

## Psychotherapeutic Function of the Kazakh Traditional Music

Zere S. Shakerimova<sup>a</sup>, Aizada S. Nussupova<sup>a</sup>, Maryam N. Burambaeva<sup>b</sup>,  
Zhanat R. Yermanov<sup>a</sup>, Akmaral E. Emreyeva<sup>a</sup>, and Sveta S. Janseitova<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory, Almaty, KAZAKHSTAN;

<sup>b</sup>Kazakh State Women's Pedagogical University, Almaty, KAZAKHSTAN.

### ABSTRACT

This article considers the psychotherapeutic parameters of traditional Kazakh music, best practices that were achieved in practical psychology. From the one hand, it allows us to see the music features in a new light, and from the other hand - to identify the ethnic psychology of the Kazakh nation. An important step in the study of the psychotherapeutic nature of the Kazakh traditional music was the analysis of shamans' syncretic ritual actions. We considered akyn and shaman's activities as a creative comprehension of the world, which records and reflects the reality, as well as bears creative, form-building beginning, developing and reflecting the variability of culture and the reality mediated by it. We relate to it a healing art that includes psychotechniques of hypnosis, techniques of trance, assumed by baqsy and society as an interaction with spirits. It was found out that musical relaxation had not just an emotional but an intellectual nature. In addition to aesthetic needs, ritual shamanic music ensured a sense of peace, helped to cope with pain and raised above the level of everyday life to the higher spheres.

### KEYWORDS

Psychotherapeutic method;  
national music; shamanistic ritual;  
ethnos; kui music

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## Introduction

The psychotherapeutic method of using music as a remedial measure testified about the close relationship between music and medicine. In mythology, national idea on the music's impact on people, taking music for a magic was developed over centuries. An example is the myth about Korkut, Orpheus, Amphion, who attracted the animals, birds and people with their music; singing sirens, who lured nearby sailors with their enchanting music and voices. This attests to the magical properties of musical art. A healer Asclepiad subdued the discords with the sounds of music, restored the auditory sense with the sounds of trumpets; medieval Italian music theorist Joseph Carlino wrote about Xenocrate who returned former health to insane with the sound of trumpets; Taleta of Candia cast out a plague with the sounds of cithara; the prophet David by singing and

**CORRESPONDENCE** Sveta S. Janseitova ✉ [bntb@mail.ru](mailto:bntb@mail.ru)

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playing the cithara cured the biblical king Saul from bouts of severe depression; Pythagorean Damon with his singing drew the young men, who lived wantonly, to a frugal and honest life; Achilles soothed his anger and rage singing and playing the lyre; Avicenna treated mentally ill people with the music; Hippocrates cured insomnia and epilepsy with music; and music helped Eskulap to heal emotional disorders.

The legendary musician Korkut, who lived at the turn of VIII – IX centuries on the banks of the Syr Darya river, in the capital of the Oghuz, Zhankent, was the creator of ancient kuis. His name is found in the chronicles of early middle ages of many Turkic nations (Toropova et al., 2016). Korkut wrote music based on certain melodies and rhythms that healed, as well as «purified» human actions and passions, restoring the harmony of the soul.

We find information about the psychotherapeutic functions of music in the works of ancient thinkers like Pythagoras, Plato (1971), Aristotle (1976) and Plutarch. According to Pythagoras, the art of music influenced the human psyche, promoting health: «There are certain melodies created against the passions of the soul, against discouragement, and internal ulcers. Others, in turn, influence on irritation, anger, on all mental changes» (Iamblichus). It was Pythagoras who first set forth the tradition of comparing social life with musical fret and musical instrument. The philosopher Iamblichus, in his treatise «*On the Pythagorean way of life*» tells about «education through music, certain melodies and rhythms that heals human temper and passions, and restores the harmony of the mental abilities» (Iamblichus).

According to Al-Farabi, certain tunes cure the anguish, heartache and nervous disorders. The author believed that meaningful enjoyment of music can develop intellectual ability, «a piece of music can express a spiritual and physical virtue», rhythm and harmony have «some kinship with the movements of the soul» (Al-Farabi, 1993). The ancient Chinese believed that music relieves all ailments, the treatment of which is beyond the doctors' power.

Plato (1971) claimed that the music contributing to formation of personality, development of logical abilities, creative thinking, should become the basis for the state system of education (Plato, 1971). This suggests that in antiquity people were aware of the necessity for correction of the human psyche.

