

Traditional songs

Song (*surūd*) is one of the ancient folk genre of the Tajik people and popularly it is known as *she'ri*; *ašūlā*, *tarona*, *badēhā*, *ghazāl*, *naqš*, *ruboī*, *muxammas*, *bayt* and so on. On the genesis of Tajik songs scholars believe it to have roots in the Avestian Gathas.

Traditional songs are accompanied by the melody and are composed on basis of literary genres like *ruboī*, *dubaiti*, *ghazāl*, *mukhammas*, *masnavī*, *qit'a* and so on. Central functional purpose of the traditional singing is expressing individual aesthetics and emotions; social relations and ones love to his native land etc. Thus, the songs cover wide array of themes including love, humor, laments and complaints, mourning and other aspects of human life. And this very characteristic of songs i.e. being expression of social emotions makes them prevalent and popular and are sung continually.

On the basis of their themes scholars have identified the following categories in Tajik traditional songs:



Lyrical songs

Historical songs

Religious songs

Festive and happy songs

Mourning and lament songs

Humor songs

Children songs

Songs dedicated to the nature

Songs devoted to specific profession and type of craft.

Lyrical songs are composed on themes of love, uniting of two lovers. This kind of songs are sung in festive and traditional ceremonies and are accompanied by lively musical tunes.

Historical songs narrate specific historical events or historical heroes such as «Šuriši Vose'» (Vose's revolt), «Šuriši Qalandaršo» (Qalandarsho's Revolt), «Šuriši Usmōn» (Usman's Revolt), «Niyoz-Konchi» etc.

Happy songs are usually performed in festive events and have lively, dance music. These songs are often performed in weddings including 'circumcision parties', which is a type of 'wedding'. Within this category however according to the scholars there are songs specifically called 'wedding songs', which are devoted to the theme of wedding, bride and groom etc. For example, some popular representative of this group are «Sartarošon», «Ustoi langi sartaroš», «Šah meoyad», «Saršuyoni arūs», «Buror-buror xušruša» etc. Despite being very old and historical these songs are still current and performed in the wedding ceremonies.

Another group of folk songs are mourning and lament songs, where the main themes are complaint of separation, being away from native places, forced marriage etc. The larger group in this genre is known as «marsiya», which is mourning songs. There are mourning songs in Tajik that have come from old days in specific



musical and thematic format. To this category the main ones are «Yo mavlon», «Dodaram», «Usmonjonume», «Abdulgʻajidjonam balam», which are sung by people to this day.

The humor (comedy) songs are performed by the comedy singers and are performed in funny tunes. These songs are accompanied by gestures and body movements expressing various aspects of the comedy. Some of well known in this groups are «Ušturbacha mond dar balandī», «Yalali bobo» and «Bale murghak». The humor

songs are also expression of social discords and condition by medium of comedy.

Religious songs are dedicated to the praise of God, the deeds of the prophets and other religious events and topics. Among the populace these types of songs are also called «naʼtxoni».

Children songs include very broad topics and are sung in multiple contexts and events. For example, «alla» (lullaby) songs of comfort, songs dedicated to natural world and songs dedicated to different children plays and games.

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