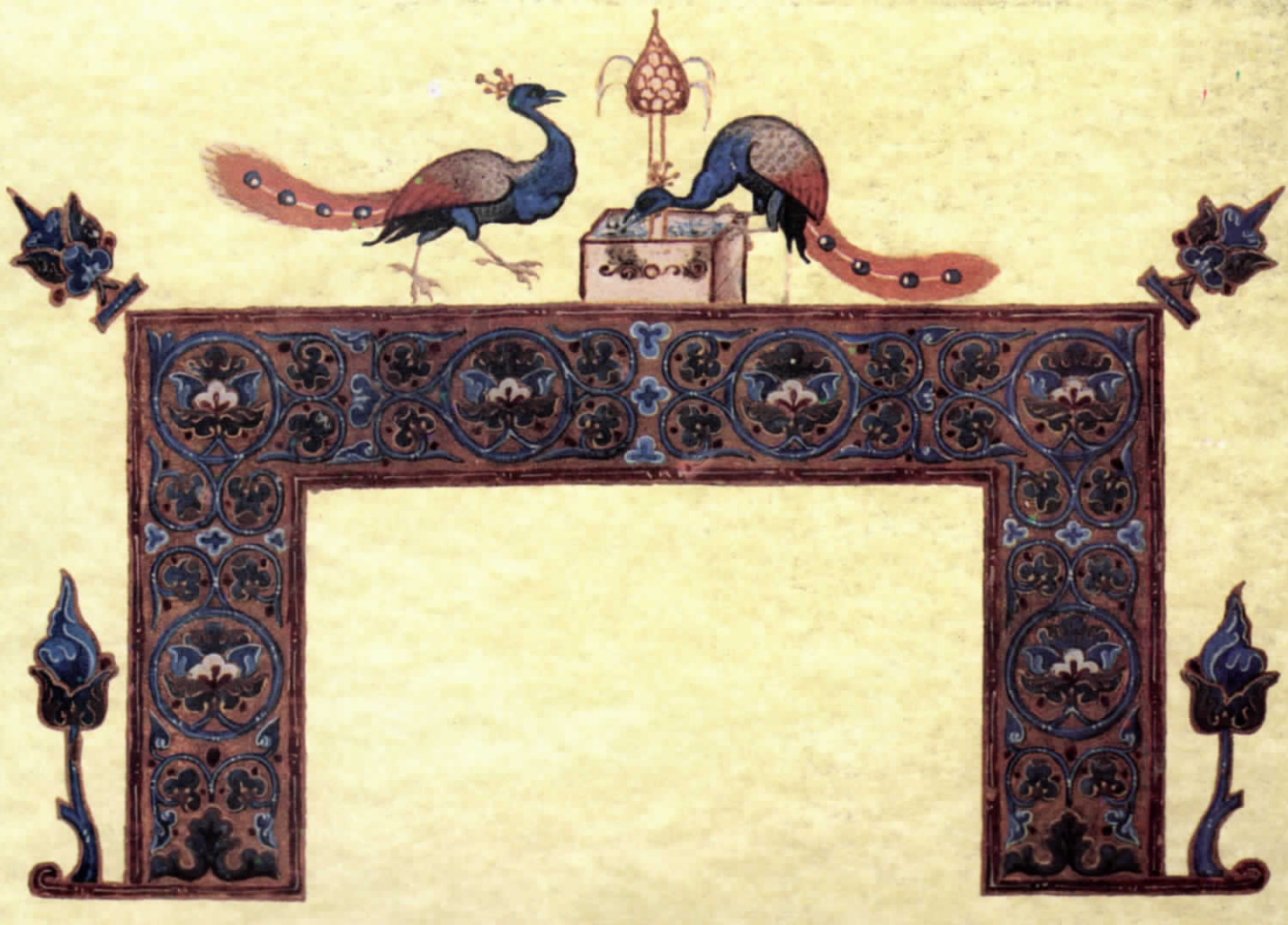


MUSIC AND DANCE IN SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE

MYTH
RITUAL
POST-1989
AUDIOVISUAL
ETHNOGRAPHIES

Fifth Symposium of the ICTM Study Group
on Music and Dance in Southeastern Europe 2016
South-West University "Neofit Rilski", Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria

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Abdullah Akat
(Trabzon, Turkey)

CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTIONS IN CRIMEAN TATAR MUSIC AFTER RETURNING TO THE HOMELAND

Crimea is a region located to the north of the Black Sea, which is extremely important with respect to its social, economic and geopolitical perspectives, and the Crimean Tatars are one of the societies of this region. However, they currently live in their homeland as a minority and they have been forced to migrate from one place to another for almost 250 years. The music of the Crimean Tatars has risen and grown in popularity in parallel with changes within the Crimea, one of the living geographies that have experienced changes since the collapse of the Soviet regime. Furthermore, while the Crimean Tatar people started to be more acquainted with popular culture and its products with each passing day; the traditional music of the Crimean Tatars was moved into a new order and economic model. The aim of this paper is to explain the musical differences in the process of change in Crimean Tatar music after they returned to the homeland and to define the effects of the cross-cultural interactions on people, places and media. It includes the interactive elements carried from the global market to the local market in the popularization process which began at the end of the 20th century and still continues today.

Keywords: Crimea; Tatars; change; intercultural music.

Introduction

Crimea, being a location which several different nations desired to dominate for its geopolitical significance, has witnessed so many conflicts and wars throughout history. Notwithstanding, Crimean Tatars were the dominators of the region for hundreds of years and considered this place as their homeland. When the Russians seized the Tatar state authority in Crimea in 1783, a forced migration was initiated for the Crimean Tatars and this condition has continued until today. Such that, during a period of time, there was not a single Crimean Tatar living in Crimea. Scattered to every corner of the world, the Crimean Tatars tried to keep their cultures alive under the pressure of different dominant cultures; they interacted with such cultures sometimes in a peaceful manner and sometimes experienced a hostile attitude. Being one of the subjects of study in which ethnomusicologists have recently become interested, they have obtained implications and have made contributions to, the intercultural interaction is discussed in this study within the frame of music over both Crimea which is the homeland of Crimean people and other regions where they have migrated to. With the disintegration process of the Soviet regime, the Tatars had the opportunity to regain their real homeland and by 1988 had begun to return to Crimea. This study primarily focuses on the period after this date. Additionally, it includes the interaction elements of the popularization process which began at the end of the 20th century and still continues today and was carried from the global market to the local.

Examining the Crimean Tatar music within the frame of intercultural interaction of a really long and complicated historical, political and economic process is very important as this has not been done before. The researchers like Edward Allworth, Alan Fisher, Edward J. Lazzerini, Mubeyyin Batu Altan and Hakan Kirimli enable us to see the processes before and after 1989 from different dimensions. However, in this period, unfortunately there was no literature generated on research related to music. Rather, there are some notes published and some information in the folklore compilations created at the

beginning of the 20th century. The earliest compilation notes published are known as "Kırım Türklerinin Yırları" [Songs of Crimean Turks] by A. Olesnitski in 1910. Asan Rifatov, Yahya Serfedinov, Ilyas Bahsis, Edem Nalbandov and Fevzi Aliyev published their songs compiled during several different time periods. Mustecip Ulkusal and Emin Bektore, who perform their arts in Romania and are also active in Turkey, have made a great contribution to the field of folklore. The earliest musical records known to belong to Crimean Tatars have been taken from prison camps in Prussia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire during the in 1915–1918 and now are preserved in the Berlin and Vienna Phonograph Archives. The first publication recorded in the records in Vienna was made by Robert Lach. Currently, the author is continuing his studies on the historical records in Berlin. Related to the same period, Zsuzsa Kakuk has made a book about folksongs, which were compiled by Ignac Kunos, in Budapest. While Zekeriya Basarslan, Selma Agat and Yalkin Bektore have made the studies which bring light to Crimean music in Turkey, Dilaver Osmanov and Cemil Karikov published a compilation study titled "Kırım'ın Çöl Yırları" [Desert Songs of Crimea] in 2005 in Crimea. All these studies mentioned their aim as to compile, explain, transfer and make Crimean Tatar music widespread. As an ethnomusicological study, the Crimean Tatar music has been examined for the first time under the title of "Diaspora, Kimlik ve Müzik" [Diaspora, Identity and Music] by Ilhan Ersoy in 2010 within the axis of *Tepreş* ritual of Crimean Tatars in Turkey.