Aristotle (1976) noted the ability of music to influence the emotional status of the listeners associated with the imitation to a particular nature. In the treatise «*Poetics*», the scientist, telling about the nature of musical catharsis, focuses on the affect that influences the psyche of some individuals, when the influence differs only in the degree of its intensity: «Only music can reflect mental processes and using this reflection it can bring catharsis» (Aristotel, 1992). For L.S. Vygotsky (1992), catharsis meant aesthetic reaction, through which a person is freed from the unpleasant and painful affects. «A state after catharsis is proportional to the power of tormenting affect: the more painful was the affect, the brighter its detente due to catharsis». Shamanistic music, kuis, aitys are particularly rich with catartic impact; listening to them one experiences emotional reactions that help relieve the stress, anxiety, irritability, affective states.

Plato wrote: «Musical innovation is full of danger to the state, for when modes of music change, the laws of the State always change with them» (Plato, 1971). Medieval Muslim scientific thought continued the study and classification

of ratios of frets and psychological states, music and the world (Al Farabi, 1972). Pythagoras linked musical harmony with the harmony of the world, giving a mathematical basis for musical intervalics, which is based upon a mathematical range, organizing world order (Losev, 2000). As we see, ancient philosophers, who developed musical studies, brought to the forefront the peculiarities of its influence on the mental condition of the person. Music for them was a means of balancing the internal mental and external physical aspects of life. Their ideas later formed the basis of modern music therapy. The term «music therapy» means «healing music» in Greco-Latin language. There are four aspects of therapeutic effect of musical therapy: emotional activation during verbal psychotherapy; development of interpersonal skills (communicative functions and abilities); a regulating effect on psycho-vegetative processes; increasing aesthetic needs. We define music therapy as: systematic use of music to treat physiological and psychosocial aspects of life of the ethnos; a means of rehabilitation in stress; the means of prevention, increasing the reserve capacity of the organism; a means of optimizing the creative forces; one of the newest psychological techniques, which is designed to ensure effective functioning of the person in society, his harmonisation.

Music was used during complex operations. According to the surgeon B. Petrovsky's, influenced by music, the organism started working more harmoniously. I. Tarkhanov, as a follower of B. Petrovsky, considering the healing effect of music, established a pattern: joyful melodies slow the pulse, fast melodies speed the pulse up. The psychologist and musician V. Petrushin (2012), resting upon famous ancient methods and modern scientific achievements, developed an original concept of musical and rational psychotherapy, substantiated theoretical principles, developed exercises, tasks for psychological correction of personality by means of music, the psychological formula for overcoming stressful situations.

Rushel B. (2014) system is based on the ancient experience of using healing effect of sound by Indian, Nepal and Sri Lanka healers, its influence on hormonal and biochemical changes. He is the author of books on traditional systems of healing, a unique method of music therapy, founder of the catalog of therapeutic musical works of different genres and styles, stimulating, soothing therapeutic action.

American researchers Hills, M. Argyle (2001) revealed that people singing in the choir experience an emotional state similar to believers' feelings calling the music a recognized form of treating mental ailments. The scientists Scherer and Oshinsky played 188 types of sound with a synthesizer and experimentally identified what emotions they evoked in the persons under test. Joyful sounds were found to be the sounds of high tone, pure sound, weak, ascending modulations and crisp rhythms. Minor mode was revealed to be sad, major mode – on the contrary, full of fun and joy. Psychiatrist S. Grof (2013) which legalized the connection of music therapy with psychology and psychiatry, writes about the influence of music as a psycho-physiological influence. Psychotherapist Gordon Shaw explains the influence of music on health by impact of sound vibration that causes the resonance of human organism cells. Swiss society of music therapists found that the bell sounds, containing resonance ultrasonic radiation kills typhoid bacilli, pathogens of jaundice and flu viruses in a few seconds; under certain types of music protoplasm of plant cells accelerate their movement, etc.



China, Korea, Japan, USA issue musical albums with quite unexpected titles: «Digestion», «Insomnia», «Migraine», «Liver», «Lungs», «Heart», «Concert for the kidney with orchestra»; they «take» these musical works as pills or medicinal herbs to improve their health. In India, a special center for training the physicians and musical therapists compiled musical pieces to treat hypertensive disease and some mental diseases that traditional medicine is powerless to treat.

According to A. Kircher (1673), the impact of music on the human body is explained as a physiological process. The author wrote about various connections between the temperament of the patient and his preference for certain type of music. St. Petersburg biologist S. Shnoll, who gave a speech at Tbilisi «Symposium on the Unconscious» on the musical «body organ scores», adhered to this position. E. Kurth believed that music psychology should study music as a phenomenon of «hearing» consciousness, highlighting the need to study spiritual activity caused by the music (Solanki, 2013).

