

BETWEEN HERITAGE AND MODERNITY: BUTTON ACCORDION ARRANGEMENTS OF KAZAKH DOMBRA KUI IN MUSICAL TRANSCULTURATION

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the study of the phenomenon of button accordion arrangements of Kazakh dombra kui in the context of musical transculturation. The aim of this work was to reveal the patterns and artistic mechanisms of transforming the traditional kui in the button accordion performance practice of Kazakhstan. The study is based on the concept of transculturation by Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz, which includes three interrelated stages examined in detail in the methodology section.

The methodological foundation consists of historical-cultural, musical-analytical, and comparative-typological methods, as well as a transculturation approach, which made it possible to consider button accordion arrangements of kui as the result of interaction between traditional and academic cultures. The empirical material includes published scores and recordings of more than 50 works by Kazakh composers and performers, as well as anthologies, pedagogical collections, and archival sources.

As a result, it was found that button accordion versions of kui are not mechanical adaptations but rather a form of cultural dialogue in which the European instrument assimilates the Kazakh modal system, and the Kazakh tradition acquires new artistic forms. Three types of arrangements were identified—*perelozheniy* (arrangements), *transkriptsii* (transcriptions), and concert interpretations, differing in the degree of creative transformation of the material. The analysis showed that the process of transculturation leads to the formation of a new synthetic genre—the button accordion kui, which manifests a synthesis of national content and academic forms.

The scientific novelty of the work lies in the application of Fernando Ortiz's concept to the analysis of musical material, which made it possible to consider button accordion arrangements of kui as independent cultural phenomena reflecting the transition of the tradition from the oral sphere into the professional-academic space. The results of the research expand the understanding of the interaction between folk and academic traditions and contribute to contemporary musical-cultural studies in Kazakhstan.

Keywords

cultural dialogue, dombra kui, button accordion arrangement, Kazakh music, hybridization

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INTRODUCTION

The *dombra kui* occupies a central place in the system of traditional instrumental music of the Kazakhs, serving as a vessel of the people's cultural memory, philosophy, and figurative thinking. As Asiya Mukhambetova notes, the *kui* functions not merely as a musical genre but as a form of artistic thinking that unites the verbal and the sonic elements (Amanov and Mukhambetova 2002: 180). Throughout the 20th century, the *kui* genre repeatedly became the object of academic reflection and instrumental adaptation, primarily in connection with the professionalization of folk music and its incorporation into educational and concert spaces.

The first experiments in arranging *kuis* for piano and violin were undertaken by Aleksandr Zataevich, Yevgeny Brusilovsky, Boris Yerzakovich, and Iosif Kogan. They aimed to preserve the melodic expressiveness and rhythmic specificity of the Kazakh tradition within new instrumental frameworks. However, a special role in this process was played by the **button accordion**—an instrument of European origin. It became one of the mediators between the traditional and academic cultures of Kazakhstan. Since the 1940s, beginning with Konstantin Oshlakov's arrangements, the button accordion has held a stable place in the system of folk-instrumental performance and music education.

The modern interest in button accordion versions of *dombra kuis* is explained not only by the performance capabilities of the instrument, but also by the culturological significance of the transfer process itself. An interaction of two musical worlds takes place—the nomadic and the European, the oral-improvisational and the notated. This interaction, as Gulzada Omarova notes, does not destroy the Kazakh tradition, but “integrates it into a new cultural context, expanding the horizons of its existence” (Omarova 2018, 45).

In prior studies, the process of adapting the Kazakh *dombra kui* was considered mainly from a cross-cultural perspective (Smakova and Kuzbakova 2025). However, contemporary cultural anthropology also offers more precise categories for analyzing such phenomena. Foremost among these is the concept of **transculturation**, developed by the Cuban anthropologist Ortiz. Investigating the dynamics of cultural contacts under colonial exchange, Ortiz proposed a model in which cultural interaction is viewed as a complex process of mutual changes: **acculturation** (acquisition of the new), **deculturation** (loss of the old), and **neoculturation** (creation of a new synthetic phenomenon) (Ortiz, 1995).

The transculturation concept was later advanced in Western humanities. For example, Mary Louise Pratt introduced the notion of the “contact zone”—a space of cultural encounters and clashes where the sides simultaneously interact and contest each other (Pratt 1992, 49–62). Similar observations on the development of the genre are provided in the study by Ayman Davletyarova, which examines arrangements of *dombra kuis* in the works of the Kazakh composer Abdrasheva (Davletyarova, 2021).

Applying a transculturation approach to the Kazakh musical reality makes it possible to interpret button accordion arrangements of *kuis* not just as the borrowing of folk themes by an academic instrument. It is a dialogue of tradition and modernity, the result of a reciprocal cultural movement. In this sense, the button accordion is not a “substitute” for the *dombra*, but a translator of Kazakh musical intonation into a different artistic system.

