

DEVELOPMENT OF DOMBRA PERFORMANCE IN KAZAKH CULTURE IN THE 20TH CENTURY IN THE VIEW OF NEW FORMS OF MUSIC-MAKING

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The aim of the article is to show new forms of music-making in dombra performance which are the results of mastering Kazakh national instruments for orchestra. To do that we set the following tasks: discover various aspects of the activities of the orchestra of Kazakh national instruments; describe new forms of music-making related to new activities of the orchestra culture; define genre structure of modern dombra performance which reflects the correlation between dombra performance and orchestra practices. Using integrated, comparative and typological methods, we defined the following new forms of music-making in dombra performance: concert performance, playing national instruments as a group; playing dombra to the accompaniment of the piano. Dombra performance of the 20th century is a separate stage in the development of dombra art with its own genre system and repertory. It was formed under the influence of orchestra practices in 1920-1930s and represents a combination of the traditional and the new. The key point of the article is historical and cultural dependence of new features and forms of dombra performance on the mastering of orchestra practices as one of the important demonstrations of new artistic and esthetic concept of Kazakh art of the 20th century.

Keywords: Kazakh traditional kyui, Kazakh dombra, solo concert performance, orchestra practices, ensemble performance, arrangement.

INTRODUCTION

The course of development of contemporary dombra performance was determined by highly important social and political changes in Kazakh society of the 20th century which had been the result of October Revolution (1917). Since that time musical art of Kazakhstan is characterized by interaction between national and new European traditions [10, 3]. The process began in 1920-1930s. Cultural life of the country is characterised by such new phenomena as mass music art aimed at artistic education; professional music education aimed at special training of musicians; concert and theatre life aimed at further development of music art and introduction of listeners to national and world cultural values [11, 6].

These social and cultural changes described in literature had an effect on dombra performance, which had been an integral feature of Kazakh music since its inception. It was impossible for dombra performance, a representative of traditional art, to develop separately from general cultural unity of this historical period. While continuing its development in the traditional sense, which previously had been “the only system of learning life” [2, 303], dombra performance acquired other

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new features starting from 1920-30s. They formed slowly, under the influence and with assimilation of European music culture experience. Basic characteristics of performance also changed: music material and sound space; instrument and its expressive means; performer and his or her technical and artistic potential. When trying to understand dombra practices of the period under consideration, it is important to remember that they continued to exist in traditional sense while also taking new courses of development by adapting to new cultural conditions.

METHODOLOGY

Dombra performance as a broad concept is a subject of many researches. The most examined area is dombra instrumental music. Musicological literature gives historical and theoretical view on the phenomenon of dombra kyui. It consisted of the understanding of such matters as origins and development [2; 4; 12; 27; 34], interaction between epos and instrumental music [13; 20; 33], genre system [5; 24; 25], shaping [18; 25; 30; 31], modal system [18; 20], pitch system [3; 21; 32]. But dombra kyui is only one of the aspects of dombra performance. Study of instruments is a separate line studying the origins of Kazakh dombra, its structure and historical evolution [14; 15; 28; 29; 32]. Diversity of regional performance traditions is described in research works dedicated to style patterns [4; 12; 15; 23; 25; 33; 35], works of particular performers and kyuisi composers [4; 12; 15; 16; 17]. Despite multidimensionality of the study of traditional instrumental music, dombra performance as an independent matter, meaning the unity of three aspects: “music – instrument – performer” [26, p.11], has not been a subject of special research in the existing literature. Particular attention has also not been paid to 1920-1930s, a unique period of mastering new forms of music-making in dombra performance.

Throughout the 20th century performance on the whole was a minor question in the studies of Kazakh music experts devoted to genres of academic music [10; 11], including Kazakh national instruments [5; 8], works of composers, conductors and performers [1; 4; 10; 11; 12; 22]. Therefore, principal scientific research was not based on closely related dombra and orchestra performance while new courses and forms of music-making in dombra performance were not examined in its close relation to orchestra practices, although it is obvious, especially in the initial period of dombra performance formation in 1920-30s.