It might seem to be a logical step, at the first glance, to head towards a field study on a subject which cannot be fed sufficiently by the literature. However, it will not be possible if the study field is a place where active conflicts can occur. Therefore, e-fieldwork application is utilized in this study: interviews have been made with Tatars in Crimea over the Internet; the Crimean Tatar radio and television channels which make online web broadcasting have been followed closely; and the video flows on social media platforms of Crimean Tatar non-governmental organizations have been watched via subscription. Additionally, the Crimean Tatars who live in Eskişehir, Turkey have been contacted, interviewed in the field and their ideas and opinions have been utilized during the entire study.

Migration of Crimean Tatars

Crimea is a peninsula located on the north of the Black Sea. Even though there are some arguments claiming that the Turkic peoples started to live in Crimea by the 8th century, the Crimean Tatars dominated the region in 13th century. The Golden Horde Empire and the Crimean Khanate established afterwards managed to sustain their existence until the 18th century. Even though it fell under the auspices of the Ottoman Empire by the 15th century, the Khanate conducted its official relations with its neighbors in the north independently for a while [Fisher 2009:29–30]. With the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca signed between Ottoman Empire and Russia in 1774, the Crimean Khanate was no longer under the auspices of the Ottoman Empire and was annexed entirely to Russia in 1783. The Crimean Tatars, who comprised 92% of the population at that time, were forced to migrate after this date.

The migrations continued to Romania, Bulgaria which were under the reign of the Ottoman Empire and then to Turkey. After this date, "the biggest migration waves occurred in the years; 1792, 1860–63, 1874–75, 1891–92 [...] According to the census of 1897, the Turkish population decreased to 53%" [Karadavut 2013:7].

During the Second World War, Crimean people fell under the domination of the Germans. However, after the war the Russians gained control of the region and with the order of Joseph Stalin, they expelled the Crimean Tatars to the Middle Asia and also to

Uzbekistan and Siberia in 18th May 1944. Removing the Tatars; the local people of Crimea from the region during the 19th and 20th centuries, the Russians seized and exiled the majority of the population in 1944.

During their exile period in Middle Asia, the Crimean Tatars experienced several different threats. The financial problems, integration into a different society and assimilation caused their various traditions and language to weaken and even to disappear. The world public opinion was not aware of this exile until 1956. Then, while the Russians were explaining their own exiles, in 1957 they gave the right to return to the other nations who were exiled however they excluded the Crimean Tatars from this right [Reddaway 1998:226]. On the other hand, Crimea was united with the Ukraine Soviet Socialist Republic in 1954 on the account of the 300th anniversary of Russian-Ukrainian brotherhood.

'Return to Homeland' Period

Despite delivering their demands to the Soviet Unions in a systematic and organized way since the 1960s, the Crimean Tatars always got negative responses to their demands and witnessed violence most of the time. They tried to settle in Crimea for the first time at the end of the 1970s. Even though they had to go back after meeting with several obstacles, 5400 Crimean Tatars managed to settle in Crimea in 1979 [Wilson 1998:282]. As a result of the democratic actions sustained under the leadership of Mustafa Cemiloglu, the world finally became aware of the Crimean issue in 1987 and then the Soviet Union allowed them to return to Crimea. However, since there was no attempt under the order of the state, the population of the Tatars in Crimea was only 17500 in the spring of 1988. A Crimean Tatar National Movement Organization was established in Tashkent in 1989 and the return was turned into a battle. "38000 people in 1989, 83000 people in May 1990, 100000 people in June 1991, 132000 people in July 1991, 142200 people in August 1991, 250000 people in May 1993, 257000 people in September 1993 and 260000 people in 1994" [Wilson 1998:282] returned to Crimea. Today, this number is nearly 270000.

Tatar Music in Crimea between 1989 and 2014

The Crimean Tatars who returned to their homelands first of all tried to deal with the attacks by the Russians and struggled for their lives against such threats. The destroyed houses were rebuilt and the empty areas were filled again. Then they tried to understand the homeland because people tend to dream that they would find the same structure when they returned however these people found different structures re-shaped by different societies. Such cases would generally result in traumatic outcomes. Therefore, it took some time for those people who returned to their homelands to get used to the new order. For instance, their houses of worship were replaced by houses of worship belonging to a different religion, their schools were replaced by the schools of different nations, the architecture, the roads and the villages were completely changed. Hence, on the one hand the music – as a part of this change – was bound to take a different form. Moreover, the people who returned from exile had established a bond between their music and the cultures which they were integrated into in different geographical areas.

