# THE ROLE OF THE TINIBAEV DYNASTY AND MASTER-APPRENTICE TRADITIONS IN THE KARAKALPAK NATIONAL ART OF GIRJEK PLAYING

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**Abstract:** This article explores the historical development of the Karakalpak national art of girjek (gijjak) playing, highlighting its evolution through the master-apprentice (ustoz-shogird) traditions. The study focuses on the significant contributions of the Tınıbaev dynasty, particularly Karimbay Tınıbaev and his son Muratbay Tınıbaev, in preserving and enriching Karakalpak instrumental music. It details the genealogical lineage of performance, the integration of the girjek instrument as an accompaniment in bakhshi (epic storytelling) art, and the dynasty's educational legacy at music institutions. Furthermore, the article underscores the ongoing promotion of national musical heritage through international festivals and state-led cultural initiatives.

**Keywords:** Karakalpak national music, girjek, gijjak, Tınıbaev dynasty, master-apprentice, Karimbay Tınıbaev, Muratbay Tınıbaev, bakhshi art, instrumental performance, cultural heritage.

As is known from history, since ancient times, bakhshis and instrumentalists have performed songs and melodies at our people's celebrations and festivities until dawn. In Karakalpakstan, the emergence of the art of bakhshi dates back to the era of Aximbet bakhshi. During these periods, not only the art of bakhshi but also the art of instrumental performance began to gradually develop. Furthermore, according to our scholars' findings, the Turkmens played a special role in the development of girjek players among the Karakalpaks. The introduction of the girjek musical instrument to the Karakalpaks is closely linked with Sultaniyaz (Suyew) bakhshi.[1]

As far as we know, Qoyli Axmedov was one of the first girjek players among the Karakalpaks living in the early 20th century. Qoyli Axmedov performed as a girjek player for such bakhshis as Esjan Qospolatov and Japaq Shamuratov. By the middle of the 20th century in Karakalpakstan, Karimbay Tınıbaev played a special role in developing the art of girjek playing among instrumentalists and training a number of apprentices. Karimbay Tınıbaev was born on March 15, 1941, in the village of «Qum shungil» in the Kegeyli district, into the family of Tınıbay bakhshi.[2] Karimbay's

father was the famous and well-known Tınıbay bakhshi. Tınıbay bakhshi's father was Qudaybergen bakhshi, and Tınıbay received his initial lessons from his father. Following his father's path, Karimbay Tınıbaev also grew up to be a powerful bakhshi and instrumentalist. Since Karimbay had a high interest in music from early childhood, his father would take him along to gatherings and even to wedding celebrations. Karimbay received his initial lessons from his father Tınıbay. Moreover, from a young age—around 10 to 13 years old—he was able to skillfully perform 10 melodies to perfection.

After graduating from the 10th grade, K. Tınıbaev went to the city of Shimbay and began studying at a tractor-driving school. While studying at the tractor school, as he passed by the House of Culture, he heard musical sounds and went inside.[3] In 1951, K. Tınıbaev's mother passed away. This tragic event dealt a major blow to him. Not long after, his father passed away in 1959. After losing his parents, Karimbay faced many hardships in life. In 1961, he moved to the city of Nukus and made a living by doing various hard physical labor. Starting in 1962, K.Tınıbaev began taking lessons from U. Sadiqov. Alongside the art of bakhshi, he learned to play the girjek and performed as an accompanist (janapay) on the girjek alongside bakhshis at various competitions, weddings, and gatherings.

Not long after, in 1967, Karimbay Tınıbaev married Qurbangul Qosbergenova. Together they built a large family, giving birth to and raising 3 sons and 4 daughters: Muratbay, Tamara, Aygul, Maqset, Patiyma, Ziynegul, and Polat Tınıbaev. All of their children became interested in music, with some becoming bakhshis and others girjek players, serving and contributing to the development of Karakalpak culture. In 1976, he helped gather bakhshis to form the "Muxalles" dutarist ensemble and became a member himself. In 1977, K. Tınıbaev participated in the Days of Culture held in the Republic of Bashkortostan, playing the girjek with the "Muxalles" ensemble. In addition, Karimbay traveled to Moscow, Tatarstan, and Azerbaijan to participate in various competitions and concerts.