Simplified sound fabric, minimalism of means, a kind of «pointlessness», quiet climax, silent pauses factor into the highest degree of sublimity and diversion from real life. At such moments, the music is closer to its original essence, being the «echo», «the tremble of reverberation», seemingly low-key means can have a strong emotional impact and be filled with the boundless expressiveness». There are musical cultures in the world, which in their position regarding the matter of sound led the other way. The strength, power and density of sound, as the characteristics of the material world, were insignificant for them. These cultures contented with the most «simple» (in comparison with the European organ, clavier, piano) instruments, «transparent» (in comparison with European polyphony and homophony) monodic constitutions, «pale» forms of two-voice texture (polyphonists' texture was complicated up to 32 voices), «light» (compared to European choirs and orchestras) solo sounds. This is the culture of Central Asian nomads. The symbol of their relation in sound matter are quiet and velvety sounds of Kazakh dombra and Kyrgyz komuz, delicate sounds of the Turkmen dutar, the strings of which emitted such an ethereal sound, that it seemed it was born and sounded in the listener's heart. These cultures loved not only «light», «immaterial» sounds, but also created forms of music development, which represent the clearest example of «dematerialization of the world and man» and «grasping pure essences».

The sound of Kazakh kobyz and dombra and the instruments, created in conditions of a nomadic way of life and adapted to these conditions, are distinguished by chamberness and softness, designed for a small acoustic space of the yurt. The sounds of dombra, bright when extracting, quickly fade and it needs continuous repetition to create the effect of lasting sound. These repetitions, linking kui sounds together, create an impression of a surprisingly light, clear sound matter, shimmering and trembling in the air. The listener feels that the sounding music is addressed to him personally, and it conveys his innermost feelings and experiences. The capability of kui music to attract attention and, in the language of psychology, «to join» is a special vertical overtone principle, underlying in the Kazakh traditional musical language. The proportional correlation of sounds, giving the effect of overtones, has the ability to penetrate into the deep layers of the human psyche, to cause the phenomenon of bioresonance.

The ancient Greek philosopher Hippocrates thought about the main role of the overtones in a person's life. In his work called «On diet» he writes that the development of the human embryo depends on whether it will be able to find the right proportion, «the harmony» with three intervals – quart, quint and octave (Merritt, 2016). Modern scientific researches correspond with this thought: «Waves of harmonic sound formed the structure of the universe». The heart of the embryo is formed in a similar way, when in a particular system of cells, in the course of biochemical reactions the waves of electrical signals occur in different places. They begin to interact and acquire synchronicity, creating the resonance. «This intensified, consistent, harmonic vibration forms the sinus node, the pacemaker of the heart, activating biochemical processes» (Berger, 1989). B.L.Berry (2012) believes that the external influences on our planet of harmonic vibrations from the movement of celestial bodies in the solar system should be taken into account.

### **Aim of the Study**

The aim of our study is to reveal the impact of music on human organism.

### **Research questions**

What are the psychotherapeutic effect of music?

What is the relationship of musical psychotherapy with other psychotherapeutic directions?

How the Kazakh national music affects the emotional health of a person?

### **Method**

The complex of methods used in this work correspond to the set objectives, they include: system analysis, dialectical method of cognition, conceptual, structural and functional analysis of texts that help perceive the lyrics of kuis and aitys as a holistic conceptual-symbolic system based on the need to relieve the psychological tension, the regulator of the psychic life of society. The author used a complex of interrelated and complementary methods aimed at exploring the effect of psychotherapeutic methods on the development of the processes of psycho-emotional states. We have identified several trends in using music in correctional work: psychotherapy (connected with the impact on cognitive, emotional spheres), psychological (performing cathartic, regulative, communicative functions), social (connected with the development of aesthetic, spiritual needs). These trends are implemented through certain psycho-corrective, correction and developmental techniques that are used in traditional Kazakh music. Special attention was paid to the application of the technique of hypnosis by baqsy, as a reserve form of mental response, enhancing the ability to control the unconscious. The effect of this type of therapy consists in enhancing the listeners' mindset on liberation from painful addiction, strengthening the will, resolving the conflict by an awareness and intensive focus on liberation, suggestive method used by the baqsy, kuishi in some cases, in crisis situations related to actual loss (death) of a close person; in deactualization of crisis conditions, accompanied by the passions of anger and resentment. «Aitys, kui, synsu, zhoktau, koshtasu» were used as a symptomatic technique for relieving mental stress in acute sorrow, normalization of vegetative functions, increasing control of emotions and behaviour, removal of



blocks, optimization of internal human resources, strengthening vital social positions and formation of favorable circumstances in life.

### Data, Analysis, and Results

M. Hoppal (2001) wrote about the necessity of special intermediaries between human collective and spirits (deities): «The shamans' duty was to serve the spirits and protect the tribesman from troubles with their help». People had recourse to baqsy in following cases: infertility, prolonged labor; enforcing a taboo to domestic animals; a purification or consecration of the house; a conspiracy of charms; at the funeral, in military campaigns, etc. – such inclusiveness is rooted in the era of the primitive syncretism, presented in a natural and organic form in the ritual complex. As noted by A.P. Elkan (2012): «Mystical power can be fought against only by means of such mystical power, therefore shaman contradistinguishes superior mystical power of his quackery.

