

On The Educational Significance Of Folk Songs

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Abstract: The content of folk songs reflects a collection of ideas connected with the inner state of a nation, its historical experiences, spirituality, spiritual world, ways of thinking, goals, intentions, and joys. In addition, folk songs embody a set of socially significant political, legal, moral, religious, artistic, philosophical, and scientific views, thoughts, and ideas that exist within society.

Keywords: National music, musical instruments, folklore, history, National Program for Personnel Training.

Introduction: The educational significance of folk songs has developed over centuries; therefore, they encompass the history, past, aspirations, thoughts, and goals of the people. The genre of folk songs, which has been preserved since ancient times, belongs to folklore. In English, the term “folklore” is derived from “folk” meaning “people” and “lore” meaning “knowledge” or “wisdom,” thus referring to the creative heritage of the people. The term “folklore” was introduced into scholarship in 1846 by the English archaeologist W. J. Thoms. From the 1880s–1890s of the nineteenth century, the concept of folklore began to be widely used in many countries. From that period onward, in a broad sense, the term came to encompass all branches of folk creativity, including folk poetry, oral narratives, music, dance, performing arts, visual arts, sculpture, as well as religious beliefs and customs. In a narrower sense, however, it refers specifically to verbal art—namely, the oral poetic creativity of the people.

The content of folk songs represents a collection of ideas closely connected with a nation’s inner condition, lived experiences, spirituality, spiritual world, ways of thinking, aims, intentions, and joys. They may also be understood as a synthesis of socially established political, legal, moral, religious, artistic, philosophical, and scientific views, thoughts, and ideas. In other words, folk songs reflect the spiritual and socio-political life of society as a whole, influence human consciousness, are comprehended and systematized by

individuals, and serve as both a theoretical and spiritual foundation within practical social activity.

Among Turkic peoples, the first efforts to record folk songs can be traced back to the eleventh century. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, interest in folk songs intensified. The collection, compilation, and publication of these works became widespread. From the second half of the 1920s of the twentieth century, significant achievements were made. Within a relatively short period, major works and epics such as “Alpamys”, “Yusuf and Ahmad”, “Alibek and Bolibek”, “Rustam”, “The Birth of Gorogly”, “Yusuf Ahmad”, “Awez Khan”, “Edige”, “The Foolish King”, and “Garip-Ashiq” were recorded.

Karakalpak national folk songs were collected from among the people by scholars such as N. Nikolayev, S. Tolstov, Q. Ayimbetov, and T. Adambaeva, who systematized Karakalpak folklore works. The fundamental characteristic of folklore lies in the oral nature of the creative process—both creation and performance—and in its collective character. Features such as traditionality, variability, multiplicity of forms, universality, and anonymity are inherent to folklore and are manifested precisely through this creative process. National works emerge collectively through the transmission of poetic elements and traditional expressive techniques from generation to generation. They are intended for a specific group of listeners and acquire social and historical significance only when

performed within the community. Folk song samples are created orally and transmitted orally, which allows a wide range of poetic forms within the social repertoire, the stability of common elements passed from text to text, and the recurrence of similar plots. In each act of creation and performance, certain elements of a traditional work may change or be omitted. Such variability depends on social conditions, internal circumstances, audience demands, and the creative competence of the performer. However, any transformation takes place within the framework of firmly established traditions.

The Karakalpak people acquired their ethnonym from the second half of the sixteenth century; however, their culture and art had been forming since ancient times. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Karakalpak people suffered oppression under Turkestan domination as well as from neighboring peoples. After enduring numerous hardships, struggles, and sacrifices, and after achieving independence, efforts began to revive national traditions, focus on the upbringing of a healthy younger generation, and take action for the benefit of future generations. Following the attainment of independence, one of the most pressing issues today has become the education of youth in the spirit of national traditions and national ideology, with the aim of restoring historical heritage, reviving cultural traditions, securing a *достойное* place among developed nations, and creating opportunities for a prosperous future. For this reason, the primary objective of the National Program for Personnel Training is to educate young people in a national spirit. We recognize that the responsibility for implementing this task rests with teachers and educators.

Through books, video recordings, films, journals, and newspapers, we have gained knowledge about the past, enabling the customs and traditions inherited from our ancestors and our national values to reach the present generation. In today's era of rapid scientific and technological development, modern and innovative technologies have become an integral part of life, helping young people to further enrich their knowledge. It is difficult to find a person today who does not use computers, which have become an essential tool for work, or who is not accustomed to staying informed through mass media and internet portals. In this regard, we are all willing participants. In

everyday life, work, and education, questions that constantly attract human interest arise. Folk songs, which constitute the spiritual heritage of our people, call individuals toward goodness and moral education. They possess a powerful influence and serve as an inexhaustible foundation for literature and the arts. Along with the formation of human consciousness, the most ancient forms and genres of oral verbal art emerged and developed in close interaction. These creative models, which encompass various forms of artistic culture, were closely connected with all aspects of the labor and daily life of ancient people and reflected their religious views, early scientific knowledge, and perceptions of nature and society. However, such early forms of folklore have not survived to the present day.

