



AESTHETIC FEATURES OF UZBEK FOLKLORE: THE LANGUAGE OF RITUALS SONG

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SUMMARY

Article deals with providing all-inclusive information about kinds of folkloric songs, especially the cultic songs, which were within several centuries the integral parts of the life of Uzbek people and their performance modes, including their protection and transfer to the next generations.

KEY WORDS: *folklore, melody, genre, ceremony, wedding.*

ЭСТЕТИЧЕСКАЯ ОСОБЕННОСТИ УЗБЕКСКОГО ФОЛЬКЛОРА: ЯЗЫК ОБРЯДОВОЙ ПЕСНИ

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Аннотация

В статье представлена исчерпывающая информация о видах фольклорных песен, особенно культовых, которые на протяжении нескольких столетий были неотъемлемой частью жизни узбекского народа, и способах их исполнения, включая их защиту и передачу следующим поколениям.

Ключевые слова: *фольклор, мелодия, жанр, обряд, свадьба.*

It is impossible to imagine the culture of a people without songs. Folklore song occupies a special place in the life of Uzbeks, along with instrumental music and epic poetry. The song invariably accompanies the main milestones of a person's life - birth, wedding, is widespread in everyday life, and serves as a decoration for any celebration. Musical folklore - the unique, original culture of our ancestors - is recognized by modern society as a significant factor in spirituality, continuity of generations, and familiarization with the national origins of life. The results of the centuries-old process of folk art are reflected in works that have preserved the most perfect and significant images in their memory. Life, consciousness, and norms of behavior of distant ancestors reflect rituals, the study of which makes it possible to identify some of the foundations of the traditional worldview.

Ritual action and singing in it are among the symbolic forms of behavior. Among all kinds of needs, a person has a need for symbolization. Its products were precisely ritual (rite), myth, language and other semiotic means of culture. In this regard, ritual and ritual singing act as the highest form and the most consistent embodiment of symbolism. All spheres of life of the Turkmen traditional society - everyday life, food, animal husbandry, raising children, the behavior of various age groups were ritualized. These traditions are still alive among the people today, in rural environments to a greater extent than in urban ones. Compliance with rituals helps society solve vital problems in preserving its basic values, not only material, but also iconic and symbolic. The ritual is a kind of language, a way of expressing main ideas.

Wedding rituals are associated with a wide range of phenomena in folk life; it presents an interesting combination of various folk genres: songs, jokes, games, proverbs and sayings, ritual quatrains and ritual actions. The concept of an Uzbek wedding hides an



incredible variety of different options, transitional, more or less similar or unique forms of the wedding ceremony. Until now, each clan is distinguished by local features peculiar only to it, among which there are the main general aspects of the wedding ritual. Each step of the ritual - from the moment of matchmaking to the wedding fun - is associated with special honors, which have a deep ethical meaning. It is impossible to clearly define the boundaries of the wedding ritual, its beginning and end. What we call ritual is sometimes difficult to separate from other, non-ritual aspects of life. In Uzbek wedding folklore, researchers distinguish three stages: pre-wedding, the wedding itself and the post-wedding period. These stages show the sequential transition of those entering into marriage from one sex and age group to another. Through the language of ritual, Uzbek society marked the change in the social status of the young and the main milestones in the life of traditional society.

The specificity of folklore is that it reveals the features of a syncretic art form. Each work of folk art is of a procedural nature and each time is recreated anew on the basis of the complex interaction of traditionally established elements of the artistic and figurative system, language, genre-functional significance of works of folklore and specific social historical conditions.

The musical arrangement of the ritual actions of an Uzbek wedding is extensive and multifaceted. Music greatly enhances the emotional tone and artistic merits of the ceremony. Songs highlight that side of things and phenomena that are not noticeable in ordinary life, but in fact determine their true essence. Hence the duality of phenomena, the switch from the level of daily life to the level of actual values. The performance of ritual songs refers to the system of musical behavior in the ritual. The question "why this and not otherwise?" didn't matter. The principle of immutability of behavior and obligation for all members of the team had a self-sufficient character in traditional culture. Musical speech acted as a norm, a kind of program that acquired ritual status in ritual action. The linguistic means in which the action was embodied were not similar to ordinary (spoken) language. They acquired a symbolic character. In the structure of rituals, this role was played by rhythmic musical speech, organized according to the type of formula. Gradually, the formula crystallized in the poetic content of ritual singing and "absorbed" certain meanings, becoming materially consolidated in the music through rhythm. Over time, linguistic forms in ritual songs became a means of musical expression, and music turned into a kind of lexicon, dictionary, and the key to understanding ancient musical culture.

