

**Analysis of Kyrgyz music from the point of view of semiotics**  
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**Анализ кыргызской музыки с точки зрения семиотики**  
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**Abstract:** *the paper analyses the Kyrgyz music from the semiotic perspective. Kyrgyz songs are characterized by their complex linguistic and semiotic system which includes verbal and non-verbal signs. Verbal signs include various stylistic devices such as alliteration, assonance, metaphor, anaphors, syntactic parallel constructions, etc. Non-verbal signs include paralinguistic, symbolic and prosodic signals.*

**Аннотация:** *статья посвящена анализу кыргызской музыки с семиотической точки зрения. Кыргызские песни характеризуются сложной лингво-семиотической системой, которая включает в себя вербальные (стилистические приемы, такие как аллитерация, рифма, метафора, анафора, синтаксические параллельные конструкции и т.д.) и невербальные знаки (паралингвистические, символические и звуковые сигналы).*

**Keywords:** *semiotics, verbal and non-verbal signs, participants, musical love discourse, national and traditional values, specific images, lifestyle, world perception.*

**Ключевые слова:** *вербальные и невербальные знаки, стилистические приемы синтаксические параллельные конструкции, паралингвистические сигналы, символические сигналы, звуковые сигналы).*

Musical semiotics is quickly establishing itself in the 21st century as an independent discipline, along with historical musicology. The growing importance of this field of investigation concerning itself both with theory and analysis can be explained in the light of different developments. The changing of our musical understanding plays an important role. Since music became a product of technical reproduction, pieces of different historical periods are more readily accessible to us as listeners, and the musical experience of the past is continuously being recreated by new interpretations, which update the "meaning" of individual works and musical styles.

One can't but mention the Finnish musicologist, Eero Tarasti (Tarasti 2002: v), whose contribution to musical semiotics is vivid and great. He was the first to give the definition of musical semiotics in the preface to the book *Signs of Music: A Guide to Musical Semiotics*. The book contains a commented history of musical semiotics, an overview of new topics and areas of semiotic research being carried out by Tarasti himself and other authors, as well as some practical applications. By reading this book, one follows the process of emergence, development and diversification of a new discourse about music as a sign and as a communicative practice. The book consists of three parts. In the three chapters of the first part – "Music as a Sign" – Tarasti presents the foundations and perspectives of musical semiotics. It begins with two important references, the linguistics of the Swiss Ferdinand de Saussure (1857 - 1913) and the philosophy of the American Charles S. Peirce (1839-1914). Saussure developed a theory of language as a sign system whereby signs are to be understood as the relationship between signifier (sound) and signified (sense). In the phenomenology of Peirce, the sign is designated as a *representamen* which stands in relation to both an *object* and an *interpretant*. According to Peirce, signs can represent everything that we perceive and imagine. Linguistics and structuralism shaped by the linguistics and semiotics of Peirce dominated the first steps of the research on music and signs in Europe and North America, which are commented upon in the first chapter. Lithuanian linguist A. J. Greimas (1917 - 1992) at the beginning strongly influenced Tarasti's musical semiotics. An interesting part of this chapter concerns the question of the understanding / misunderstanding of musical signs. Tarasti postulates fourteen theses about processes of musical understanding in order to clarify the manifest relation between music and sign. In the second chapter, Tarasti analyzes the development of music from the Renaissance to contemporary music from a semiotic perspective. The music of the Classical and Romantic eras receives special attention here, as is also the case in Tarasti's *Theory of Musical Semiotics*. Most examples come from the music of Beethoven, Wagner, Chopin, Mahler, Scriabin, Schumann, Berlioz, and other Romantic composers – and of course, also from the works of Sibelius, the most well-known Finnish composer. Tarasti also shows how semiotic approaches are to be found in the thinking of traditional music scholars like the Austrian Heinrich Schenker (1868 - 1935), the Swiss Ernst Kurth (1886 - 1946), the German Hugo Riemann (1849 - 1919) and the Russian Boris V. Asafiev (1884 - 1948) [1, p. 28]. He outlines the connections between historical musicology and semiotics and shows clearly how and why the question of musical meaning became so important. Finally, the chapter presents an historical overview of the current tendencies and issues of musical semiotics in the world, including references to authors and recent publications. After presenting the main lines and perspectives of the research

field musical semiotics in the first part of *Signs of Music*, Eero Tarasti elaborates on some topics of his own semiotic thinking in the second and third parts. In the second part, he raises and analyses some aesthetic questions from a semiotic point of view. The semiotic investigations move through a subtle network of conceptions and references to classic authors of musicology, philosophers or artists. Tarasti is convincing not only through the connections he makes between different approaches and scientific domains, but also through the commented examples from the music of Beethoven, Sibelius, Chopin, Strauss, Wagner, Mozart, Webern, Stravinsky, etc. But musical semiotics does not deal exclusively with aesthetic subjects and analysis of works from the past. The third part of the book treats aspects of musical and social practice. An entire chapter is dedicated to the voice, dealing with subjects including the meaning of the individual voice as a sign of existence, the function of orality in music, singing as social and national identity, and the voice in relationship to genre and education [1, p. 45].