Being an attribute of Tengrism and syncretic art, shamanistic ritual combined both religious and aesthetic, artistic functions. As a religious and magical figure, who is close to Tengri and spirits, baqsy had a singing, musical, narrating, poetic, acting, choreographic gift, that were recognized as a fact, condescension of spirits upon him. Music helped to conjure up the images of spirits, delve into the world of sensations characteristic of ecstasy.

The space of music has its own specifics compared to space studied by physics. This space is of mythopoetic platform, associated with ideological and, consequently, sacred levels of consciousness. Anthropological structure of Kazakh kobyz confirms its connection with the cosmic harmony (Ayazbekova, 2011). Fantastic deep timbre of kobyz had a magical effect on the spirit power, fascinated the audience, hypnotized it. Captivating the listeners, shaman engaged them into joint meditation, exalting the soul and soothing the heart. His creative activity opened the portal of sacred connection with higher worlds, manifesting the true divine face of music.

Shamanic music is beyond the causality; it is a gift of higher powers. The effect of music is a magic. Accompanying shamanistic ritual, music played the role of interlink between worlds, performing the role of «a vehicle», baqsy's meditative journey to the world of higher beings, trans-spiritual world. Shaman was predestined to perform higher functions: to link the human consciousness with his subconscious, influencing his body and mind, to connect phenomenal and non-phenomenal worlds of the Universe, influencing the course of events in these worlds. This Kazakh legend narrates about movement in space and time with kobyz:

«One shaman-baqsy puts his kobyz to participate in races on a dare. During shamanic rites kobyz turns into a horse that whirls the shaman away anywhere into Upper, Middle and Lower worlds populated by good and evil spirits. Knowing the extraordinary power of the kobyz, the opponents tied it to a large tree so that it cannot race with usual earthly horses. People, who gathered at the finish line, stared into an approaching kobyz in awe that was pulling an uprooted tree tied to it with lasso in a cloud of dust».

This legend preserved a memory about shamanic technique of hypnosis, which could affect heaps of people. The doctor of medical sciences Balmukhanov S.B. told about the analogous case of using hypnosis. In childhood, living in the village, he witnessed similar case. At traditional Kazakh dastarkhan someone dared to

address baqsy disrespectfully, who was considered to be an acknowledged baqsy and a guest of the house, who, according to unwritten law of hospitality, was to be treated with respect. Baqsy was in a rage, waved his hand, and suddenly a tray of meat on a round low table turned into the tray with the living, moving frogs. Horror-stricken people fled away. According to the comments of the doctor of science, it was a case of the use of mass hypnosis.

Ritual music of baqsy helped to loosen up, to enhance interpersonal, «heart-to-heart communication», at the same time it contributed to overcome various communication barriers. Beautiful, vivid and imperishable music of baqsy can express the inexpressible – immersion into the nature of your own consciousness. Emotional state, meditateness, detachment from the real world influenced the numinous ecstatic states: trance, excitement, exhilaration, divine fear. Shamanic music provided a unique opportunity to communicate without words, purposefully influencing the subconscious mind of the individual; the baqsy could transform it in a given direction. By means of sacred kobyz sounds the listener was able to gain certain qualities or get rid of them, to achieve fundamental changes of his character, as well as the style of worldview in general.

With a phenomenal technique, wide amplitude, fantastic speed and strength, baqsy made sounds manifesting the breadth and depth of his nature, full inner freedom and powerful energy. The climax of masterful instrumentalism was numerous interludes, establishing thematic circle, emotional state, the nature of the ritual drama. Physiotherapeutic manipulations were accompanied by improvisational kobyz playing along with verdicts, ritual, theatrical movements and gestures. Baqsy transmigrated spirits of disease to animals, various objects and plants. «Like a shaman performing a ritual wraps into a single point and unwraps, recreates the universe, the kui performed by baqsy, immersing the listener into the experience of the past, returns him to starting point and recreates the space of the human psyche». Perhaps this very return to oneself heals «the lost soul», hence the psychotherapeutic effect of baqsy's instrumental music.

The mechanism of music therapy effects on living matter was identified as an acoustic and bio-resonance effect, the rhythm playing the major part in it. If to speak about special personal tone of musical statement in kui, we should also note the emphasis of internal acoustic sound micro-properties: subtle nuances of dynamics, timbre, articulation, micro-altitude. Sound fabric of shamanic *kuis* are characterized by sophistication, transparency, and, when compared with European music, a certain minimalism. However, it turns out to be that the available means of musical expressiveness are sufficient enough to create a powerful energy field of kui and implementation of the huge informational plane contents, which makes the transition to other dimensions and levels of matter possible. The myth about Korkut tells about it:

«Death lurks in wait of Korkut, but Korkut continues playing «The song of life» all day long, and as long as this music sounds, the death cannot approach him. Now, exhausted, he dozed for a moment, and death, assuming the shape of a poisonous snake «Kairak-zhylan», stung him and Korkut died. His music since that time victoriously struggles with death. Where this music sounds, death is powerless».