Thus, the subject of this study is the analysis of button accordion arrangements of *dombra kui* as a phenomenon of musical transculturation. In this process, the national heritage is transformed within a new instrumental and aesthetic environment. The goal of the research is to determine the mechanisms, patterns, and artistic outcomes of the transculturation transfer of the Kazakh *kui* into the button accordion performance tradition. The scientific novelty lies in the fact that, for the first time, the process of adapting the *kui* is examined through the prism of Fernando Ortiz's concept. This makes it possible to understand button accordion arrangements not as secondary interpretations, but as new cultural formations reflecting the movement of the musical tradition between heritage and modernity.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The empirical basis of the study consists of published sheet music editions, anthologies, and educational manuals devoted to Kazakhstani button accordion literature, as well as audiovisual materials. Among them are the *Anthology of Kazakhstani Button Accordion Literature* edited by Smakova and Konysbaev (Smakova and Konysbaev, 2013) and the work of Lips (2007). In addition to published sources, archival recordings and video materials of performances by leading Kazakh button accordionists were used, stored in the phonotheque of the Kazakh National University of Arts and available in open access (YouTube, Kazakh TV, and others).

The theoretical foundation is formed by scholarly works in the fields of musicology, cultural anthropology, and ethnomusicology. Of particular importance were works on the nature of the Kazakh kui and its structural-intonational patterns (Amanov and Mukhambetova 2002; Omarova 2018; Raiymbergenov and Amanova 1990), studies in the realm of transcription and arrangement (Borodin 2011; Klimova 2013; Lips 2007), as well as methodological approaches to analyzing cross-cultural and transcultural processes (Smakova and Kuzbakova, 2025; Ortiz, 1995).

A range of methods was used in this work, combining traditional music-theoretical and modern culturological approaches:

- The **historical-cultural** method made it possible to examine the genesis and evolution of the Kazakh kui, as well as the stages of its assimilation into academic performance. Special attention was paid to the role of the button accordion as an intermediary between the oral and written (notated) traditions.
- The **musical-analytical** method was applied to study the structure, texture, modal-intonational, and harmonic features of the arrangements. Through analysis, the original dombra kuis and their button accordion versions were compared, revealing techniques of polyphonization, range expansion, and harmonization of the folk material.
- The **comparative-typological** method made it possible to classify the forms of button accordion kui arrangements by the degree of transformation of the source material—from simple arrangements and transcriptions to concert renditions (Lips, 2007; Klimova, 2013).
- **Content analysis** was used for a quantitative survey of the corpus of works—examining the distribution of arrangements by authors, years, and level of complexity (educational, concert, competition pieces).

Central to the study was the transculturation approach based on Fernando Ortiz's concept (Ortiz 1995). Ortiz was the first to propose the term “transculturation” to describe processes of mutual cultural exchange (Ortiz 1995), which allows the adaptation of the kui for button accordion to be seen as the result of a dialogue between two artistic systems. As Clifford noted, in the modern world, cultural forms exist not in isolation but in movement and translation (Clifford, 1997).

In contrast to earlier cross-cultural models that focused on describing differences between cultures, Ortiz views cultural interaction as a mutual process of exchange and transformation. His concept includes three interrelated stages:

- **acculturation**—adoption of foreign elements
- **deculturation**—partial loss of original characteristics
- **neoculturation**—formation of a new synthetic phenomenon

Applied to the Kazakh musical context, transculturation is manifested in the fact that the button accordion, being an instrument of the European school, embraces the traditional Kazakh kui as an expressive core, while simultaneously modifying it through its own timbral, harmonic, and textural capacities. Thus, the process of adapting the kui to the button accordion becomes an act of two-way cultural exchange. As a result, a new artistic entity is born—the *button accordion* kui as a distinctive phenomenon of Kazakh musical culture.

In Anglophone musicology, the term *arrangement* is understood as a form of adapting musical material while preserving its compositional basis (Boyd 1980). This interpretation brings Kazakhstani button accordion arrangements closer to the global practice of creatively rethinking an original piece.

Modern classifications of musical transformations regard arrangement as a special type of interpretation in which the identity of the original work is preserved (Lee 2019). As Hans Keller

noted, an arrangement is not a “secondary” genre but an independent way of thinking that reflects the interpreter’s stance (Keller 1969). According to B. Borodin, the history of transcription in the European tradition shows a transition from an illustrative function to artistic autonomy (Borodin 2011). This tendency is also echoed in the evolution of Kazakhstani button accordion arrangements.

The methodological application of transculturation theory made it possible to regard button accordion arrangements not as derivative renditions, but as independent forms of musical creativity. They reflect a synthesis of the national tradition and European instrumental aesthetics. This approach provided a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of cultural mutual influence and also revealed the internal patterns in the formation of modern academic performance in Kazakhstan.

RESULTS

The analysis revealed a broad corpus of button accordion arrangements of Kazakh *dombra kuis*, encompassing more than seven decades of the genre’s development—from the 1950s to the present. In total, about fifty published pieces by thirteen authors were documented, including both Soviet-era classics and contemporary Kazakhstani musicians.

The greatest contribution to the repertoire was made by Konstantin Oshlakov, whose arrangements account for almost one-third of the known examples. He adapted traditional *kuis* for button accordion, introducing them into the educational and concert practice of music schools and colleges in Kazakhstan. Also significant are the arrangements by Bolat Mustafin, Gennady Gaisin, Anatoly Gaisin, Dosmukhamed Tuyakbaev, Damir Sultanov, and Zaure Smakova, which are characterized by more complex texture and a concert-oriented style (Smakova and Kuzbakova 2025).