Karimbay Tınıbaev worked tirelessly for 21 years as a teacher of bakhshi, instrumentalist, and girjek specialties at the "National Music" department of the Nukus Culture and Arts College from 1992 to 2013. K. Tınıbaev passed away on September 8, 2017. Muratbay Karimbayevich Tınıbaev was born in 1970 in the city of Nukus and is of Karakalpak nationality. In 1977, he entered the Maxim Gorky secondary school. The person who introduced M. Tınıbaev to the field of art was his father, the great girjek player Karimbay Tınıbaev. His father, Karimbay Tınıbaev—one of the founders of the "Muxalles" dutarist ensemble, bakhshi, instrumentalist, and girjek player—was born in 1941 in the Kegeyli district. His father was the nationally renowned Tınıbay bakhshi. Karimbay Tınıbaev learned the art of music from his father. In 1976, he successfully graduated from the Pedagogical Technical School. His main profession

was as a girjek player. He served the people by playing the girjek as an accompanist alongside many of our famous bakhshis, such as Amet Tariyxov, Genjebay bakhshi, Turganbay bakhshi, and Qurbanbay bakhshi.

His mother, Qurbangul Qosbergenova, was born in 1947 in the Shimbay district. After graduating from the Agricultural Technical School, she worked as an accountant and retired on pension. She gave birth to and raised 7 children: Tamara, Aygul, Maqset, Patiyma, Ziynegul, and Polat Tınıbaev. After successfully graduating from school, M. Tınıbaev entered the "Folk Instruments" department of the Japaq Shamuratov Music and Art College in 1985. He studied the girjek instrument under the guidance of teacher Qalbay Alimov. M. Tınıbaev successfully graduated in 1986 and was hired by the Folk Instruments Orchestra under the Radio and Television Committee.

In 1986–1987, he fulfilled his military duty to the Motherland by serving in Moscow. Upon his return, he continued his work in the orchestra. His career was both arduous and honorable; alongside the orchestra, he worked as a teacher at the Nukus Specialized Culture School. His students became talented bakhshis and girjek players like himself, becoming laureates of various talent competitions, studying in higher education institutions, and bearing the fruits of his labor. Among them, Aman Arzimov, Aynura Niyazbaeva, Miyassar Dauletbaeva, Kamalbay Alimbaev, Devora Quwanishbaeva, Aydos Orinbaev, and Azamat Elmuratov received their education; today, some of them perform on the girjek alongside bakhshis at concerts, while others teach the subtle secrets of the girjek instrument to children at Children's Music and Art Schools.

In 1993, he married the well-known bakhshi Begzada Asqarova. Together they built a large family and raised three children: Alimbay Karimbayev, Quwat Karimbayev, and Sarbinaz Karimbayevalar. True to the proverb "What a bird sees in the nest, it does," their children also improved their knowledge in the field of culture, participated in festive evenings, won honorable places in competitions, and continue to contribute to the development of Karakalpak culture.

Muratbay Tınıbaev passed away in June 2023 at the age of 53. As the saying goes, "A good person leaves a garden, a bad person leaves a scar," his trained students and children continue to serve tirelessly in the development of Karakalpak culture. The Tınıbaev family has made a tremendous contribution to the development of national instrumental performance in Karakalpakstan, particularly in passing down the girjek instrument through the master-apprentice tradition to the present day.

In conclusion, today great strides are being made in the development of our national music through the initiative of our Head of State. Moreover, it is heartwarming to see various competitions and festivals being organized for our bakhshis. In particular, the organization of international maqom art festivals, international bakhshi festivals, "Sharq Taronalari", and "Great Silk Road" international folklore art festivals

serves to develop our people's national heritage and fosters strong specialists by increasing competition among youth. Similarly, organizing various competitions for our girjek players in instrumental art helps raise youth interest in our national heritage.

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