On the other hand, when the Autonomous Republic of Crimea was established in 1991, the Crimean Tatars wanted to determine their own fate. Hence, the National Organization gathered again, determined new political targets and the notions of 'Crimean' and 'homeland' were re-defined. Studies were initiated to revive all the traditions that had been forgotten or were sinking into oblivion, institutions were established that contributed to the society in educational and cultural manners.

As for the music, the recovery time was very fast and very exciting since the members of "Kaytarma Ensemble"[1] also returned to Crimea. In addition to this community continuing their performances within the borders of Crimea, several popular Tatar musicians and players set up different communities and began to perform. These included the ensembles like Kırım, Uçansuv, Horan, Teselli and Fidanlar. Arousing excitement among the people with their stage performances that displayed Crimean songs and dance figures, it was tried to support these ensembles under the conditions of that time. After a long time, in addition to the classical, folkloric and modern compositions, the compositions by Crimean Tatars like Y. Serfedinov, I. Bahsis, E. Nalbandov, and F. Aliyev were also included in the repertoire of the Crimean Symphony Orchestra. Furthermore, the stages and organizational structures where Tatar music and dramas and even theatre plays could be performed continued to be established.

The relationships between the Crimean Tatars who settled in Turkey, Romania and Bulgaria after the first migration wave and those who were able to return to their homelands began to gain momentum in the 1990s and collaborations and bi-directional traffic were created in cultural-artistic senses. This revealed the scope of the changes in Crimean Tatar music and enabled the music related communities to experience this. Therefore, there was established a basis for the notion; *kolorit* [coloring in music] which was expressed by the musicians in Crimea later on. Making detailed observations on this issue, İlhan Ersoy commented:

> The Tatars use the *kolorit* both while emphasizing the distinctness of Tatar music from other tunes and while emphasizing differences of the other music from each other. Although this concept essentially seems like it is based on difference, in fact, it also emphasizes integrity of differentiating ones in themselves. From this perspective, it gathers different music forms than others in a common ground and serves for gathering them. For example, while distinguishing Tatar music from others, the *kolorit* positions Tatar music among others by combining both musical and performance components. When it is considered from this aspect, the *kolorit* comes up at the time of contact with the other or comparison/analogy. Therefore, the concept of *kolorit* takes place commonly as a sense of belonging/identification in the Crimean Tatar musical environment in Crimea [Ersoy 2008:79].

Because of the broadness of the area where the Crimean Tatars expanded throughout history and the length of the time period of the migration, it is very natural for these people to interact with different cultures. Even though the migrating communities were making an effort to preserve their national identities and traditions, it is almost impossible to resist changes and not be influenced by the environmental factors. Therefore, it is very obvious that music was also under this influence, which brought about the differentiation among them. Currently, there are some expressions like Tatar *kolorit*, Uzbek *kolorit*, Turkish *kolorit*, Romanian *kolorit*, Bulgarian *kolorit*, Russian *kolorit* and Ukrainian *kolorit*; and the intercultural interaction is in a way highlighted.

In Crimea, which was the place experiencing a change after the destruction of the Soviet regime, it was expected that Tatar music would start to rise in every sense. Then, the music and other stage performances were displayed not only in official organizations, performance stages or special entertainment environments but also on radio and television. Moreover, an intense amount of effort was spent to make music a part of the social life and demographic structure which was shared in different communities in the homeland. Consequently, Crimean Tatars had found their places in representative

authorities in both the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and in the Ukrainian parliament until 2014; and the people kept living in peace.

The peace environment created moved Crimean Tatars into the Movement of Convergence into the West experienced primarily in Ukraine. This case caused the global economy to enter into the region, the culture of consumption increased and the popular musical elements to be more appreciated every passing day. In the 2000s, the life styles and interests of Crimean Tatars began to change and their traditional music was transferred into a new order and economic model.