Typology of Arrangements—Based on comparative analysis, three main types of button accordion versions of the *dombra kui* have been identified:

- Arrangements (*perelozheniya*)—minimally altered versions of the original, preserving the melody and rhythmic structure but adapted to button accordion texture; intended primarily for pedagogical purposes.
- Transcriptions (*transkriptsii*)—a faithful transfer of a piece from one instrument to another while preserving the musical foundation.
- Concert interpretations—free and considerably transformed versions of the original material, employing virtuosic techniques.

These types differ in their purpose, the degree of creative transformation of the source material, and the level of performance challenge. They reflect the historical and stylistic continuity between Western European and Kazakh musical traditions, demonstrating the evolution of performance thinking in the button accordion art—from the simple study arrangement to a mature concert transculturation.

Evolution of Style—The historical development of button accordion *kui* arrangements can be conditionally divided into three stages:

- 1950s–1960s—the formative period of the genre, associated with the activities of Oshlakov, Lips, and their contemporaries. The main focus was on preserving the melody and rhythm of the *kui* when transferring it to the button accordion.
- 1970s–1980s—a stage of artistic expansion: improvements to the instrument (the invention of the multi-timbral free-bass button accordion) lead to more complex textures and harmonies in arrangements. Arrangers (e.g., V. Basargin, G. Gaisin) experiment with polyphony and an extended range.
- 1990s–2020s—a time of active concert practice and experimental approaches. Modern arrangers (Smakova, Demchenko, Seitkhanov, and others) produce concert arrangements with original interpretations of *kuis*, integrating elements of improvisation, jazz, and avant-garde.

This evolution illustrates the gradual transition from simple pedagogical arrangements to complex artistic models, reflecting the professionalization of the Kazakh button accordion school.

Artistic Features—Music-theoretical analysis showed that in adapting *kuis* for button accordion, arrangers preserve the fundamental modal-intonational structure of the Kazakh melos, while actively employing the devices of European harmony and polyphony. The monodic texture of the

dombra is transformed into a polyphonic texture rich with chordal layers and counterpoints. The button accordion interpretation introduces new artistic qualities:

- use of second and fourth–fifth intervals and chords (non-tertian sonorities) that are uncharacteristic for the dombra kui.
- deployment of the button accordion’s unique and combined timbral registers (tutti, organ, bassoon, clarinet, and others) as form-building devices to emphasize climaxes and create orchestral colors.

Thus, the quantitative mastery of simple arrangements serves as the foundation for qualitative musical growth, allowing the musician to progress to deeper and more complex arrangements.

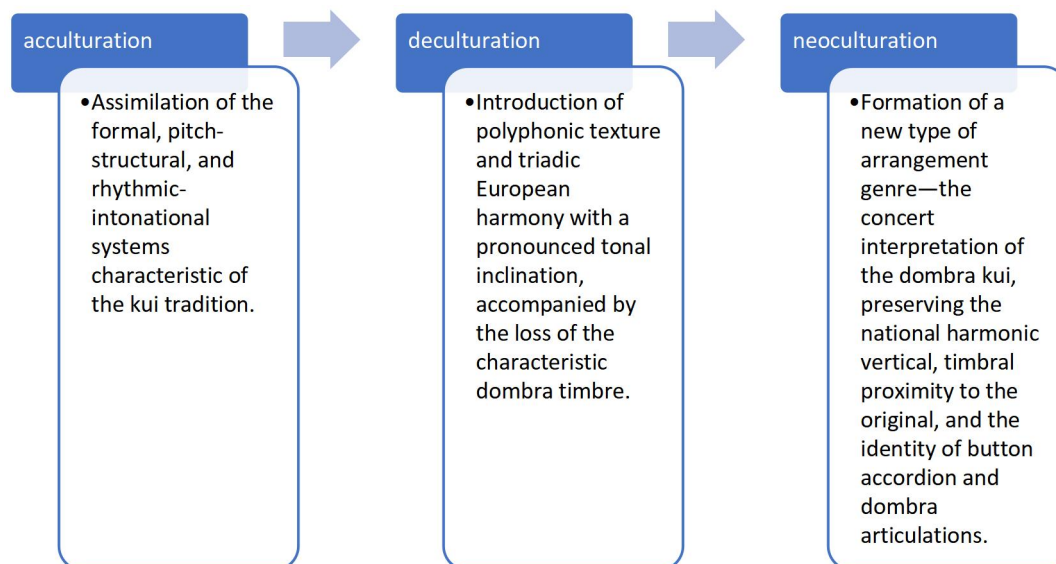


Figure 1: Stages of musical transculturation of the Kazakh dombra kui.

Cultural Dynamics—In line with Fernando Ortiz’s concept, the development of button accordion kui arrangements can be seen as the result of a transculturation process. The interaction between the Kazakh dombra tradition and the European button accordion school is shown in Figure 2, illustrating the dialogic nature of this transcultural synthesis. Three interrelated stages are evident: *acculturation*—the inclusion of a European instrument into the Kazakh tradition (creation of dombra kui arrangements for button accordion); *deculturation*—the loss of some of the dombra’s timbral and performance characteristics and a shift from national harmony toward European harmony; *neoculturation*—the formation of a new synthetic genre, the concert *button accordion* kui based on the dombra kui.

