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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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THE HARMONY AND ARRANGEMENT OF THE “SOYOL ERDENE” SONG

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ABSTRACT

If we compare the song “Soyol Erdene” being sung by Dorjdagva to it being sung by vocalists during the current period, it will allow us to research and compare whether positive comprehension (thinking) traditions, innovations, differences and growth can be observed or allow us to question whether such aspects can be seen declining. Thus, this comparative element can become an important research indicator and measuring point. It can be stated that the fate of the long and folk songs of the 20th century was placed on the back of Dorjdagva. This created the conditions and reasoning behind the composition and creation of the 1930s song “SoyolErdene”. Within Navaan-Yunden’s poem, even though Dorjdagva did not know the notes (keys), he hummed and sang it out which Pechnikova transcribed into notes (sheet music).

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INTRODUCTION

The 1930s is the historical period when the Government of Mongolia contributed to the development of “long songs” and folk songs and their associated talent, through cultural and arts policy. Since beginning his craft, J.Dorjdagva, one of the first recipients of the title “Meritorious Singer of Mongolia”, devoted all his efforts and “soul” to long songs and folk songs, regarded as priceless heritages of Mongolian culture, and their practice, methodology, research, and preservation. Since the 1930s, the research of both Mongolian long song and folk song have made invaluable contributions to the development of modern songs and their associated art forms. One such example is the “SoyolErdene” (Cultural Treasure) song and it is the analysis of this song which is the main goal of this paper.

METHODOLOGY

In order to study this topic, the song’s historical period, the song’s method of singing, the utterance (narration) of the song’s dialect, the song’s norms, and the song’s harmony were studied using interview and observation methodologies.

Main Research Body: Each song was composed reflecting the historical events that occurred within Mongolia. As a result they uniquely reflect all of the country’s different developmental periods. In terms of time frame, the song “SoyolErdene” was written during the period that coincided with the years 1933-1936 when the “New Economic Policy” was implemented to erase the errors of the left-wing.

Specifically when the country saw more activism from the public and began to experience economic recovery and revitalization. The song “SoyolErdene”, featured in the book “Collection of Mongolian Songs” published in the Year 25 (1935), was composed by 1935, on occasion 15th Anniversary of the Mongolian People’s Revolution which was to be celebrated in 1936 and necessitated the composition of such a new song. By 1930, Russian music expert BerlinaPechnikova, who was a pianist, had arrived in Mongolia to spread the culture of music. This person’s contribution to Mongolian culture and art, especially the art of music, is corroborated by the fact that the most renowned singers (vocalists) of the period sung Pechnikova’s long and folk songs. The lessons and wishes of the ministers of the period also played an important role in the development of the period’s music. The names of singers who sang the songs published in the “Collection of Mongolian Songs” were printed next to the songs. The inclusion of this also acts as a historical document that attests the singer’s singing methods, technique, and cadence. The fact that a compilation of songs that were sung during this period was published has been an invaluable means for researchers as well as contemporary singers to understand and compare how folk songs, Dorjdagva’s songs, and Dugarjav’s songs were sung. However, this necessitates further comparative study of the songs of the 1930s to the songs and music culture of Mongolians from the Khuree over 100 years ago. If we compare the song “SoyolErdene” being sung by Dorjdagva to it being sung by vocalists during the current period, it will allow us to research and compare whether positive comprehension (thinking) traditions, innovations, differences and growth can be observed or allow us to question whether such aspects can be seen declining. Thus, this comparative element can become an important research indicator and measuring point. It can be stated that the fate of the long and folk songs of the 20th century was placed on the back of Dorjdagva. This created the

conditions and reasoning behind the composition and creation of the 1930s song "SoyolErdene". Within Navaan-Yunden's poem, even though Dorjdagva did not know the notes (keys), he hummed and sang it out which Pechnikova transcribed into notes (sheet music). If we observe how it was composed, the poem element is interesting. If we approach it as a poem, from a modern perspective, we can see it written within 4 lines (stanzas).

ЗэxөөСоёлэрдэнийнсоёмбоүсэгсолонголсон
Сүртэйулаантугньнамилзанмандахөхөхө
Содмэргэнхувьсгалминьцогжавхлансүртэй
Зэxэзасгийнминьалдараахөхөгэжбайна.

Zee Khuu the Soyombo letter of the Cultural Treasure (SoyolErdene) has been rainbowfied

The grandiose red flag billows and rises in splendor khukhukhu
The wise revolution of ours has magnificent brilliance

Zee Khuu it is said that the fame of our State goes aakhukhukhu

Yet, within the first stanza, the song follows "the Soyombo letter of the Cultural Treasure (SoyolErdene) has been rainbowfied, the grandiose red flag billows and rises in splendor" which is a complete sentence, specifically a continuous word sentence or compound sentence. Whereas, while the second stanza is shorter and has a simple compound sentence "the wise revolution of ours has magnificent brilliance" the third stanza has an even shorter simple compound sentence that follows "the fame of our State". The structure of this sentence varies from the style we learned to read. It also differs from the 4 stanza (line) structure of folk songs. This leads us to wonder why Navaan-Yunden wrote the song down as a poem, for it is undoubtedly a song about the revolution in terms of content. If we observe the structure of the poem, it appears as a continuous letter. In accordance with this, Dorjdagva created the song's melody. As the melody was created, it was separated at the section "rainbowfied". It continues to be written in accordance with the 4 stanza (line) structure of the contemporary period. Composing a song is directly related to its words and poem and the song appears when one reads it.