Dombra performance is understood in the view of trinity of musical material, individual creative work and technical potential of the instrument, just like any other musical instrument. Thus, the first original methodological foundation is a comprehensive method in the view of unity of three aspects – “music, performer and instrument” [26]. Comparative method is used to characterise the originality of contemporary dombra performance, to show peculiar features of its development and discover its differences from traditional culture. We see this originality in new forms of music-making which are defined by the method of typological approach.

RESULTS

The development of dombra performance is a logical result of its close relation to orchestra performance on Kazakh national instrument. The orchestra was of great importance for Kazakh culture. Having imparted European values to listeners, it increased the best traditions of folk art and is interpreted as a new artistic phenomenon in the national art of the 20th century.

The result of orchestra practices and reconstruction of the instrument was concert dombra, which, on the one hand, continued to embody the connection with tradition and, on the other hand, complied with contemporary ideas while gaining new qualities. Orchestra music-making had a great impact on the development of performance means and methods of playing dombra.

Activities of traditional musicians related to the creation of ensemble and orchestra of national instruments extended the potential of their solo performances. Kyuishi now performed not only as solo artists, but also as members of an orchestra. Instead of traditional representation of their role they started to perform in theatres, concert halls and other places where listeners are spatially separated from performers.

Kyui performance on a concert stage compared to its original traditional form is a particular independent version, a result of selection which can be considered a peculiar arrangement of folklore source. New artistic and communicative environment in the concert form of music existence determined a new approach to music material and understanding of kyui as a composition of concert genre. Change of performer's attitude towards kyui lies within the general process of involving traditional art into contemporary music life, which M. Imkhanitsky writes about, defining concert arrangement of a folklore tune as a new form of folklore music life in stage conditions [26, 29].

Artistic and communicative existence environment of kyuis where listeners and performers are separated allowed researchers to see tendencies to concertivity in folklore music-making. But concert practices themselves for traditional kyuis developed in the process of concert activities and mastering of orchestra performances.

Mastering of ensemble form of music-making and logical emergence of the concept of a single example of kyui had an effect on solo performance of dombra players. Practices of solo performance changed under the influence of playing kyui as a group. Examples of kyuis performed in ensemble and orchestra versions were transferred to solo repertory of dombra players.

DISCUSSION

Orchestra of Kazakh national instruments as a new phenomenon in Kazakh culture

It is known from scientific literature on the history of creating the orchestra of national instruments named after Kurmangazy that during the first two decades a

great deal of importance was attached to renovation of traditional art and its representation as an integral part of professional music culture of Kazakhstan. Instrumental music of Kazakhs of previous epochs functioned only in solo performance. Researchers agree that there was no ensemble and orchestra practices not only with dombra, but also with other Kazakh national musical instruments [2, 330]. Taking into account these national traditions, introduction of group (ensemble and orchestra) forms of music-making is recognized as a new quality of culture while creation of an orchestra of Kazakh national instruments is interpreted as a new artistic phenomenon in national art.

Positive view on changes in Kazakh culture is on the whole characteristic of listeners. B. Gyzatov, one of special researchers of this area of music art, compares “the past” and “the present” and believes that “orchestra ensemble has increased, made colours, rhythms and intonations of national tunes more expressive, brought powerful sound into Kazakh kyuis which had been previously hidden under primitive texture of topical development” [8, 19].

However, comparison of artistic phenomena of solo and orchestra culture by determining special features of the latter is methodologically unproductive. In addition to positive evaluation of the phenomenon under consideration, it also generates critical attitude to the creation of orchestra based on Kazakh national instruments. In works of A. Mukhambetova dedicated to Kazakh traditional music group performance on kyui is described as its simplification, while orchestration is believed to be created by “the most primitive measures of European technique”, which allowed the author to make a controversial conclusion about kyuis thus losing its authenticity and improvisational culture [2, 458]. As musical practice shows, kyuis continue to sound both in authentic version and in *various forms of its interpretation not connected with authenticity*.