The correlation of these stages is illustrated in Figure 1, which schematically represents the process of musical transculturation of the Kazakh dombra kui. This genre combines the sonic language of the European button accordion school with the melodic-intonational archetypes of Kazakh folk music, representing a unique example of musical hybridity.

Quantitative Results—Using content analysis, information on the scope and makeup of the repertoire was systematized. Of 50 works analyzed, 60% are educational arrangements, 25% are concert transcriptions, and 15% are concert renditions (Smakova and Kuzbakova 2025).

This distribution indicates the predominance of the genre’s pedagogical function, while at the same time it demonstrates a steady trend toward the expansion of concert repertoire.

The shift from a quantitative dominance of simple study arrangements to the creation of high-quality concert arrangements can be viewed through several key aspects:

- Improvement of playing technique: an in-depth mastery of button accordion playing technique enables the musician to convey musical ideas more accurately and expressively.
- Musical interpretation: studying the history and style of the dombra kuis allows for a better interpretation of the piece.
- Mastering the basics of arrangement: understanding the characteristics of national harmony and the structure of the pieces helps in creating more complex and engaging arrangements.

- Timbral experiments: trying out various timbres and their combinations leads to a unique sound.
- Development of personal style: the search for an original sound and a creative approach to arranging makes each performance unique.
- Participation in master classes and competitions: receiving feedback from experienced musicians and teachers helps improve the quality of arrangements.

Thus, the extensive practice of simple arrangements serves as the foundation for qualitative musical growth. It enables the musician to move on to deeper and more complex arrangements.

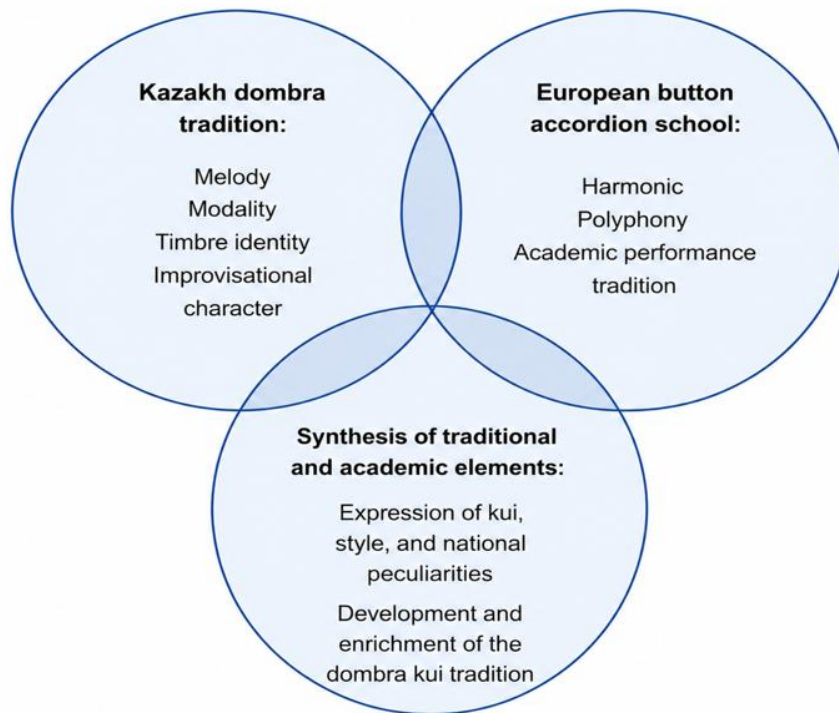


Figure 2: Dialogue of traditions: Interaction between the Kazakh dombra tradition and the European button accordion school.

DISCUSSION

In musicological literature, the term *arrangement* is treated as a general concept encompassing various forms of reworking musical material. According to the definition an arrangement is a reworking of a musical composition, usually for a different medium from that of the original. In other words, it is the reworking of a piece, usually intended for a different instrument or ensemble. Narrower variations of this process include forms such as transcription, adaptation, and paraphrase (Walker 1987; Lee 2019; Boyd 1980).

Contemporary researchers view arrangement as a continuum, where the degree of intervention in the original text ranges from literal reproduction to a free concert fantasy. N. Boyd (1980) described this continuum as a “*scale of arrangements*.” On it, the lower end is represented by a *literal transcription*—an arrangement that follows the original as closely as possible—and the upper end by a *paraphrase* or *fantasy*, which are based on a free reimagining of the source material. In the intermediate zone lie various forms of *adaptation* and *creative arrangement*, which allow changes in texture, register, harmony, and form.

Lee (2019) further developed a similar gradation, classifying arrangements by the type of transformation:

- **inter-medium arrangements**—transferring a composition to a different instrumentation while preserving the musical structure;
- **intra-medium (performance) arrangements**—changing the level of technical difficulty, register, or texture within the same instrument;

- **form/genre transformations**—include transcriptions, fantasies, virtuosic paraphrases, and potpourris, which involve a deep reworking of the original material.