On one hand, there were the names that came to the forefront in the arts of music (such as composition, vocalizing and instrumentalism) like Zarema Almazova, Dilaver Osmanov, Server Kakura, Rustem Memet, Gulizar Bekirova, Edip Asanov, Edibe Ablay, Afize Kasara, Cemil Karikov, Asiye Sale, Susanna Memet, and Arsen Bekirov; on the other hand names such as Enver Izmailov, Elzara Batalova, Elnara Kucuk, Sevil Memetova, Adoni, Jamala, and Aysel Balic were the ones who experienced this change.

During this period, the performance venues changed significantly. The stage and spatial perception shifted due to the development of product technologies such as the sound, light, decor on stage and taking as an example the mass media injected into this type of music. The differences of solo singers on stage, that they are eager to be 'stars' in this generation, are evident from sounds to dances, from costumes to stage stances and forms of behavior.

The language used in the popular music of the Crimean Tatar is substantially the Tatar language. But Jamala, Aysel Balic, and in particular Sevil Memetova perform their works in foreign languages and this situation is frequently encountered. The stage performances in which Sevil Memetova covered the songs of Whitney Houston and Beyonce are quite interesting especially among young people, and these artists were listened to not only by the Crimean Tatars but also throughout Ukraine. The English-language song "Smile" was sung by Jamala in the national competition to represent Ukraine in the 2011 Eurovision contest. There are too many names in the popular music market. The Belbek Group have been seen in popular music competitions in Ukraine; Adoni, who has a rap infrastructure but currently produced in pop music; Asan Hayretdinov; and Esref Ablayev making the electronic music and mixes and by the name of Eshnight are some of those.

To sum up, the examples which were carrying the discourse of nationalism, yet based on the synthesis of popular and traditional music were created. And then, a young mass who were listening to mainly pop, rap, rock, Latin and jazz music emerged. In the direction of the consumption habits and demands of this mass, Crimean Tatar music is still experiencing the change.

From 2014 till Today: Jamala; the Eurovision Winner

According to the 2013 census in Crimea, the population is nearly 2 million. 58% of the population is Russian; 24% is Ukraine, 12% is Crimean Tatars and the rest is minorities such as Belarussians, Armenians, Jews, Urums, Karaites, Kyrmchaks, Germans, Ahiska Turks etc. Since 2014, Crimea had a conflictual status between Ukraine and Russia; according to Ukraine it is an autonomous republic connected to itself, according to Russia, it is a region which belongs to it.

Against Viktor Yanukovic, the Ukrainian President who follows pro-Russian policies, the people organized protests for months in Kiev. Consequently, Yanukovic escaped to Russia and a pro-Western government started to take the lead. Russia considered this case as an attempted coup and did not recognize the new government. With the convenience of having a population majority, it took the initiative for the pro-

Russian protests in Sevastopol on 23rd February 2014. Right after that, pro-Russian militias were seen in several cities of the region and the strategic points were seized. Even though they came face to face with especially Crimean Tatars within a short period of time, they utilized their position and seized parliament and left the Ukrainian military power helpless in Crimea. On the date of 16th March 2014, as a result of a referendum, the Russian federation officially annexed Crimea.

This attitude by Russia was condemned by NATO, European Union, Turkey, USA and United Kingdom and it was defined as an 'invasion'. Some sanctions against Russia were put into force. In spite of this, Russia adopted harsher attitudes and started new attempts to discourage all the ethnic elements which might be a threat for itself in Crimea. Accordingly, the Crimean Tatar National Council was shut down, the administers were prohibited from entering/exiting Crimea, illegal and arbitrary searches were made in the houses, several Crimean Tatar young people who resisted were attacked physically, the rights to education of Tatars were violated. The publications and broadcasting of the Crimean Press Agency, the radio and television channels (Meydan, ATR) and printed media organs were stopped. Currently, the Crimean Tatars sustain their struggles within Ukraine and try to make their voices heard via several methods. One of these methods is music, which may be the most efficient way and which gathers most support.

