

Revival and revitalization of Sakha khomus music

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This dissertation focuses on the *khomus* (Jew's harp) music and its culture among the Sakha (old name Iakut or transliterated as Yakut), who mainly live in the Republic of Sakha Russia. Mainly using materials issued by khomusists and Sakha-based musicologists, I clarify their activities involving revival and revitalization of Sakha khomus music and consider how their activities function as devices for transmission and propagation of khomus music.

Chapter 1 presents fundamental information about the Republic of Sakha and the Sakha people.

Chapter 2 discusses the Jew's harp from the viewpoint of organology. The Jew's harp is classified as an idiophone in the Mahillon and Hornbostel-Sachs taxonomy of musical instrument. But some Russian-Soviet musicologists, think the Jew's harp resembles stringed or wind instruments. From a Sakha spiritual perspective well-known Sakha writer A. E. Kulakovskii (1877-1926) describes the khomus as an instrument gifted from the Creator in his poem. This sacred image of khomus has spread among khomusists and their audience.

Chapter 3 focuses on various activities of three Sakha khomusists. In the Soviet age, they had played khomus in the *samodeiatel'nost'*, which means amateur activities in Russian. Through *samodeiatel'nost'*, khomus has changed from female instrument used for domestic entertainment to a concert instrument on the stage. Their experiences in the *samodeiatel'nost'* lead khomusists to conduct their concerts throughout the world after the collapse of Soviet Union.

In chapter 4, the playing method of the khomus is presented. Analyzing two similar pieces played by Spiridon Shishigin, I indicate an example of how a player composes and improvises his khomus music.

Chapters 5 and 6 focus on the scheme of Sakha music history in the Soviet age and its discourse. Development of musical history in the Soviet age was divided into three stages: 1917-36, 1936-56 and 1956 to the end of the Soviet reign. In Sakha music history discourse, only folk music existed before the Russian Revolution, and professional music culture was established after the Revolution. The key person in these chapters is Mark Nikolaevich Zhirkov (1892-1951), who is regarded as the first Sakha professional composer. He engaged in research of Sakha folk music to collect material for his compositions. He emphasized the necessity of professionalizing Sakha folk music and presented his

ideas about improvement of the khomus in his work *Iakutskaiia narodnaia muzyka* (Sakha folk music).

Chapter 7 considers Sakha khomus music in the present through the *ysyakh* festival and the 7th international congress of Jew's harp music held in Iakutia in 2011. Drawing on these events, I discuss the revival and revitalization of khomus music achieved in two main frameworks. One is *narodnaia muzyka*, which means folk music in Russian, in which khomusists contributed to set devices of transmission and propagation of khomus music. The other is professional music. Both of them complement each other and combine to support the revival and revitalization of khomus music.