Among them is orchestra sound of kyui. It cannot be studied in the view of authenticity, as originally solo genre acquires new instrumental nuances here. But with all the novelty related to orchestra’s structure, in this interpretation kyuis usually keep principal typological characteristics of dombra texture (heterophonia, which can be primitive).

Formation of orchestra of Kazakh national instruments

To create polytimbral and polyphonic orchestra of national instruments groups of instruments had to be united: bow, fingered, wind and percussion instruments. To expand their sound range, to reinforce the register and make the orchestra vertical sound full, first improvement work and creation of different versions of dombra, kobyz and percussion instruments was conducted under the supervision of A. Zhubanov in 1933-37.

Bow group was represented by prima kobyz and its varieties – alto, bass and contrabass. Before the reconstruction of kobyz, violin and flute had been introduced

into the orchestra as cantilena instruments [8, 14]. Gradually two strings were added to *kyl kobyz*, and *prima kobyz*, which replaced the violin, was created. It became possible to perform melodic parts, virtuosic pieces using complicated techniques. *Sybyzgy* was also improved; it fell into the group of wind instruments and replaced the flute. Group of percussion instruments consisted of *dauylpaz*, *ushayak* and *asatayak*.

In 1950-1958 *synnai* (button accordion), which formed a bellows-driven instrument group, was introduced into the orchestra under the supervision of chief conductor and artistic director S. Kazhgaliyev to create polychromatic tone palette, increase orchestra sound, stabilize the pitch [1, 58].

Dombra and its varieties, including *prima*, *tenor* and *bass*, became a part of fingered instruments group. After the reconstruction of *dombra tenor* its concept also changed. Before its improvement, each region of Kazakhstan had its own variety of *dombra* for solo performance; they were divided into triangular, oval and trapezoid ones according to their form, there are also three-stringed *dombras* [15, 6]. Such difference was caused by specifics of artistic and expressive means of regional and stylistic patterns. In Arka and East Kazakhstan *dombra* traditions three-stringed *dombras* and so-called “*kalak dombyra*” are widely spread. They are small, with short neck and are used to perform *shertpe kyuis*. In West Kazakhstan region *dombra* has long neck and two-octave range for *tokpe kyuis*. Sometimes the instrument was specially designed for the repertory of a particular performer.

In all these kinds of *dombras* gut or silk strings, caprone and curled horse-hair were used as strings to create specific tone in *dombra* sound, which people usually call “*konyr dauys*” (“*кoныр дауыс*”) [32, 95]. Specifically treated industrial line could endure high tuning in the orchestra, *dombra* sound also became stronger. If previously *dombra* pitch had been indefinite, now optimal pitch tuning for the orchestra was defined as small octave D and G. Number of frets on the neck was increased (up to 21), they were placed according to chromatic semitones, which allowed to expand the instrument’s range up to two and a half octaves. As a result of reconstruction, *dombra* was improved according to 12-step even temperament [8, 13]. There appeared various types of *dombra*, such as second, alto and baritone with the third string, which made it possible to play chords and arpeggio.

Thus, as a result of orchestra practices and instrument reconstruction, *dombra tenor* appeared. On the one hand, it continued to embody the connection with tradition, on the other hand, it complied with contemporary views acquiring new qualities.

Concert form of music-making.

The first instrumentation of the orchestra of Kazakh national instruments n.a. Kurmangazy, which at first was generally an ensemble of *dombra* players, consisted of traditional performers who had had independent solo practice before. They were

famous representatives of traditional instrumental art. These first orchestra performers were special because “they thought and created as traditional professionals, but according to their social status they became artists in European sense of this word” [2, 373]. Each had their own solo repertory related to performing schools of the region the heritage of which they had adopted.

Before the 20th century dombra performers (kyuishi) performed at different fairs, weddings, events, competitions, in everyday atmosphere, which defines them as traditional musicians. Although concert performance is not typical of kyuishi art, it included elements and prerequisites for such kind of public performance. The attention of researchers was drawn to such originality of Kazakh instrumental culture. Among the conclusions the following are worth mentioning: moving beyond applied arts and crafts, emergence of dombra performance as a kind of professional activity, recognition of authorship, development of “*music itself* intended only for listening” [2, 323].