When there is no power left to run away from death, the sound of kobyz empowers him: Dede Korkut played the kobyz and life revived again, and Dede himself forgot about the grave and death and eternal separation. Again he lived in



a beautiful world, resurrected by the strings of kobyz, in the world of brave djigits, magnanimous warriors».

«Korkut's play attracted all earthly creatures – flying birds, running animals. Everyone who has life glimmering inside, gathered on the banks of the river and listened to kobyz. Death also came to take away Korkut's soul, but it did not dare to do so since it had no power to approach Korkut».

We have different national interpretations of the common myth about Korkut in front of us, each of them recreates different ways of creating Cosmic Harmony, but they are united by one feature – nothingness is harmonized and turned into Cosmos only by means of music. Music given to Korkut by Almighty Tengri, becomes a life creating beginning and rises in Turkic culture to the symbol of sacrality and divinity. Hence the uniqueness of nomads' representations on creation of the world – through music, as a quintessence of any harmony» (Ayazbekova, 2013).

Music covers not only what is perceived by the ear, but also inaudible vibrations. Healing by means of sound vibrations takes place due to resonance, therefore ancient instruments can heal the nervous system and the internal organs, carrying out the attunement at the molecular level, bringing the human vibrations to a higher quality amplitude of fluctuations. As a consequence, the blocks are removed, internal human resources are optimized, vital social positions are consolidated and favorable circumstances are formed. Summarizing the searches of scientists, undertaken in different historical periods in different countries, we can pay attention to the fact that empirical understanding of music psychology and acoustics as expressions of world order are logically different from each other. The search of the mystery of musical impact on the mind is connected with the image that appears in consciousness that is associated with acoustic characteristics of its constituent sound.

The theories of psychoanalysis, as well as subsequent works on neuropsychology were the basis for an investigation of the musical phenomenon in a new manner. It is no coincidence that scientists provide an analogy between spiritual power in each of us and physical and astrophysical force fields of the Earth, which wraps us around with invisible threads. This analogy has a continuation, as the Earth being the part of a space system is connected with the cosmos by invisible links. In this approach, in three-layer structure of a kui we can see the musical projection of the trinity of energy fields of internal (human), earthly and cosmic worlds. Therefore, the process of listening to kui is perceived as the moment that carries a special significance, moment, experienced as the creative embodiment of the sound analogue of the universe and touch of the eternal truths of existence; as a moment of revealing and inclusion into general model of deeply personal, subjective experiences and thoughts. The phenomenon that gives the listener the impression of unity, of merging with the cosmos when kui is performed in traditional manner. And, very importantly, that cosmos is not distant and cold, but full of compassion and empathy, when the personal spiritual experience becomes the property of the world and the universe itself embraces the listener with soft and warm sound vibrations. All this makes the listeners' heart skip a beat and makes the Kazakh kui the greatest achievement of the human spirit.

Musical allegory as a form of communication is quite widespread. As a form of musical thinking, it expressed mediated connections between the real world and the content that baqsy and akyns strive to express. Musical allegories are



particularly manifested in the messages on death or expressions of sympathy: in the legend called «Aksak-kulan» the khan is informed about the death of his son by means of a kui, expressing the sorrow, grief, condolence. Expression of sympathy sounds in the legend-kui «Erden»: «Ikhlas who was going with a request to the head of the district, Erden, is informed on his way about his son's death. Entering Erden's house, he starts playing the kui of sympathy». In Kazakh tradition, when informing about death or expressing the sympathy, people give preference not to a verbal, but a musical language. This is connected with ontological basis of the world picture, when the confluence with the otherness is realized through music. The expression of sympathy can help harmonize the order of human existence, to bring the grief-stricken man through internal broken world to the plot of philosophical understanding of life and death. This shows the subtlety and delicacy of compassion, when in the most significant moments of human communication a unity of the universe scale is reached through musical allegory. Now it is not an individual person who expresses his condolences, but the whole world shares the burden of the grief.

Music removes all restrictions: social, age, etiquette; it is always «inscribed» in the situation, and thus, its significance in terms of harmonizing the human existence is undeniable. The kui «Тансаншы, ойбай, тансаншы» («Don't confess»):

«The judge, who understood the innocence of a poor dzhigit, took the dombra and played the kui «Don't confess». The dzhigit understood the kui and it helped to justify him in front of the other three judges».