The performance of ritual songs is not strictly assigned to a certain stage of the wedding ritual; it is largely arbitrary for each region. It is these features that do not allow us to distinguish the wedding ritual of any locality as the main form of ritual in this territory. The set of songs is not accidental; each village had its own logically clear "musical direction" for the wedding ceremony. The difficulty of figuring out this "direction" is determined by the significant flexibility in assigning songs to a specific ritual action and the fairly easy inclusion of songs of other genres into the wedding. Actually, wedding songs were not supplanted, but were largely overshadowed and gradually lost in the mass of those introduced later.

On the territory of Uzbekistan, there is basically the same repertoire of wedding songs. The ritual begins with the moment of matchmaking, which is already replete with traditional quatrains and sayings. Long before the scheduled wedding day, the bride, surrounded by her friends, began to embroider her dowry. Getting together, the girls joked and sang songs, among which the lyrical "Ulan", "Kelin Salom" and "Yor-yor" are popular in the Fergana Valley and the south of the republic; varieties of the song-game genre "Vakil Berish" ("Give Tribute") are widespread everywhere. Girls' lyrical songs are drawn-out and melodic in nature, with lyrics of a wide variety of content. To this day, these original songs, rich in original national flavor, are brilliant examples of folk art.

The wedding begins at the bride's house, where she says goodbye to her family and friends. In some areas of Surkhandarya and Kashkadarya, there are still crying farewells to the bride, her mother and friends. "Farewell to the bride" of the bride, accompanied by crying and lamentations, is typical for many cultures. It is crying, along with other components of the ritual, that signifies the actual transition from one world to another. Accordingly, the importance and significance of the ritual that opens the "doors" between worlds increases. This completes the girl's life cycle; she is reborn again in the house of her future husband, but in a different capacity - as a mother, a continuer of the family. Despite all the variety of magical actions, the central semantic core of the wedding ritual is precisely the transition of a member of one clan to another. This can also explain the fact that at first after the wedding the daughter-in-law exists in a position of ritual isolation (remember the 40 days after the birth of the child). She does not show herself to her father-in-law and her husband's older relatives, never raises her eyes to them, and does not address them by name. The daughter-in-law mainly communicates with the children of this house.

After all the ceremonies have been completed in the bride's house (farewell, braiding, changing clothes, changing headdress), the action moves to the groom's house. Upon entering a new home, the bride performs a series of ritual actions to welcome members of the new family. In this regard, the ritual of kneeling, which has been preserved in some regions of Uzbekistan - the bride's bow to the main members of the groom's clan, is important. After any bow, the one to whom it relates must announce a gift for it. The tradition of opening and showing the bride's face for a moment is deeply symbolic. In this case, with the help of certain actions, the situation of "birth", the appearance of a new member of the clan, is materialized. Completion of all elements of the ritual, including



the singing of songs, was considered mandatory. The well-being of not only the young, but also the entire family of the groom was associated with them.

After performing the necessary ritual actions, the actual entertainment part of the festival began, with music, songs, games, often traditional wrestling and other entertainment. The performance of song genres brings special fun and youthful excitement to the wedding ceremony. The spread of popular wedding songs “Yor-yor” (“Fire-heat”) among most peoples of Central Asia speaks of the once common roots of the Central Asian tribes. According to tradition, they were performed at the moment of the arrival of the wedding caravan and personified a playful competition between representatives of two clans, on the part of the bride and groom. In the Baysun region, the variety of wedding genres also includes comic songs performed to the accompaniment of doira. The verses were sung solo or by a group of voices and were taken up in the chorus part of the songs by all those present. In Ahal, along with “Yor-yor”, the songs “Yaku-yaku” are also popular, the performance of which was accompanied by clapping and traditional dance movements.

“Chirok yakish” (“burning of the fonus”) is a genre that exists in the southern regions of Uzbekistan. The genre traces its evolution back to dhikr, whose former function was the expulsion of evil spirits. The primary reason for introducing dhikr into the wedding ceremony was the desire to protect the well-being of the newlyweds from the “evil eye.” Thus, the ritual performed at weddings began to serve as a talisman and was called “Chirok Yakish”. The genre is a multi-part cycle, during the performance of which the female participants perform characteristic rhythmic body movements.