Similar categories are found in 19th-century historical practice. Franz Liszt's works, as studied by Walker (Walker 1987), are divided into transcriptions and paraphrases. Walker noted that in a transcription, the composer follows the original with the utmost fidelity, whereas in a paraphrase, the arranger's fantasy is not only permissible but desirable. This dichotomy reflects the Romantic era's inclination toward artistic freedom in interpreting the source. F. Keller (Keller 1969) also recorded analogous distinctions, dividing arrangements by authorship into *somebody else's*, *the composer's own*, and *nobody's*.

In the context of Kazakh button accordion art, this typology allows us to distinguish three main levels of arranging a Kazakh dombra kui:

- **Literal transcription (simple arrangement)**—a literal arrangement without changes, serving educational purposes;
- **Artistic adaptation (complex arrangement)**—a reworking with elements of variation, expanded texture, and development of form;
- **Concert paraphrase (concert arrangement)**—a virtuosic interpretation involving polyphonization, complex harmony, and an independent artistic development of the theme.

This delineation reflects the historical and stylistic continuity between Western European and Kazakh musical traditions. It demonstrates the evolution of performance thinking in the realm of button accordion art—from a didactic arrangement to a stage-ready concert transculturation.

As an example of a literal transcription, let us consider the button accordion arrangement of the folk kui *Kelinshek* by Oshlakov (Example 2 in Figure 4) and Dauletkerey's *Turkmen Kui* arranged by Basargin (Example 3 in Figure 5). For comparison with the dombra original, the authentic notation is provided (in Figures 3, 6, and 8).

It should be noted that the dombra kui is usually notated in the treble clef. This was likely because, when the Kazakh Folk Instruments Orchestra was established in 1934, folk kuishi (traditional kui players) without formal musical training were involved. Therefore, to simplify sight-reading, melodic perception, and ensemble playing, a system was adopted whereby Kazakh dombra music is written an octave higher than it actually sounds. The dombra's actual sound corresponds to the small octave and would otherwise be notated in the bass clef.



Figure 3: Example 1 - Kazakh folk dombra kui *Kelinshek*.

Unfortunately, the button accordion arrangers of the 1950s–1960s did not take this notational peculiarity into account and used the written music literally—i.e., an octave higher than the original sounding. At that time, the button accordion's construction had a limited range. All this led to an unnaturally high register in the button accordion versions of the kuis, unfamiliar to the traditional ear. The characteristic national timbre **qonır dauys**—a **velvety sound** (euphonious, soft, warm tone rich in overtones, corresponding to a male voice)—disappeared. Thus, the first button accordion arrangements of the dombra kui marked a stage of deculturation, manifested in the incompatibility of the register and timbral adaptations of the simple button accordion arrangements with the dombra original.

In **literal transcriptions** of folk *kuis*, filling in the middle register and adding a second voice were achieved through octave doublings, parallel thirds duplicating the melody, stating the theme in sixths, substituting the monody with triadic chords, and adding extra chordal tones. All of this adversely affected the balance of sound, and sometimes even the technical ease of performance (Figures 4 and 5). Therefore, the *kui* as a genre underwent deculturation also through the introduction of triadic chords (built in thirds), not typical for the *dombra*.



Figure 4: Example 2—Arrangement of the *kui Kelinshek* for button accordion by Oshlakov.



Figure 5: Example 3—Basargin's arrangement of Dauletkerey's *Turkmen kui*.

The extensive use of major and minor tonal inflections, and leading the melodic line in parallel thirds or sixths—all clearly contradicted the national harmonic aesthetics. Harmonizing the *kui* by button accordion means, although it led to a degree of deculturation (loss of original simplicity and timbral clarity), at the same time, it opened the way to a new artistic form. This balance of loss and gain reflects the dualism of transculturation described by Ortiz, where the clash of cultures creates not a hybrid “copy” but a new whole.

Both of these *dombra kui* arrangements were created by button accordionists in the 1950s–1970s, when the button accordion with ready-made major–minor basses was popular. For that time, these arrangements enriched the repertoire of button accordion players in Kazakhstan and introduced a wide audience to folk music. At present, they are studied for pedagogical purposes. As a result, the

button accordion does not merely imitate the dombra, but develops a new type of sound, which, according to Bruno Nettl (Nettl 1985: n.p.), attests to the “viability of tradition in an altered environment.”

In the 1980s, with structural changes to the instrument and the advent of multi-timbral free-bass button accordions, the genre of button accordion arrangement of the dombra kui underwent drastic changes.



Figure 6: Example 4—Sugir, *Bozyngen* (original dombra kui).

With the expanded capabilities of the modern button accordion, transcribers began to analytically recognize the patterns of traditional musical thinking, to understand the principles of kui form, and to take into account the timbral-register, modal-melodic, textural, and articulatory characteristics of dombra performance.

The free-bass left keyboard opened up broad textural, modal-harmonic, and hence artistic possibilities for the arranger. This made it possible to abandon the methods of European (major–minor) harmonization that used parallel thirds and sixths, as well as the ready-made left-hand chord clichés. Indeed, such techniques undermine the distinctive sonic imagery of the kuis. In their place, quartal–quintal combinations, non-tertian chords, and bifunctional chordal structures became widespread—solutions much more in line with the modal-intonational nature of Kazakh music. The free-bass system of the left hand allows one to perform melodic figurations of individual notes and chords necessary for harmonizing the texture in a way closer to the national color. This approach symbolizes the process of acculturation—the button accordion’s assimilation of the harmonic vertical of the traditional pitch system by means of a European instrument.