As we see, traditional Kazakh music is a perfect example of this psychological protection. Ritual laments of the bride that are called «synsu» and mourning over dead «zhoktau», and generally, the whole sequence of the ritual «scenario», in fact, performed a vital role in the life of society: they served as a powerful and centuries-tested means of individual's psychological adaptation and protection from neuro-psychological breakdowns and for preventing frustration (critical emotional state). «The representative of a well-developed ethnicity in this sense can unconsciously reproduce a whole complex of ritualized reactions, emotions and actions, which enables him to outlive the grief with least psychological losses» (Aytuarova, 2013).

The tradition of mournings and lamentations for the dead was important from a therapeutic point of view – telling out, «singing out» the grief to release negative emotions and relieve inner stress and tension. *The lament*, denoted by the lexeme «Қоңыр» is a tragic reflection of the thinking personality, a cry, associated with philosophical comprehension of life, its impermanence. The first function of the *lamentation* is a therapeutic function, that allows to adequately undergo the rite of parting. The emotional content of the cry was regulated as well. Too feverish expression of the mourners, if extended beyond the accepted norms, was condemned. The second function of the *lament* is a social function that brings the grief to public level, sharing it with everyone, which, manifested musically, helped people cope with personal grief, to come round.

If the laments like «зар, зарлау» are characterized by openness, the lament of «Қоңыр», even the most expressive, is marked by the restrained, slow performance, which does not pour out the full force of the emotions' stream, but it makes it even more intense. «Қоңыр күй» is a healing melody; it's the music of the mystery of life, conveyed by vibrations of overtone shades. «Қоңыр күй»,



reflecting the elusive mystery of existence is the result of a long search and careful selection of sound means embodying the Tengrian mindset of a musician. In “*Қоңыр күй*” we feel the elusive line between the visible, mysterious, parallel worlds, immersing into immensity and eternity of existence; we feel the magic of «evanescent beauty of sound». In the context of mythological beliefs we consider “*Қоңыр күй, Қоңыр дауыс, Қоңырлау*” as an original source, containing our ancestors’ deep, ancient knowledge on traditional worldview and their psychotherapeutic features.

The word 'psychotherapy' comes from Greek, meaning 'care for the soul, i.e. the care for the mental balance of the person, his mood, feelings and emotions. It is a related area of psychology and medicine, when a person is rendered help by influencing his psyche: «The essence of the psychotherapeutic activity is to provide verbal and non-verbal effects on emotions, judgment, self-consciousness of a man» (Belukhin, 1992).

Apart from aesthetic, educational, and cognitive functions, kui and generally, instrumental music performed the role of non-verbal intermediary, conveying the information in cases when it was necessary to avoid the conflict or negative consequences for the individual. Music expresses a definite content; an example is a kui-legend «Aksak kulan», when the dombra in baqsy’s hands saved not only his own life, but the life of many others, who feared to report the sad news to khan.

At the beginning of the kui baqsy artfully depicts the gallop of a horse. The khan is worried thinking that his favorite son is almost here approaching the house. A smile spreads across his face. But at this time baqsy proceeds to the sinister part, which is demonstrated by kobyz mourns. Khan dropped his head on his chest, feeling bad. Hope gives way to a heavy feeling. Baqsy depicts the joy of the khan’s son at the sight of the herd of koulans, then the whistle of arrows, piercing the air, the clatter of galloping koulans – this takes khan from one thought to the other. To his misfortune, he understands the language of music very well. Now the baqsy reaches the climax of the kui – kobyz now makes a sound similar to a cry of despair, the dying breath of a person. Khan jumped up, bit his lips, clenched his fists, his eyes became bloodshot. Meanwhile baqsy returned to the primary theme of the fate, which sounds sadly and ends with barely audible notes, depicting the grievance of the soul leaving the world in khan’s mind’s eye. Khan covers his face, wet with tears, with his hands. However, quickly mastering himself, he wished to fulfill his word at any price: «You, kobyz, are guilty for informing me of the death of my favorite son, you will be punished! » So the music saves people from the danger of death ...».

The history of the origin of Sokyr Eszhan and the maiden Akbikesh’s kui is very interesting. The dombra player who is in love with Akbikesh runs away from captivity and ... gets to her wedding. Realizing that everything is lost he improvises a kui «Қош, аман бол, Акбикеш» («Farewell and be happy, Akbikesh»). The maiden plays her kui. Before a vast assembly, keeping up with the wedding etiquette, the pair was able to publicly confess in their feelings and say goodbye for good.