Before the start of zikr, a long vocalized appeal to the Almighty is performed solo. The melody and semantic content of the ancient genre have undergone a radical transformation over time, but the emotional tone of the performance and the traditional cries of “Alla”, “Kusht-kusht”, “Ahha-ahha”, “Huv-a” have been preserved. Thus, the ritual function of the ancient genre, which went into the subconscious and is unconscious in modern conditions, was reborn into a wedding game and took shape in a song and dance form of a comic nature.

It is necessary to study song folklore taking into account the history of the formation of local traditions of folk culture. In order to master the subject of folk art in full, it is necessary, in addition to musicology, to involve data from philology, history and ethnography. For example, when considering the chant or text of a wedding ceremony, a researcher may come to random conclusions if he does not take into account the origin of the genre, the structure of its musical and poetic content, or the features of the local tradition. Often, the diversity of the plot development of a song, the dialectological features of the dialect, as well as a huge layer of non-song folklore remain beyond the attention of musicologists. In turn, folklorists-philologists pass by the intonation-rhythmic essence of song texts, which is the only form of existence of these texts and precisely in which the national characteristic of folk song culture is manifested.

Uzbek wedding songs have well preserved their distinctive features. Wedding songs are rich in everyday life; they reflect the nomadic life of the Uzbeks and their tribal customs. Their poetic content reflects the ideas about the world of the traditional consciousness of the people. The images of nature that appear in the poetic metaphors of these genres are a modification of the ideas of the Uzbek ancestors about the three worlds: upper, middle and lower. The symbol of the world tree is known to all Turkic peoples as an object of worship for the middle world; the image of a river and everything connected with water can symbolize the underworld. In addition, the river in ancient Turkic mythology means the border between the worlds of the living and the dead. The categories of fire found in poetic texts are also an echo of ancient beliefs. Thus, according to the ideas of the ancient Turks, earth, water, air and fire constitute the four original essences of the universe.

Samples of the hearth, birds, horse, sun, and moon are scattered in the poetry of almost all ritual genres. The collectivity of these images speaks of the preservation in the historical memory of the people of the cults of totemism and reverence for the forces of nature. A common picture of the world, common memory, uniform rules of behavior determine the viability of a culture. Each society develops its own norms of behavior that have been established over centuries. A reference to the law of ancestors is a universal way of motivating actions in a ritual. Poetic metaphors of Uzbek ritual songs serve as symbols and semantic codes. In the traditional consciousness of Uzbeks, such well-known metaphors led to a strong consolidation of the corresponding rhythmic intonations in music. Poetic clichés as symbols of rituals were clothed in corresponding rhythmic formulas. Ritual speech in this context implements a stereotype of behavior at the musical and poetic level.

Thus, some behavioral stereotypes can be identified in the Uzbek wedding ceremony. Ritual actions are the implementation of certain behavioral programs, where “prescription” is equally important for all components of the ritual: the behavior of participants, gestures, clothing, food, emotional and physical state, special intonation - poetically rhythmic speech, etc. The main character of an Uzbek wedding is the bride, who leaves her home and moves to the house of her future husband. The ritual situation of “opening” doors between worlds is accompanied by many signs and special chants. For the participants of the ritual, the most important thing



is to overcome the border between worlds. Ritual songs have one quality that is not characteristic of material things. They are intangible. A sound, a word, a chant is a certain aggregate, a sequence of sound waves that can easily overcome both physical barriers and reach immaterial worlds. Music is created, performed and sounded in the material world; it belongs to the material world, but at the same time does not have the characteristics of material objects. Singing performs the magical function of communication: only it is capable of penetrating into other worlds, making it possible to be heard and understood. As a special sacred language, singing connects “vertically” representatives of different worlds. In this regard, the musical component of the wedding ceremony has preserved the most ancient features and brought the breath of millennia to our time.

There is something great in folk rituals. Behind it stands the whole way of life, its infinity. Meetings and farewells of the seasons, the spell of rain, the magnification of the harvest, weddings and funerals - all this is connected together: nature, economy, people, music, ritual. And only in this connection, in endless roll calls, connections, associations and metamorphoses, the greatness and meaning of life is learned.

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