If we listen to the song, from the viewpoint of professional music theory and structure, it does comprise a beginning and an end. However, it does not have 'repetition' in the middle. We have attempted to show the song's stanzas (the first bars continue). It continues with a 4/2 time signature. It is uncertain if Pechnikova correctly or wrongly noted them with a 4/2 time signature. If we measure the differences, it measures following a 4/4 time signature. The first finishes at "rainbowfied" by a 4/2 time signature at 10 bars.

"The grandiose red flag billows and rises in splendor" (following modern measurements measure 2 stanzas) follows a 4/2 time signature for 9 bars. While the lines "The grandiose red flag billows and rises in splendor" and "The wise revolution of ours has magnificent brilliance" has the same measurement, the line "The wise revolution of ours has magnificent brilliance" follows a 4/2 time signature for 6 bars and the line "The Fame of our State" has a melody that follows 6 bars for 3 words.

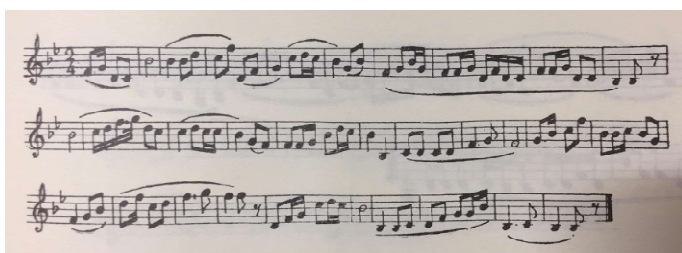


Figure 1. A collection of Mongolian songs, 1935

When doing this it has 10, 9, 6, and 6 bars. When going from many bars to few bars using a 4/2 time signature does not work (in order to

find the beat) whereas a 4/4 time signature works perfectly. When using the 4/2 signature there is a beat on a quiet do note. Thus 4/4 seems to be the correct time signature. When using a 4/4 signature the missing bar is added to the 9 bars. As sung by vocalists A. Zagdsuren, A. Buted, Sh. Davaakhuu and Ts. Uyench using a 4/2 signature they just come in. There was this disparity in beats. At that time the composer was not a music composer who knew musical notation, they must not have known how to use musical notation. If this person knew musical notation this person would not have composed such a song. They would rather write a song like "The Fields of My Countryside Are Full of Livestock". Because this person did not know musical notation, luckily a song such as this was written. If this person had known musical notation he/she would have written a piece forcefully restricted and dictated by the European system. Composers such as Gonchigsumlai, who had gained knowledge on musical notation, wrote European style songs because of this. Because the five note scale already originates from Mongolian words, language and everyday culture it is dictated by the five note scale. People who sing long songs have no knowledge of the European seven note major and minor scale and harmonies. Because they are long song singers their specialities can be seen here. D. Oyuntsetseg has said that "Long song is a type of poetry which is sung." In long song, even when a short word is sung, it is elongated and sung as a wordless vocal melody. This can be seen here. The words "Zee KhöSoyol" are sung in this elongated melodic manner. One word is sung and then it keeps continuing through vocalization. Then in other parts the lyrics "Sod mergenhuvisgal mini tsogjavkhlangtuguldur" (The wise revolution of ours has magnificent brilliance) is sung like a song with regular measures and these parts seem to have been added forcefully. Music and western artforms must all conform to a regular structure thus their songs seem akin to conversations which follow a four beat signature and have evenly distributed words. On the matter if Dorjdagva was restricted by the lyrics, he was indeed, but the more free flowing mindset of long song can also be observed. In some sections the lyrics are abandoned for wordless vocalization. In some sections having lyrics be sung in very few measures shows the manner of long song.

Navaan-Yunden did not invent the words "Zee Khö". Long song singers learn the words "Zee Khö" through instinct, by heart or by practice and thus the "Zee" was added to this song. If a long song singer were to compose a song this is the kind of song they would compose. "Zee Khö" was added to something which does not exist. If the lyrics "Zee Khö" were not there the song would start with "SoyolErdene". Perhaps the "Zee Khö" was added because it catches the audience's attention or perhaps it was to allow the singer to clear their throat, find their tune and prepare their breath. There are instances where Dorjdagva's song is mistaken for Dugarjav's song "Bayan Mongol" (Rich Mongolia). The style of long song and free thinking showcase the pitch changing of folk short songs. People of that time were close to their cultural heritage and roots. Now we have become far removed. We are trying to become closer to our Mongolian way of life in an abstract way. For these singers and composers of the past in their original state they easily slip into the forms of long song thus I conclude that the influence of long song is apparent. A melody which comes from the depths of the soul is one that could only come from said person and this composer can be considered a very outstanding musical composer with great experience with long song.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The song "SoyolErdene" has been sung continuously for 88 years. The "SoyolErdene" song by Navaan-Yunden and Dorjdagva is an important piece of work and archival material in the pursuit of learning how to sing Mongolian long songs and folk songs, to recover and clarify the melodies of these songs and to preserve what the composers wished to convey by paying attention to its poetic form. I posit that it is required to further study how this song is being sung in different ways across different singing styles and musical genres. The most important thing to further develop the study of the lyrics of long and folk songs is musicology and musical criticism.

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