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### MECHANISMS OF TRANSMISSION AND TRANSFORMATION OF KARAKALPAK CULTURAL HERITAGE FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION THROUGH ORAL TRADITIONS

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#### ANNOTATION

Problem to be solved in this study is the analysis of the process of transmission of the cultural heritage of the Karakalpak people. The object of this research is to comprehend the social . The main research structure of the oral transmission process, the situation of performance, and the technologies of memory. The methods used in this research include qualitative research, textology and ethnographic comparison. The results of this research have shown that the cultural heritage was transmitted through variability, performance, and the mentor-student model. The novelty of this research lies in the application of modern elements to the model of oral transmission.

#### Key words

variability, performance, mentor-student, memorial practices, ritual context, Karakalpak, oral creativity, cultural heritage.

**Input.** The Cultural heritage and identity of the Karakalpaks constitute the historical experience of the Central Asian people; an experience with an extensive range of sub-classifications and ethical and aesthetic values, and a vast system of memorial artifacts and a richer oral culture. The internal social communication system, a social memory of the past, a repository of traditions, defined social structures, and systems of social roles, and aesthetic views transcended an entire society and was cultivated over several generations. Oral traditions are social systems of memory, and the long-lasting internal, social communication systems (tradition, memory, oral narrative), and aesthetic



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views. Contemporary research in oral traditions and legacies has focused primarily on the documentation and systematic categorization of oral traditions. This documentation is devoid of institutional analysis. The broad scope of functional variations, contextual settings, and the situational essence of all traditions eludes such analytical frameworks. The environment of the dastan, zhyrau, and bakhshi, as well as the modern information environment, posed focused challenges and opportunities that have not been addressed in the Karakalpak oral legacy and heritage.

The focus of the study is oral traditions. Oral traditions serve dual purpose of preserving a body of text as well as preserving a particular cultural tradition. Thus, the term 'crossing' is not meant in the sense of copying and reproducing, but rather, an intricate phenomenon involving the memory of the performer, the anticipations of the audience, the situational context, the social and ritual context, aesthetics, and the social hierarchy. This paper is an attempt to begin to take apart the paradox of the complexity in the cross-process and relates to the study of the components and the links between them. The study also seeks to identify the social, performative, and textual mechanisms through which the oral traditions of the Karakalpak cultural heritage are transmitted, as well as the factors that contribute to the stability and variability in these processes. The achievement of these goals is realized in the accomplishment of the following tasks: conceptualizing the social context of the transmission communities and the participants, outlining the demand of the performance context and audience on text variants, separating the roles of the memory and rehearsal in 'preservation' and 'renewal,' and examining the practices for the transmission of oral heritage in a contemporary context.

**Methods.** The research method is based on the theories of oral creativity and intangible cultural heritage, in which the oral text is not seen as a "product," but as a communicative phenomenon that reappears in the process of performance. The method of qualitative research was used as the first method, in which the conditions and functions of the





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transmission of such genres as dastans, legends, proverbs, and ritual songs in the oral traditions of the Karakalpaks were described in a logical connection. The textological method was used as the second method, which allowed the analysis of the variability inherent in the oral tradition as an adaptation to the social task, and not as a "mistake" or "disturbance"; in this case, such phenomena as semantic contraction, expansion, replacement of images, and the presence of toponymic suffixes, which led to the emergence of variations, were seen as a consequence of the conceptual criteria [1; 2].

The third method used was that of ethnographic and contextual analysis, which examined the forms of communication in the process of family, mahalla, ritual gatherings, mentor-student groups, and collective labor as a habitat of oral heritage; this method was needed to associate the social "distribution channels" of oral heritage with the factors outside the text.

As a fourth method, the method of comparison was used, and the experience of oral heritage in Karakalpak was compared to the general trends in the oral creativity of the Turkic peoples; this method was used to more precisely show the local specificity against the background of general typological regularities.

The choice of the method, in accordance with the research goal, allows one to simultaneously analyze the process of the transmission of oral heritage in three layers: the personality of the performer, the performance situation, and the text structure.

As the empirical material used in the research, the texts recorded in the scientific literature, their interpretation, and interpretation were used, as well as the descriptive sources on oral heritage; this allowed us to firmly hold the conceptual and theoretical orientation of the article.

**Results.** The results of the research have revealed that the transmission of Karakalpak cultural heritage through oral traditions is not a one-way process but is ensured by the combined action of a number of mechanisms. As the first result, it was



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established that the main institutional model of transmission is the mentor-student system: the authority of the performer, the repertoire, and performance ethics serve not only as a source of text for the student, but also as a school of "normative style." In such a system, the process of memorization is oriented more toward mastering the compositional skeleton, tone and rhythm of sound, and sequence of images than toward copying; and accordingly, the student makes every effort to find a proper balance between tradition and individuality in his or her own performance. In other words, the stability of oral heritage is assured not by a 'hard text' but by the laws of performance and aesthetic criteria of the repertoire." The second result indicates that the situation of performance and audience factor are critical in oral transmission. A fragment of a legend or epic with similar plot content is represented differently in different social spaces: in the ritual setting, the performance relies more on images and formulas that enhance solidarity of all participants, and in the family circle, didactic and moral aspects are emphasized more. The structure of the audience by age and their prior knowledge and expectations directly influences the decisions of the performer; and accordingly, variability may result from communicative adaptation and not from 'memorization.'" Such adaptations are especially pronounced in proverbs and short narratives: their formulaic structure allows for quick "packaging" of the content and its "unfolding" according to the situation. The third result demonstrated the two-mode operation of the memory operations, wherein the conservative mode produces a "familiarity effect" by the performer using traditional formulas, epithets, images, and rhythmic patterns, while the innovative mode produces an actual enhancement of the meaning of the text by using local historical experience, geographical details, or household items. These two regimes do not negate each other; on the contrary, they ensure the viability of the heritage. It was also revealed that repetition in oral transmission works not only for memorization, but also as a mechanism of social control: frequently repeated texts within one team become