As it was mentioned semiotics of music in general, and semiotics of Kyrgyz music in particular, is very topical today. Kyrgyz songs are characterized by their complicated linguo-semiotic system that includes verbal and non-verbal signs.

Verbal signs include various stylistic devices such as alliteration, assonance, metaphor, anaphors, syntactic parallel constructions, etc.

Non-verbal signs include paralinguistic, symbolic, toponymy, color and audio signs, etc. Paralinguistic signs include mimes, gestures. They can be divided into phatic, appealing, signs for attracting audience's attention, greeting, warm-up setting, thanking, hit-set, roll-call/ singing along, saying goodbye, etc. Toponymic signals include names of clubs, stadiums or any other places where concerts take place: Philharmony named after Satylganov, Sports Palace named after Kojomkul, Ala Too Club, etc. Color signals include various floodlight projectors, footlights, different colors that also some semiotic meaning depending on the songs. As for symbolic signs, they may include national clothes, dress-up, threads, togs, trags, rags, thugs. If it is a popular modern song representing teenagers' lifestyle, then there may be jeans jacket, jeans, T-shirt, sneakers, leather bicker jacket, waistcoat, pants, mittens, loose long hair or tail.

Kyrgyz love songs are characterized by their complicated linguo-semiotic system which includes verbal and non-verbal signs. Verbal signals include various stylistic devices such as alliteration, assonance, metaphor, anaphors, syntactic parallel constructions, etc. Non-verbal signs include paralinguistic, symbolic, toponymy, color and audio signs, etc.

Kyrgyz love songs can be presented in two ways: face-to-face and distant ways. The major participants of musical love discourse are the listener, the performer and the author of the song. The aim of Kyrgyz love songs is to make an influence on the listener, to transfer the author's intention to the listener which demands choosing linguo-semiotic means of discourse. Author's intentions, in its turn, are aimed at establishing love atmosphere, showing feeling, sufferings of the beloved through his songs mostly indirectly, implied, since Kyrgyz culture is a closed one. According to Kyrgyz national traditions it is not decent to say about your love or feelings directly. Kyrgyz songs reflect national and traditional values through specific images, lifestyle and originality of world perception.

Below there is a Kyrgyz national love song and it's semiotic analysis. I will not provide non-verbal signals of the song that are constituents of linguo-semiotic system. The focus will be made on verbal signs in the song.

<b>Кызыл өрүк</b>	<b>Red Apricot</b>
Жазда келгем айлына кызыл өрүк,	<b>In spring I came to your village, red apricot,</b>
Түштү көөнүм көркүнө сени көрүп,	<b>And I fell in love when I saw your beauty.</b>
Күндө отуруп түбүндө искейм жытын,	Every day I sit in your shade and smell your scent,
Карай берем кайталап көңүл болуп	Admiring I look at your time and again.
Ого бетер буруксуп мени тиктеп,	You look back at me with even more sweetness
Болгонсудун өмүргө өзүн шерик.	And I feel you are my life's companion.
Күндөгүдөй күлүндөп мени кара,	Look at me with a smile as you do everyday,
Коштошууга кол берип келдим сага,	I've come to shake hands and say farewell to you.

Атыр жытын жыттайын аябачы,	I want to smell your fragrance, don't hold back,
Белек болсун өзүндөн ошол мага.	It will be as a gift to me from you.
Неге мынча бук болом кымыккансып,	Why do I yearn for you so very much?
Бсыйт денем алоолойт улам жана.	Flushing, I feel my body blazes more and more.
Бажырайсын ачылып гүлүн жайнап,	You flourish brightly full of flowers,
Угуп турчу ырдайын мен да сайрап,	I want to sing for you too: listen to me.
Калды ичимде кумарым - канбай сенден,	<b>My passion for you stayed in me, unfulfilled,</b>
Женди абийрим, тартындым белим байлап,	<b>My conscience won, I felt shy, suffering pain.</b>
Болоор эле бир жөнү эгер мурда,	There would be reason to stay if I myself
Мөмөлөрүн бышырсам өзум айда.	Planted you and ripened your fruit.
Кызыл өрүк кош болгун, кошкун эми,	Farewell, red apricot, I say goodbye to you,
Күбө болсун жүрөккө жаздын жели,	<b>Let the spring breeze be a witness of my heart.</b>

[2, p. 66].

This is an old Kyrgyz love song. The literal, denotative meaning of the word *red apricot* is the fruit of the apricot tree, anywhere from yellow to dark red in color, and it has seeds and a sweet taste. The literal meaning of a word, its denotation, can usually be defined in simple, clear language and can be understood right away.