The rethinking of dombra techniques *ilme qağys* (one downstroke, two up—first with the thumb, then with the index finger—used for playing rapid triplets) and tremolo with analogous modern button accordion techniques (ricochet—repeating a note by the rebound of a finger or bellows, and bellows tremolo) created a new quality of button accordion sound equivalent to dombra performance. The bellows tremolo technique gives articulatory clarity and definition to the sound production, effectively conveying the continuous development and the impulsive, driving character of the musical image, allowing flexible changes of dynamics without breaking the musical line.

An interesting effect is produced by the use of the ricochet technique in kui arrangements. Instead of a standard repeated attack, it is advantageous to employ a triplet ricochet—a rapid repeated bouncing of intervals or chords using the *ilme qağys* stroke with a set rhythmic pattern. The relative simplicity and ease of the ricochet technique allow the performance of rather extended passages with an ostinato triplet or quadruplet rhythm. This technique is especially effective for evoking the image of **horseback riding** in the swift kuis of Western Kazakhstan, which do not require substantial dynamic variety. This is because ricochet and tremolo techniques inherently limit the maximum volume achievable. Nevertheless, modern four-voice button accordions (using tutti registers and their lighter variants, as well as various combinations of powerful ready and free basses) make it possible to reproduce the phonetic specificity of traditional music.



Figure 7: Example 5—Arrangement of the kui *Bozyngen* for button accordion by Tuyakbaeva.

Mastering the expressive possibilities of the ricochet, and skillfully combining it with other specific intonational and expressive devices of the button accordion as required by artistic objectives, makes it possible to reveal the emotional development of the image most fully.

Thanks to these technical means of sound production, a swift, **flying** character of the music emerged, with high density and rhythmic precision of sound. The use of various timbral registers to create new colors and to emphasize the structure of the kui enriched the artistic value of the arrangement. Thus, following Ortiz's logic (Ortiz, 1995), a transition from deculturation to neoculturation occurs—a stage where a new artistic form is born that preserves the spirit of the kui while expressing it through the means of academic instrumental culture.

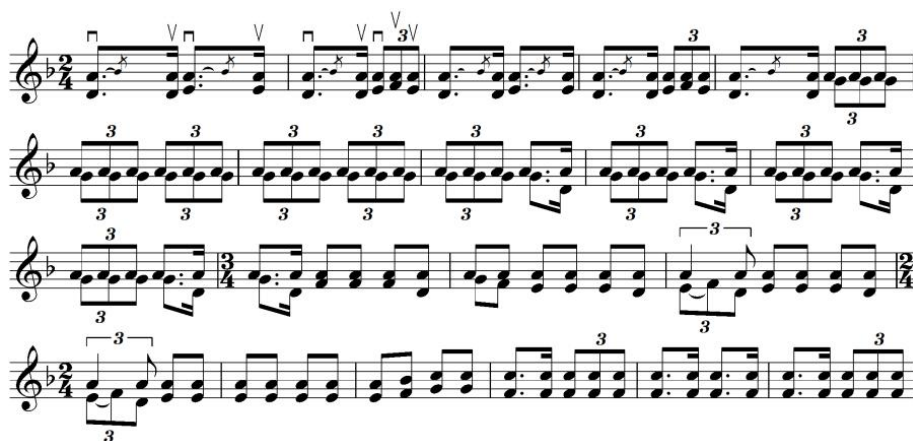


Figure 8: Example 6—Kurmangazy, *Bäjuma* (original dombra kui).

In the original dombra version of this kui, the lower voice develops independently—it can be doubled in the button accordion's left-hand part.



Figure 9: Example 7—Arrangement of the kui *Bäjuma* for button accordion by Gaisin.

In the concert arrangement of the kui “*Bäjuma*,” various methods of enriching the texture are used by introducing the nearest overtone pitches (see Example 7). The use of Octave-fifth and second-interval combinations in the left free-bass, can create a rich, harmonious effect by doubling the melodic line an octave lower. This technique, known as hidden harmony, involves a “rocking” motion of homogeneous material with auxiliary bass notes. Powerful bass notes accentuated by bellows articulation contribute to a potent sense of internal energy and forward motion. In essence, this approach resembles a *dombra* technique in which open low strings are combined with an active melody in the upper register. As a result, the sound acquires a special textural richness, timbral stratification, and a maximally expanded range. In the button accordion rendition of the kui, for 12 measures, a low D bass serves as a kind of pedal point, analogous to the open strings on the *dombra*. In other words, European types of texture are integrated into the national context. Such a synthesis reflects the stage of neoculturation, where, according to Canclini (Canclini, 1995), tradition does not disappear, but continues to live in a new semiotic field.” When arranging kuis for button accordion, one possible method of addressing textural challenges is polyphonization. By developing the voices, a variant expansion of the main intonational complex is created, thereby achieving textural development.

Thus, the phenomenon of button accordion arrangements of the Kazakh kui should be viewed as the outcome of a complex transculturation process involving the mutual transformation of tradition and innovation.