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the "norm," and the degree of deviation of the performer is assessed by the listener. The fourth result showed that the "transmission rate" and the degree of stability between genres are not the same. Large epic texts rely more on the school and teacher, since their compositional complexity and performance technique require special training; short genres, on the other hand, spread and adapt quickly in everyday communication. As a result, in the general system of intangible heritage, epic genres act as a "canonizing core," while subgenres form a "adaptive periphery." This difference also determines the social distribution of transmission: while epic performance is formed as a more specialized role, proverbs and legends can be used as a communicative resource by representatives of almost every social group. The fifth result indicates the emergence of a "second life" of oral heritage in the context of modern communication. As a result of the recording of oral texts and their transition to audio and video form, the natural chain of transmission does not cease, but new types of intermediaries appear: a performer relying on recording, an amateur reconstructor, a stage interpreter. In this process, some layers of inheritance can become standardized, while others, on the contrary, multiply, giving rise to new variants. Within the framework of the study, it was clarified that this situation is not a loss of the oral tradition, but a systemic change interpreted as its mediatization; the main issue here is how traditional aesthetic criteria of transmission are preserved and how they are recoded in the new environment.

**Discussion.** The obtained results indicate the need to consider oral tradition as a process rather than a text, and this approach corresponds to the theoretical views formed in the study of folklore. The concept of "recreation" of oral text in the process of performance has been substantiated in various scientific schools, where variability is considered an internal law of the oral system [4].

The results of this article reveal the institutional foundations of this very regularity in the Karakalpak material: the mentor-student system acts not as a limiting mechanism



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for variability, but as a mechanism that keeps it within the normative limits. Thus, it is established that adherence to tradition is not adherence to a "single text," but adherence to performance ethics, a system of images, and compositional logic. Studies focusing on the ethnographic context have shown that the social functions of oral heritage are constantly changing[3].

Our results also support this idea, but additionally allow us to explain how a change in task leaves a mark on the level of text structure. For example, the increase in formulas that strengthen collective identification in ritual performance or the strengthening of the didactic component in the family circle shifts the semantic centers of the text, as a result of which one plot lives with different "centers of meaning" in different situations. This situation cannot be limited only to thematic analysis; it requires an approach that combines performative and communicative criteria. Regarding memory and rehearsal, there are views in folklore studies that the formulaic style facilitates memorization [5]. In the Karakalpak oral tradition, formulas also serve as memorization technology, but the results of the article highlight the role of rehearsal as a mechanism of social control. This aspect strengthens the "collective authorship" nature of oral heritage: although the performer is an individual creator, his performance is constantly evaluated by the listener and compared with the norm. Thus, the process of verbal transmission is formed at the intersection of personal memory and collective listening experience. In studies of the folklore of the Turkic peoples, the relative canonization of epic texts and the rapid change of subgenres are noted in the issue of stability and adaptation between genres [1; 2].

This article explains this difference through the "core-periphery" model and connects it with the specialization of epic performance in the Karakalpak environment and the spread of small genres in the daily communication network. This explanation encourages viewing oral heritage not as a single field, but as a collection of subsystems with different speeds and different social support. As a result, it becomes clear that even



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in the practice of preserving heritage, the same strategy should not be applied equally to all genres: in epic heritage, it may be more important to support mentorship schools, and in subgenres, to enrich contexts, the everyday language environment, and social communication spaces. Regarding modern media, there are also views that recording folklore "freezes" the oral system, but in international studies, media is also interpreted as an adaptation of oral heritage to a new environment [6].

Our analysis shows the possibilities of the second approach in the Karakalpak material: texts transmitted through recording, audio, and video can, on the one hand, enhance standardization, and on the other hand, open up new possibilities for reconstruction and interpretation for performers. An important aspect is that in a media environment, traditional aesthetic criteria are also reinterpreted: as direct contact with the listener decreases, the performer relies more on "stage" means of expression, which affects the rhythm, pause, and intonation system of the text. Therefore, the modern transition of oral heritage should be explained not by a simple opposition of "disappearance" and "preservation," but by the issue of increasing transmission channels and their regulatory regulation. Comparative analysis with the literature shows that the mechanisms observed in the Karakalpak oral tradition enrich the theoretical categories familiar to general Turkic and world folklore with local material. In particular, the consolidation of the relationship between performance, variability, and social institutions in one model serves to integrate the factors that are often considered fragmented in the study of oral heritage [4; 7].

As a result, the system of oral transmission of the Karakalpak cultural heritage manifests itself not as a "text archive," but as a living socio-practical system.

**Conclusion.** The study substantiated that the transmission of the Karakalpak cultural heritage through oral traditions is a multifactorial and multi-stage process. The sustainability of transmission is ensured through the master-apprentice system, performance



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ethics, and formulaic memory technologies, while variability manifests itself as adaptation to the audience, situation, and social needs. In the system of genres, epic heritage acts as a canonizing core, while subgenres form an adaptive periphery and maintain the continuity of heritage in everyday communication. Modern media can be interpreted not as a factor weakening oral heritage, but as a new environment in which transmission channels and performance norms are reorganized. The scientific significance of the article lies in the fact that it proposes a conceptual model that combines the institutional, performative, and textual layers of oral transmission and shows the need for a context-oriented approach to the preservation and study of the oral heritage of the Karakalpaks. In the future, it is advisable to focus on a deeper study of new performance areas of oral heritage in the urban environment, language changes in intergenerational transmission, and the transformation of performance norms in medialized formats.

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