The activities related to Crimean Tatar music which nearly came to an end in Crimea after 2014 can only be sustained in Ukraine or in the countries where the Crimean Tatar diaspora lives. In 2011, Jamala who joined in Eurovision Ukraine elections was dropped out of the competition and even she withdrew from the competition thinking that this was not fair and she got a raw deal. This time, she has won the right to represent in 2016 with the supports by people, political authority and public for her Crimean Tatar/English song which is named "1944" and is about the exile of Crimean Tatars. The Russian opposition which gathers people of Ukraine and Crimean Tatars on the same ground has become a way to make the entire world hear about the tragedy which Crimean Tatars have suffered. The Eurovision Song Contest was a golden opportunity for this. Considering the fact that Russia has won the advantage of the population majority since 1944, it is just like an obvious cross reference to the 'reunification to Russia referendum' which was protested against by Crimean Tatars and majority of Ukraine people and which they did not participate in. Indeed, the support to Jamala kept snowballing. Very successful introductions have been made within the Western states which apply sanctions because of the conflicts in Russia and especially among the Crimean Tatar diaspora. And for me, what is expected has become real. A Crimean Tatar who has participated on behalf of Ukraine has been the champion of Eurovision Song Contest 2016 with her song about 1944 exile. The entire world hears and people get awaken.

Looking at the stage performance by Jamala, it can be said that she sings a very well-composed song and uses the costume, make-up, lights and visions very successfully. Also, it can be seen that the song is a very obvious reflection of the production of synthesized popular and traditional Crimean Tatar music in the 2000s. But above all, it has been a very significant indication which proves that both the fate and music of Crimean Tatars continue to be shaped under the shadow of political issues.

Conclusion

Crimean Tatars, the majority of the population of which is living in different countries of the world, have a nearly 250 year diaspora. And those who could survive despite the forced migration were exiled in 1944. This fact creates two different diasporic structures which interestingly were not, or in fact could not be, aware of each other. On one hand, those who live in Turkey, Romania and Bulgaria could establish bonds and

even the Diasporas in Europe and America are comprised of the migration from these countries; on the other hand, there is a Crimean Tatar population which is trapped into their own. Those in diaspora were only able to learn about their exile in 1956, 12 years after the incident. As the individuals of the social structure in which they lived during this period of time, Crimean Tatars interacted with different dominant culture, which partially reflected on musical characteristics. Therefore, the statements like Uzbek *kolorit*, Turkish *kolorit* and Russian *kolorit* began to be used within musical environments.

Kolorit, in a way, can be considered as a state of different cultures which gather together in Crimean Tatar music. However, it is necessary to consider the influence of popular culture and music production which is promoted by the global market. While the Crimean Tatars in the diaspora act with the instinct of protecting their traditional music, those who live in Crimea go into the effort of combining tradition with popular musical elements because of the changing social status, relations and living conditions in Ukraine. Even they manage to be influential not only in Crimea but also in the entire Ukraine and increase the musical audience of Crimean Tatar music. While doing this, however, they place the notes, rhythms, structures and instruments belonging to different cultures which are popular in the global market into the Crimean Tatar music.

After the incident occurred in Crimea in 2014, the production of Crimean Tatar music becomes really difficult and since the broadcastings of Crimean Tatar radio and televisions have been stopped and accordingly the connection between the musician and the audience is severed. With the Internet having a significant intermediary role in this sense, online broadcastings are frequently interrupted. Crimean Tatar music sustains its existence only with the musical productions which are tried to be sustained in Ukraine and in the countries where the diaspora lives. Continuing her musical studies in Ukraine, Jamala has been the voice of Crimean Tatars and gets support from Ukraine with her reference to recent political incidents. Her championship in Eurovision Song Contest on behalf of Ukraine shows us that she has reached her goal.

Endnote

1. The Kaytarma Ensemble was established in 1956. As the only Tatar music community, Kaytarma Ensemble has a large staff consisting of around 40 artists which operated within the borders of the Soviet Union until 1985. The performances of the ensemble that were to some extent permitted in the neighboring settlements is very important for the maintenance of national music and folk dances. Fevzi Bilal was the head of Kaytarma Ensemble. Ilyas Bahsiş had undertaken operations such as editing all programs of the ensemble, preparing their musical parts, creating new patterns of *yır* genre and writing the music of new spectacles played in the ensemble programs from 1957 to 1972. Sabriye Erecepova gained a great reputation with her beautiful voice and being a skillful commentator of Crimean *yirs* were also included in this cadre. Crimean folk dances were revealed by Akim Cemil and choreographer Remziye Bakkal. Also Selime Celebi was one of the prominent dancers. Cemile Osman took over the flag and she and Munir Albay were the dancers of Kaytarma Ensemble. In this period, the great composers continued to show a lot of activities in Uzbekistan.

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