The tutti register allows the expansion of the sonic space to a three-octave range, enabling four-voice performance. The alternating combination of powerful preset basses and a free-bass scale in the small octave creates a rich texture and fills the gap between the outer voices. Presenting the theme in the low bass part, with a transition to the middle register, creates a full-bodied orchestral polyphony.

The results of the study show that the phenomenon of button accordion arrangements of the Kazakh kui should be viewed not as a mere borrowing of folk melodies by an academic instrument. It

represents a manifestation of a more complex cultural process—musical transculturation. This approach allows one to conceptualize the adaptation of the kui to the button accordion not in terms of influence or transfer, but as a dynamic dialogue between tradition and modernity.

According to Ortiz's model, transculturation includes interrelated stages. In the Kazakh musical environment, they manifest as a gradual transition from the assimilation of elements of the European school to the formation of a new synthetic genre. These stages do not constitute a linear process, but exist in continuous interaction. Applied to the Kazakh musical context, one can say that in the acculturation phase, the button accordion is incorporated into the national sound system, adopting its modal-intonational and rhythmic principles. As a result of deculturation, the authentic timbre of the *dombra* as the original source is lost. However, the sound of the button accordion stimulates the formation of a new expressive system. The final stage—neoculturation—is expressed in the emergence of the button accordion kui as a special genre, in which the Kazakh modal foundation and the European textural-polyphonic logic are combined. Moreover, as Bruno Nettl emphasized, modern ethnomusicology considers borrowing not as a loss, but as an adaptation of cultural meanings (Nettl, 2015).

Such an interpretation moves the button accordion arrangement out of the category of “derivative forms” and into the realm of independent artistic creativity. Each act of interpreting a kui on the button accordion becomes an act of cultural exchange, in which both sides—tradition and modernity—undergo mutual transformation.

Such processes, in light of the global cultural paradigm, are natural and have historical analogues. Similar phenomena can be observed in the history of Western European and Latin American music. For example, Frédéric Chopin, turning to the Polish folk dance the mazurka, brought it into an academic context. He preserved its ethnic color and transformed the genre into a highly artistic concert form. Similarly, Astor Piazzolla created *nuevo tango*—a synthetic form. Here, elements of the urban tradition of Buenos Aires were combined with techniques of classical composition and jazz. In these examples, as in the Kazakh practice of button accordion arrangements, the principle of transculturation is realized—a mutual transformation of cultural codes while preserving their deep identity. In the terms of Néstor García Canclini, a button accordion arrangement of a kui can be considered a form of cultural hybridity, combining elements of traditional and modern identity (Canclini 1995). This approach allows one to see in the Kazakh material not only the influence of the European academic tradition, but also the active participation of national musical culture in global processes of transculturation (Canclini, 1995).

A distinctive feature of the Kazakh experience is that the button accordion does not supplant the *dombra*, but becomes its artistic partner. Unlike instruments alien to the national system, the button accordion has the ability to imitate the main articulation techniques of *dombra* playing—plucked strokes and tremolo—which makes the adaptation process organic. Thus, the button accordion arrangement of a kui appears not as a form of Europeanization, but as a mechanism of the internal modernization of tradition. In it, the national content acquires a new technical and aesthetic embodiment.

An important aspect of transculturation is the reverse influence. Thanks to mastering the Kazakh melos, the Kazakh button accordion school has developed its own performance style, distinct from the Russian and European ones. It harmoniously combines expressive plasticity of sound, free meter and rhythm, and a tendency toward improvisation—qualities characteristic of the kui (Omarova 2018). Consequently, the interaction of cultures here is bidirectional in nature. The button accordion transforms the kui, but it also acquires a national color itself, forming a new performance mindset.

From the perspective of cultural dynamics, the phenomenon of button accordion arrangements of kui illustrates the ability of the Kazakh musical tradition to renew itself in the context of global artistic processes. By entering the academic system, it does not lose its authenticity, but acquires new forms of existence. This process can be described as “creative continuity”—the transition of the tradition from the oral sphere to the notational sphere, from the chamber sound of the yurt to concert halls, from local practice to a universal artistic language.

Thus, the button accordion interpretation of the kui becomes a model of dialogue between heritage and modernity, between national identity and universal musical means of expression. From Ortiz's perspective, transculturation is not the loss of tradition, but its **second life** in a new cultural interpretation. In this sense, button accordion arrangements of kui can be regarded as an example of successful musical neoculturation. In it, national art is not dissolved in the European system, but acquires a new artistic form while preserving its spiritual essence.

The comparison of the original dombra version of Kurmangazy's *Adai* (Figure 10) and Gaisin's button accordion version (Figure 11) clearly demonstrates the transition from oral to academic tradition. The QR codes attached to the article allow this process to be traced in audiovisual form. The gradual progression from monodic plasticity to polyphonic thinking illustrates the very essence of transculturation in action.



Figure 10: QR code for viewing the video recording of the performance of Kurmangazy's kui *Adai* for dombra. Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QR8bnM-GvDk>



Figure 11: QR code for viewing the video recording of the performance of Gaisin's arrangement of Kurmangazy's kui *Adai* for button accordion. Performed by Olzhas Nurlanov, Samgar Tolkyntan, Ruslan Galkeev, and Galymzhan Narymbetov. Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6I1LguL9a8>

CONCLUSION

The study has shown that button accordion arrangements of Kazakh dombra kuis are not merely instrumental transcriptions, but the result of a complex cultural interaction defined as musical transculturation. In this process, the traditional Kazakh musical system enters into a mutual exchange with European instrumental culture, giving rise to a new synthetic phenomenon—the button accordion kui.