And all this is due to the non-verbal mediation of music. By “musical language” we mean the set of artistic techniques and tools that make up the unique specifics of the music. The daughters getting married could take the

liberty to make «ritual reproach» to her father in farewell songs of the genre of «synsu», but in real life, outside the ritual, it was impossible. Ritual song in this case is a way of relieving psychological stress, the ability to say aloud the things that were prohibited to say in traditional etiquette.

Kui is an instrumental piece, short in time, but with a very deep content and refined form, with a complex rhythm and developed melodics, reflecting genre characteristics, the logic of musical thinking. The sound fabric of the kui is marked by sophistication, transparency and a certain minimalism; seemingly low-key techniques and means of expression create a powerful energy field capable of exerting a powerful emotional impact and be filled with the boundless expressiveness. Informational completeness of kui strikes with its capacity; we can discover spatial and energetical conveyance of consciousness reflections and functionality of the universal energies of nature in kui. Three-level structure of kui reflects the musical projection of the trinity of energy fields: internal, earthly and cosmic worlds. Not coincidentally, the Kazakhs called kui “Тәңірдің күбірі” (the whisper of Tengri) and worshipped the musicians who were able to hear the Almighty.

The word kui is common for Turkic nations, its ancient meaning is the most important category of world view – ‘the state’ (Ayazbekova, 2013). Kazakhs have an expression “домбыраны күйлеп ал” (bring the dombra to life). We think that the lexeme “kui” meant ‘mental state of a person’, ‘emotional relationship of a man with reality in a particular situation’, ‘condition of life in general and in creative processes’.

The category of kui – state unites the human world and the world of the universe. The worldview of an individual reveals the state of the universe. That is why in the traditional culture the emotional state, mood of every individual is deeply important, for his well-being (mental health) ensures the well-being of the unity, integrity of the world where the man constitutes its integral part. Kui is a child of impartible worlds: of art and life. In the frames of the ritual, music enters the flow of real psychological interaction of people and becomes the main «character» of communication. Being an important part of life, kui directly influences it, harmonizing the existence and healing physical and mental ailments.

Subtle psychology of ethnic music and musical-poetic genres comes from harmonious, deeply humanistic nature of the Kazakh traditional culture where morality, respect for the older and younger, for parents, teacher, peers, respect for each other was one of the main goals of education. The word “kui” itself is associated with the word “көңіл күйі” (mood).

Kui has an amazing ability of psychological connection to the listener’s internal state, not intruding his “personal space” – this was done wordlessly, only through the language of “pure music”. Kui in Kazakh culture is not only a means of psychological regulation of interpersonal relationships through avoidance of conflict and secret transfer of information, but was a means of conveying empathic sympathy and consolation. The ability to find the core, the secret emotional chord that allows entering into the inner world of the listener and comforting him is the pathos of Kazakh music and the proof of its therapeutic qualities.

One of the means of relieving psychological tension is *aitys* (vocal contest), that does it explicitly (through verbal communication) and *tartys* (instrumental),



that is similar to aitys in its functions, that does it in implicit form, through the language of instrumental music, the purest embodiment. They have some patterns of psychoanalysis. Aitys acts as a means of announcing «secret» thoughts publicly (it relieves social tension in society). This takes place in the crowd when the folk performs the role of the judge and «psychoanalyst».

### Discussion and Conclusion

Up to the middle of XX century baqsy and akyns used the play of various musical instruments while healing the animals. Legends of music therapy reflect the nomad' views on possibilities of instrumental music, as well as its real practice. The legend «Milking the camel» tells:

«In old times one man had a camel. She gave birth to a colt, but in a few days the colt died. With the grief and sorrow for the dead baby the camel's milk went off, which menaced by starvation death for the whole family».

Coming out of the house, the owner saw the camel, whose eyes were full of tears. «Your camel could be saved only by the music. Only a very strong musician and a good dombra player can make her give milk. You must gather the best performers for that and offer a great reward for the one who helps your camel».

Lots of dombra players came to try their skills. But the camel still did not give milk. Only an old dombrist managed to do that:

«Aksakal's dombra affectionally started calling the camel "kaus, kaus", and then cried with a voice of a colt. Blood started boiling in all 62 veins of the camel, and its udder was filled with milk».

The legend «Боз иҥен» (White camel) is about a colt whose mother died and it could die from hunger, because other camels do not feed other camels' colts. The hosts invite the musician shaman, who could move the camel to pity with his play and she accepted that colt».

As the conductor of a life-creating energy, dombra uncovers the whole 62 veins (blood vessels, veins, energy channels) of a man. It's possible to revive a dying man by revealing his 62 veins:

«In ancient times a khan lost his son in a battle. Nobody could comfort him and dispel his grief. Turning away from people, not taking food, he lay on his bed dying of grief. Suddenly he heard the sounds. Someone was playing, sitting on the threshold of the yurt. The sounds of the kui affected the soul, bringing relief and uncovering the khan's vessels, restoring his vitality. After listening to all 62 kuis, khan turned around and saw a boy and said to him: «I was expecting to see lifewise old man, who experienced all the sorrows of life. How did you manage to play that and what did you play?» The boy replied: «Your grief is longing for one son; my music has absorbed the grief of the entire nation. I played kui «Қосбаар»».