Works of A. Zhubanov and B. Gyzatov shed light on tour and concert life of 1930-40s in which traditional musicians were involved [13; 8]. In addition to concerts in different regions and regional centres of Kazakhstan in front of Kazakh audience, high importance is attached to their performances at the Decade of Kazakh art in Moscow in 1936. Participation of traditional dombra musicians in artistically diverse environment expands their impressions and shows a range of innovations in their self-awareness characteristic of 1930s. Stage conditions of dombra performance, new music impressions, sounds of different unknown instruments, enormous audience of listeners prepared the ground for broadening the outlook on kyuishi’s capabilities, for enrichment of expressive and technical means of performers. The first experience of ensemble and orchestra performance of traditional musicians and their participation in concert and theatre life determined a new course of activity and new artistic and communicative environment in which dombra performance was to develop.

Concert form of music-making is a new “communicative context” for traditional art [12, 177] and involves its own performance aesthetics different from traditional art. Meeting the audience in concert outfits, personal announcement of a performer and applause become highly important. Space and acoustic conditions of concert performance dictate not only the necessity of appropriate volume and dynamics intensity of the sound, but also temporary limitation of particular performance.

For a traditional musician these artistic and aesthetic directives reconstructed both outer and inner form (context of the performance and musical text of kyui) of the performance. It is known that traditional musicians did not introduce themselves before the performance of kyui, they told an epic legend or a story of kyui origin. The audience expressed their reaction in exclamations during the performance. Within free, unlimited in time traditional dombra performance kyui developed improvisationally depending on particular space and acoustic situation and

communicative environment (atmosphere and listeners' mood, psychological state). Comparing these special features of traditional performance with new conditions of concert music-making, researchers note such significant changes in presentation of kyui as performance without introduction in the form of legends and stories about kyui origins, as well as obvious reduction in improvisational performance practices [2, 334]. Due to concert and theatre form of instrumental music-making traditional musicians for the first time have an artistic and aesthetic aspiration to bring the piece being performed to their listeners as well as possible by directing "listeners' perception only towards the music itself" [2, 334].

Concert (stage) kyui performance as a new form of life for folklore and oral tradition music formed new attitude of traditional musicians to music material. Before that, in traditional environment kyuis had no particular preparation when choosing their repertory as kyui was easy to improvise for a certain event. As opposed to traditional form of music-making, contemporary concert performance required preparation. For public performance kyuis chooses kyuis which express dynamic development and represent a sophisticated form. Performer finds an appropriate version for current concert situation from a diversity of kyui's improvisational capabilities and thinks it over in advance despite the intention to improvise while performing. Freedom in the attitude towards kyui in performance shows itself in individual characteristics of performance style – performance techniques, dynamic nuances, rhythm pattern, tempo gradation.

Group performance with national instruments as a new form of music-making.

Emergence of the orchestra of Kazakh national instruments n.a. Kurmangazy is associated with traditional musicians mastering an unknown art of group performance. New practice of group performance gave rise to a complicated and ambiguous process of reconsideration of kyui as musical text. In traditional dombra culture directions for kyui performance were unrestricted, it was as if kyuis were reborn in kyuis' performance passing from one performer to another, "from teacher to pupil", "from hand to hand". The art of kyui was passed orally from a teacher to a pupil. Kyuis were kept in a number of significantly different versions.

Such diverse views on musical text of kyui common for traditional practice created certain difficulties in achieving ensemble performance, since the ensemble was based on group performance of a musical composition, which means there is a single musical text for all performers. In contrast to solo music-making, in ensemble performance "general concept and all the details of interpretation are the result of reflection and creative imagination of *several* performers instead of *one*, and they are implemented using *joint* efforts" [9, 8]. Ensemble performance of traditional musicians, who had performed solo before, required an ensemble repertory of those kyuis which they performed solo and in various versions. Great innovative work was conducted to set a single standard of kyui to select kyuis for

ensemble repertory. Kyuis which had been more finished in form and less subject to improvisational renovations of kyuis were chosen. This process is described by B. Gizatov: “Kabigozhyn’s performance of *Saryarka* kyui was highly accurate in artistic form, without any improvisational additions and unreasonable repetitions which could disturb its classic harmony. Kabigozhyn’s version of kyui was considered exemplary and accepted for group performance”. [8, p. 18].