Oral folk creativity serves as a mirror reflecting a people's character and traditions. Through this mirror, we can see and appreciate that every nation's past and present, aspirations and intentions, humanity and universal virtues, as well as feelings toward injustice and wrongdoing, are values cherished and respected by all peoples of the world. Among some peoples, it is common for folk songs such as "Xayyiw" (lullaby, a song sung to soothe or put a baby to sleep) and "Yar-yar" to be performed by men accompanied by musical instruments or in duet form, with the bride's and groom's representatives participating from both sides. In shaping future societal development, the upbringing of the younger generation plays a vital role in nurturing national identity, spiritual maturity, education, and social well-being. Today, this remains an urgent issue. The responsibility for addressing these tasks lies with educators and with us as future teachers.

The introduction of the state educational standard in music classes, the use of our national musical heritage, and the inclusion of our country's culture and national folk traditions in the curriculum serve not only to structure lessons but also to cultivate students' ideological awareness. Lessons in national music allow students to gain theoretical knowledge about the historical development, social environment, and spiritual condition of a particular nation. Although the musical traditions preserved among the people may not be formally composed in an artistic sense, their historical emergence across different periods gives them cultural significance. Folk songs, as oral genres,

continue to reflect the moral and educational values of the people, their historical development, cultural life, and experiences, offering insight into what kind of society they were. During each lesson, teachers aim to fully develop students' knowledge while simultaneously fostering their spiritual and moral sensibilities. In planning lessons and curricula, the primary goal should be to educate students in a spiritual and ethical sense, helping them grow into well-rounded individuals and responsible citizens of their country. The educational and pedagogical significance of music has been the subject of numerous scholarly studies, many of which have taken their place in the pages of history.

Eastern philosophers and scholars such as Abu Ali ibn Sina, Abu Nasr Farabi, Abdurahman Jami, and Alisher Navoi analyzed music in their works, including its theoretical and practical aspects, methods of performance, national traditional instruments, and their usage. The issue of national identity in art has been explored by philosophers and pedagogical scholars such as G. Z. Andesyan, L. N. Arutyunov, K. K. Bazorti, B. V. Vaysman, N. Goibov, A. A. Petrosyan, M. N. Parkhomenko, K. T. Gizatov, M. Quronov, T. Adambaeva, S. Romanova, I. Moyanov, and G. V. Mukhammetzyanov, who examined the education of youth in the spirit of national and universal human values, often providing a scholarly analysis of these processes. National cultural heritage, musical works, and the ideologies embedded within them play an important role in the formation of personality, aesthetic education, and moral development. The use of musical works in the educational process, the cultivation of students' skills in performing folk songs, the ability to listen attentively, understand ideas expressed through musical rhythms, and develop a sense of taste and choice in selecting works have been studied by scholars such as R. Qodirov, H. Nurmatov, F. Khalilov, Q. Mamirov, M. Quronov, S. Annamuratova, and B. Lutfullaev. These researchers and pedagogical scholars have dedicated numerous scholarly articles, methodological guides, textbooks, and other academic materials to studying the role and significance of music in youth education. Many of these resources can be accessed via the internet. The study of national cultural heritage and the ideas reflected in it is crucial for raising well-rounded young individuals.

Karakalpak girls have continued life's traditions through songs, epics, and "terme" (lyrical folk songs) inherited from wise women such as Hurliman, as well as from their mothers and elder women. These works instilled patience, endurance, and a strong spiritual force. Previously, our understanding of these folk songs was limited, and issues of moral education were primarily shaped in an ideological framework. However, no nation can be entirely separated from its national ideology, mentality, customs, religion, and spiritual sensibilities. Studying and preserving the historical and contemporary requirements of our national musical heritage, as well as the proper teaching of music in schools, serve to introduce students to musical culture and cultivate their spiritual and moral sensibilities. These processes began to take concrete shape after the attainment of our independence.

Today, the Republic is actively implementing strategies for comprehensive development, accelerating efforts to restore the scientific and practical foundations of spiritual and moral education for young people. In this context, the meaningful and effective use of national traditional values has become increasingly important, elevating it to a key component of Uzbekistan's political, social, and economic development.

The state's active role in implementing these measures not only strengthens national education but also firmly establishes the foundations of spiritual programs and moral development. The primary objective of the state is to educate young people in the spirit of high moral virtues, respect for our rich cultural heritage, history, and universal human values, love for the homeland, and loyalty to the ideology of national independence. This responsibility is entrusted to educators and students within the educational process. In Karakalpakstan, this commitment has been reflected in the musical education of youth, where theoretical and practical approaches are combined to strengthen the ideals of independence. The spiritual and traditional musical heritage of the Karakalpak people provides a foundation for modern cultural and spiritual development. Central to this heritage are ideas of respecting, preserving, and valuing traditional musical practices.

In summary, Karakalpak national musical traditions possess an immense educative power through the

combined influence of words and melodies. The moral and instructional messages conveyed through music are readily absorbed by individuals, affecting their psychological development. Understanding musical melodies and the meaning of compositions nurtures aesthetic sensibilities, instills a sense of social responsibility, and fosters disciplined personal behavior. In the spiritual life of the Karakalpak people, national musical traditions occupy a special place in shaping the moral and ethical upbringing of youth, underlining their enduring significance in education and cultural development.

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