It is a song about the days, the years the boy spent when he was young. Several years later when he grew up, he came back to his village. And the first thing he does is to see and meet red apricot that is still there. *"In spring I came to your village, red apricot, and I fell in love when I saw your beauty"*. A red apricot in a poem is never merely a red apricot, but implies a lot of different things. The apricot itself could symbolize the Tree of Youth, it could symbolize strong health and a positive energy, beauty-perhaps a combination of these things. In this way an author uses red apricot word to express a variety of ideas at one time, and so deepens our experience.

The author of the song uses metonymy *red apricot* which resembles probably his beloved on the one hand and his motherland on the other hand. In order to show that atmosphere, his feelings, his pure love, his nostalgia to his motherland, the happiest days of his childhood, the author of the song used a number of stylistic devices such as metonymy, metaphor, epithet, simile, personification, etc. The use of metaphors, epithets, personification makes the song pretty colorful. The song is rich in alliteration "б", "к", "ж", assonance "ө", "ү", "е", etc. that have some semiotic meaning.

Weather depiction also contributes to the semiotics in the literary analysis. There are universal symbols in weather depiction, like winter and snow depicting pureness and coldness at the same time; summer and heat depicting freedom and love adventures; autumn and rain depicting the end of love and nostalgia; spring and first flowers depicting romantic relations, new life, new feelings, new love, etc. In this particular song the author depicts the season when he fell in love. It is spring: *In spring I came to your village, red apricot,*

*Let the spring breeze be a witness of my heart.*

One more symbol used in the song is color symbolism. Colors can be interpreted as a signal, sign or symbol. For centuries, people from all over the world have used color to symbolize some beliefs or events. Interpretation of color can be subjective, individual, or common to particular social groups, cultural and historical regions. The symbolism of color in different cultures tends to have the common identification of color names through cultural exchange. The uses and meanings of color have never been totally consistent across cultural boundaries. Colors can carry different symbolic meanings: yellow, in northern Europe connotes "deceit" and "cowardice," while in China is the imperial color; in Buddhist tradition, yellow stands for "humility" and "renunciation"; but in the Mayan civilization of Central America, it was associated with the West. The underlying reason for these differences is that the symbols used to portray archetypal energies are subject to the creative limitations of the human mind. At the cultural level, this process of differentiation receives further stimuli from the natural environment. Usually, the cultural elite dominate the color names over time. As for the red color that was used in this song, it is a symbol of love, passion, birth, and life, and symbolizes good luck and celebration: red roses, red apple, and red apricot.

The author of the song uses one of the key emotional concepts in the Kyrgyz picture of the world such as 'love' that brightly exhibit originality of Kyrgyz way of life and customs. Conceptual sphere is specific for a particular culture. It is expressed on emotional level and determines the national character. Conceptual sphere of Kyrgyz culture is perceived likewise in many aspects. The concept of love is perceived as the feature of well-being and happiness. "Let the spring breeze be a witness of my heart", in final lines a bit mixed "My passion for you stayed in me, unfulfilled", "My conscience won, I felt shy, suffering pain." The speaker hopes he will be nostalgic, loving and thinking of a red apricot forever. Love is appreciated and preserved.

Outstanding Kyrgyz writers and poets like Chingiz Aytmatov, Alikul Osmonov, Oskon Danikeev, Sydyk Karachev and others wrote a lot about love. In their works we can see different types of love for example; in Chingiz Aytmatov work «Кылым карытар бир күн» («The Day Lasts More than Hundred Days») mother's love is described, in his other work «Кызыл алма» (Red apple) one sided love is described, in Sadyk Karachev work «Эрксиз күндөр» («Erksiz күндөр») there is a description of love between two young people, who passed hard way to be together but who could not be. Alikul Osmonov devoted his verses to the motherland, to the lover, to children, etc. [3].

"Love" as love has a variety of forms by nature (love of one's country, nature, love of life, "pure", ideal type of love, passionate love with sensual desire, dispassionate virtuous love, love felt by parents for offspring, etc.). Thus, the concept of love, in this particular song, is considered as a lingua-cultural phenomenon, which reflects both the Kyrgyz national linguistic world picture of the whole nation along with an individual linguistic world picture of a particular person.

To summarize, I wanted to say that currently Kyrgyz musical semiotics is being studied. And I do believe that it's study will contribute to the study of semiotics in Kyrgyz language in particular, and in Kyrgyz culture, literature, philosophy, etc. on the whole.

#### Reference

1. *Eero Tarasti*. Signs of Music: A Guide to Musical Semiotics, 2002. 182 p.
2. *K. Kalieva*. Kyrgyz Women Poetry. Girls, You.... Bishkek, 2011. 148 p.
3. *Kyrgyz Songs*. Bishkek, 2008. 368 p.