Ensemble performance implicates synchronous sounding of all parts, balance in sound strength of all parts and consistency of nuances of all parts in relation to imaginative task [9, p. 18]. Traditional musicians who were used to free improvisational manner in kyui performance could not achieve such unity required for ensemble performance at once. It happened that dombra performers started playing at the same time and finished differently, either too early or too late.

Dombra players first started to play kyuis to the accompaniment of the piano when mastering ensemble performance. One of the first experiments is concert performance of folklore kyui *Kenes* by students of musical drama technical school. At first, such sound of kyui pursued applied goals. Capabilities of dombra improvement were examined, and ensemble performance trained traditional solo dombra players for orchestra practice. A. Zhubanov formed the orchestra through ensemble mastering. The main artistic problem when creating an orchestra was that improvising kyuis had metro-rhythmic freedom which contradicted metro-rhythmic unity in correlation between parts and orchestra instruments. It was impossible to solve it immediately, and it required certain time and different achievement methods in pedagogical and performance practices. During the first experiences of ensemble performance it was impossible to achieve metro-rhythmic unity in concert performance with kyuis to the accompaniment of the piano, and sometimes musicians finished playing at different times; it was also difficult for them to start playing simultaneously.

In his memoirs A. Zhubanov gives an example of one of E. Brusilovsky’s performances as a pianist with an ensemble of dombra players who played divergently and finished playing at different times [13, 102]. For this reason A. Zhubanov thought that the way to form an orchestra and implement it into concert practices was update training methods. In addition to methods of oral tradition (“from hand to hand”), it was necessary to implement academic music education which would become the basis for coordination of musicians playing national instruments together.

Influence of orchestra practices on dombra performance

Orchestra repertory, which consisted of diverse music material, directed dombra players towards the search for new performance means of music and artistic expressiveness. Any dombra sound can be played using a particular method of playing depending on artistic tasks of a musical piece. Improved dombra with

pitch system and tempered scale allowed using different methods of phonation. Principal nuances of playing dombra in orchestra practice were adopted from other instruments similar to dombra – Russian dombra and balalaika. As far as orchestra performance practice is concerned, these instruments were the most similar to dombra since they had been widely spread as orchestra instruments [7, 9]. Thus, orchestra practice of music-making had a significant influence on the development of performance means and methods of playing dombra.

Influence of orchestra performance on solo dombra performance is also found in music material. Let us examine orchestra repertory in accordance with its historical development. Original repertory of an ensemble, a historical predecessor of orchestra, consisted of kyuis of Kurmangazy and Dauletkerey which sounded in their “original version”, that is, in the same way as their solo performance. These kyuis were performed in unison – similarly by all members of dombra ensemble.

In addition to kyuis, Kazakh national songs were also arranged for ensemble and orchestra. They were performed only in one-voice rendition. The tune was duplicated, orchestra sound became stronger. Mastering songs and kyuis was the first stage in emergence of orchestra performance.

Introduction of music of Russian and West European composers into the repertory of the orchestra of Kazakh national instruments was a significant factor in the evolution of dombra performance. At the concert dedicated to the 20th anniversary of October revolution (1937) the orchestra played *Chernomor’s March* from Mikhail Glinka’s opera *Ruslan and Ludmila* and Franz Schubert’s *Moment Musical* from music for the first time. As A. Zhubanov himself writes, it was a period when “the orchestra turned from playing by ear to “written music culture” [13, 16]. Orchestra musicians had to learn how to read musical notes to be able to play compositions by European classics. Introduction of basic knowledge of how to write first helped the orchestra to play short-form musical compositions of different national cultures. Ability to read musical notes and expansion of orchestra repertory with compositions of Russian and West European composers opened up new musical culture for the orchestra musicians. In his day B. Gyzatov wrote about new possibilities that musicians of the orchestra of Kazakh national instruments had [8, 25]. During orchestra practices they absorb another intonational world, tune and harmonic language, master polyphonic and artistic and expressive means, practise unity of rhythm.