The musicological literature describes the projection of the channels and chakras in the structure of dombra kuis (Aytuarova, 2013). The connection between musical instrument and a man is much deeper; it consists in ensuring a connection of a person, his energy centers with astral and mental worlds. Dombra engages subtle resonators, its vibrations reveal channels of the centers gradually one after the other.

Kazakh music is full of «semantically meaningful musical formulae images, which typify the strongest emotional experiences. Conveying typical semantic meanings they (formulae) abstract to some extent a person from his personal emotions and thereby bring him to a universal, deeper meaning of life. An important place that was occupied by ethnic musical genres in a traditional society is a testament of not only their special psychological purpose, but primarily a proof of great spirituality and high level of development of a society, where psychological well-being of all members of society was the most important thing.

Relieving the process of emotional response, the music, apart from healing purpose, served the purpose of intellectual relaxation of the person. During the shamanistic ritual, the images, pictures and associations arouse in listeners' minds that evoke the memories, encourage deliberation, directing psychic energy to the world of thought, fantasies and feelings. Musical relaxation was not just emotional but also of intellectual nature. Akyn and baqsy's ritual shamanistic music served the aesthetic needs, gave a sense of peace, helped to cope with pain and raised a person above the level of everyday life to the higher spheres. Specially chosen music had a powerful energetic effect on the listeners' organism, normalized the breathing rhythm and relieved the tension.

Psychotherapeutic ability of music is still being studied, psychologist are trying to determine the universal tunes that will have an impact on emotional health. Today, music is used as a factor of cohesion, the psychotherapy sessions use it for the emotional cohesion of people, creating a cohesion effect.

Kazakhs' Shamanic music had a hypnotic effect on the person (Aytuarova, 2011). This is because music was a part of spiritual ritual, where people could communicate with the Gods combining singing, dancing and the use of fire.

As we see, Kazakh traditional music is multifunctional and performed a variety of psychotherapeutic, psycho-diagnostic, correctional, rehabilitative, preventive, spiritual, communicative, intelligent functions; the main influence was rendered on the higher levels of human psyche, where the causes of all the problems and diseases were rooted, matching the peculiarities of the current state of music therapy. Music in the traditional culture reflected: the ethnic psychology of the Kazakh people – philosophical contemplation and at the same time unstoppable offensive power rhythm of the nomads; the respect and attention to emotional state of close ones and others; it served as means of psychological regulation and psychological protection in society through non-verbal form of avoiding the danger – the use of wordless musical information of the kui; ritualization (typification) of borderline emotional states; relief of psychological and social tension through musical and poetic competitions – aitys; it healed physical and spiritual wounds due to the very subtle psychological nature of instrumental music, which organically combines the present and the eternal, transient and immutable.

### **Implications and Recommendations**

Kui, indeed, is a «state», a state of an individual, carefully and delicately considered from the viewpoint of the cosmic heights. Perceiving and understanding kui as a lifeful creativity determined the universal spiritual organism, which predetermined the abundant life, where the spiritual, the beautiful was not a separate, individual part, but the very content of life itself.



Therefore, the epistemology of the Kazakh culture comes not so much from the ideas about the aesthetic status of kui, where the society expects an aesthetic pleasure from it, but in the first place, kui helps society achieve sustainability, awareness and confidence in a diverse and multi-faceted relation with the outside world.

Kui requires high concentration of attention along with the skills, «disabling the oppressive dictates of mind, getting free to surrender to an influx of feelings and emotions, the music of kui – the generation of the environment, which thinks holistically, sublimely and symbolically. Kui is a repository of deep layers of culture, indispensable foundation of psychological and emotional, spiritual experience, an expression of artistic and aesthetic forms of manifested «ethnic self», a codification of the national spirit, the basis of musical masterpieces, the heritage of world music.

The results of this article may be a theoretical source for the following studies in musicology and psychotherapy.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

### Notes on contributors

**Zere S. Shakerimova** holds a PhD and now is Professor at Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

**Aizada S. Nussupova** holds a PhD now is Associate professor at Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

**Maryam N. Burambaeva** now is Senior teacher at Kazakh State Women's pedagogical University, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

**Zhanat R. Yermanov** now is Head of Department A at Karaganda State Technical University, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

**Akmaral E. Emreyeva** holds Master of Science in Contemporary Art and now is a teacher at Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory, Almaty Kazakhstan

**Sveta S. Janseitova** holds a PhD and now is Professor at Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

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