The adaptation of the kui for button accordion reflects all the main stages of transculturation—from the adoption of elements of a foreign tradition to the formation of a new artistic code.

Acculturation is expressed in the European instrument (button accordion), assimilating the characteristics of the Kazakh melos.

Deculturation is manifested in the change of the kui's sonic image: the loss of the dombra's timbre, the shift from monodic sound to polyphonic texture, and the use of harmonic techniques uncharacteristic of folk performance. At the same time, this stage creates the conditions for artistic exploration and opens the way to renewal.

Neoculturation marks the birth of a new genre phenomenon that retains the spirit of the kui. It reveals the character and figurative content of the kui through the button accordion's expanded possibilities of harmony, polyphony, and timbre.

Thus, the transformation of the kui does not lead to a loss of authenticity but becomes a new form of it. The vitality of the Kazakh musical tradition lies in its ability to renew and integrate without losing its core meaning.

The analysis of specific examples—from Konstantin Oshlakov's study arrangements to Anatoly Gaisin's concert transcriptions and contemporary authorial interpretations—shows that the button accordion arrangement has evolved into a form of modern dialogue with tradition. In it, the Kazakh kui transcends the bounds of the local tradition, retaining its intonational essence while acquiring a new sound in the context of global musical practice.

The button accordion kui becomes a kind of bridge between the oral folk tradition and academic musical thought, embodying the idea of continuity and renewal. It demonstrates how national heritage gains a second life in a new sonic incarnation without losing its cultural identity.

In this way, the process described by Ortiz as transculturation (Ortiz 1995) manifests in the contemporary Kazakh musical context as a form of mutual enrichment between tradition and academic art. From the viewpoint of transculturation theory, button accordion interpretations of kuis reflect not Europeanization, but a mutual integration of cultures. In the course of this unification, the Kazakh tradition and European instrumental practice enrich each other. This makes the button accordion kui genre a significant part of the modern musical culture of Kazakhstan—both as a pedagogical and performance phenomenon, and as evidence of the evolution of national musical consciousness.

Thus, the button accordion interpretation of the kui appears as a form of dialogue between heritage and modernity, the national and the universal. The arrangement of the dombra kui for button accordion confirms the potential of the transculturation approach for understanding the interaction of musical cultures in the 21st century.

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SUMMARY IN KAZAH LANGUAGE

Аңдатпа

Бұл мақала музыкалық транскulturация негізінде қазақтың домбыра күйлерінің баян өңдеулері феноменін зерттеуге арналған. Жұмыстың мақсаты – Қазақстандағы баян орындаушылық тәжірибесінде дәстүрлі күйдің трансформациялану заңдылықтары мен көркемдік механизмдерін анықтау. Зерттеу кубалық антрополог Фернандо Ортистің транскulturация тұжырымдамасына негізделді. Ол әдіснамалық бөлімде жан-жақты қарастырылған үш түрлі өзара байланысты кезеңді қамтиды.

Әдіснамалық негіз ретінде тарихи-мәдени, музыкалық-аналитикалық және салыстырмалы-типологиялық әдістер, сондай-ақ дәстүрлі және академиялық мәдениеттердің өзара әрекеттесу нәтижесі ретінде баяндық күй өңдеулерін қарастыруға мүмкіндік берген транскulturация тәсілі қолданылды. Эмпирикалық материалға қазақстандық композиторлар мен орындаушылардың 50-ден астам жарияланған ноталары мен жазбалары, сондай-ақ антологиялар, педагогикалық жинақтар және мұрағаттық дереккөздері енгізілді.

Зерттеу нәтижесінде күйдің баяндық нұсқалары механикалық бейімдеулер емес, керісінше мәдени диалогтың бір түрі екені анықталды. Бұл үдерісте еуропалық аспап қазақтың ладтық жүйесін бойына сіңірсе, қазақ дәстүрі жаңа көркемдік формаларға ие болады. Өңдеулердің үш түрі – лайықтау, транскрипциялау және концерттік интерпретация – анықталып, олардың материалды шығармашылық тұрғыдан түрлендіру дәрежесі бойынша ерекшеленетіні көрсетілді. Талдау транскulturация үдерісінің нәтижесінде ұлттық мазмұн мен академиялық формалардың синтезінен тұратын жаңа синтетикалық жанр – баян күйінің қалыптасатындығы дәлелденді.

Жұмыстың ғылыми жаңалығы Фернандо Ортистің концепциясын музыкалық материалды талдауға қолданылды. Бұл баяндық күй өңдеулерін ауызша дәстүрден кәсіби-академиялық кеңістікке өтуді бейнелейтін дербес мәдени феномен ретінде қарастыруға мүмкіндік берді. Зерттеу нәтижелері халықтық және академиялық дәстүрлердің өзара байланысы туралы түсініктерді кеңейтіп, Қазақстандағы қазіргі музыкалық-мәдениеттану зерттеулеріне үлес қосады.