Further repertory of the orchestra of Kazakh national instruments is enriched with long-form compositions of West European and Russian classics: pieces from Pyotr Tchaikovsky’s *The Queen of Spades*, Alexander Spendiarov’s *Preludes* and *Crimean Sketches*, chorus from Uzeyir Hajibeyov’s opera *Leyli and Majnun*, Franz Liszt’s *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*, the third movement of Beethoven’s *Symphony No. 2*, the first movement Mozart’s *Symphony No. 40*.

In addition to arrangements of composition from musical heritage of other cultures, the orchestra's repertory was also expanded with arrangements of original compositions of Kazakhstan composers written for other instruments. Since 1960-70s symphonic music has become widely practiced in the works of Kazakhstan composers. Arrangements for the orchestra of Kazakh national instruments were based on these compositions for symphonic orchestra. Independent meaning of orchestra art of performance is characterised by author's original compositions for the orchestra of Kazakh national instruments created by composers of Kazakhstan. Among them are kyuis, poems, overtures, marches, etc. The orchestra also performed instrumental concerts, such as *Concerto for Dombra and Orchestra*, *Concerto for Kombyz and Orchestra* [22, 152].

Analysis of the Kazakh national instruments orchestra's repertory shows that its development is aimed at expansion of style space and genre range, at mastering musical forms of various complexity.

Interaction between orchestra practices and dombra performance influenced the expansion of dombra players' solo repertory. Along with kyuis dombra players started to perform the repertory of orchestra compositions in the arrangement for dombra solo performance. Composers began to write original compositions for dombra to the accompaniment of the piano (M. Koyshibayev, K. Kumisbekov, M. Aubakirov, H. Tastanov, S. Shabelsky and L. Shargorodsky, D. Botbayev, etc.). Arrangements of compositions of Russian and West European composers for dombra to the accompaniment of the piano were also created. The following compositions are well-known as performed by K. Akhmediarov: *Turkish March* by Mozart, *Hungarian Dances* by Brahms, *Sabre Dance* by Khachaturian, etc. The repertory of traditional kyuishi M. Hkamzin for the first time included compositions of Rachmaninoff, Oginski, Tchaikovsky.

CONCLUSION

Analysis of the Kazakh national instruments orchestra's repertory shows that its development is aimed at expansion of style space and genre range, at mastering musical forms of various complexity which influenced the expansion of dombra players' solo repertory. Along with kyuis of traditional kyuishi composers, musical material includes modern kyuis; original compositions for dombra to the accompaniment of the piano, arrangements of compositions for dombra in different genres and styles. As opposed to traditional repertory, which had included only kyuis, the experience of orchestra performance, which started in 1920-30s, influenced solo repertory of orchestra members. Compositions played by dombra players within orchestra programmes were later included into their solo performances. Arrangement method prevailing in the field of the music of Kazakh national instruments orchestra was adopted for solo performance. Repertory of dombra players was no longer limited by genre area of kyui.

Starting from 1930s, when musical drama technical school was opened, education of traditional musicians becomes based on a combination of traditional oral learning and principles, aims and tasks of contemporary academic education. Ability to read musical notes and expansion of orchestra repertory with compositions of Russian and West European composers opened up new musical culture for the performers.

New forms of music-making related to new practices of orchestra culture were described on the bases of the orchestra of Kazakh national instruments; genre structure of contemporary dombra performance which shows the interaction between dombra performance and orchestra practices was defined. Within the scope of this research we have discovered that contemporary dombra performance of the 20th century is an independent stage in the development of dombra art with its own genre system, repertory and new forms of music-making.

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