

II. PEOPLES OF THE VOLGA, URAL, AND WESTERN SIBERIAN REGIONS

The Volga – Kama – Belaya region

In this region, too, different layers of people were settled on top of each other. Finno-Ugrian peoples lived here as early as the 3rd–2nd millennia BC, and Iranian tribes came into contact with the area in the 2nd millennium BC. Turkic elements arrived from the 2nd century AD, with the Huns in their strongest wave around 350 AD. Thereafter, the region was politically and economically dominated by the Turkic element. In the Mongol period, many ethnic blocks were shifted, and even more sweeping changes followed as a result of the ethnic policies of tsarist Russia and then the Soviet Union.¹

At the initiative of Zoltán Kodály, László Vikár and Gábor Bereczki took part in nine folk music collecting trips along the eastern edge of the European part of the then Soviet Union between 1958 and 1979, each one lasting 4–6 weeks. The initial aim was to study the phenomenon of pentatonic fifth-shifting along the Volga-Kama River, and initially they worked among the Finno-Ugrian Cheremis as well as the Finno-Ugrian Mordvins and Votyaks living in the Chuvash, Tatar and Bashkir ASSRs. However, like Bartók before them in Anatolia, the material they collected turned them towards Turkic-speaking peoples, and it is thanks to this that their research resulted in large Chuvash, Tatar and Bashkir materials in addition to the Finno-Ugrian collections.

Besides the material copied from the Leningrad Fonogram archive, the Vikár–Bereczki material includes recordings of collected Mordvin, Votyak, Cheremis, Chuvash, Tatar and Bashkir tunes, numerous photographs and detailed diaries of the collections. A brief but thorough description of the collection is given in VIKÁR 1986, which includes short ethnographic descriptions, small melodic anthologies, maps and a precise list of the collection sites and the number of collected melodies. The volumes VIKÁR–BERECZKI 1971, 1979, 1989, 1999 and VIKÁR 1993, 1999 give an even more detailed picture of the collection and its results. A number of publications on the folk music of the area had also been issued previously by other authors, and these are listed in the above volumes. The excellent overview of the folk music of the Volga-Kama region by Lajos Vargyas also needs to be mentioned.²

The folk music of the area is very complex, with small and large forms of diatonicism and pentatonicism, melodic structures in different directions, from the repetition of primitive motifs to strictly structured four-line forms, etc. However, these are not evenly distributed among the different peoples.

According to László Vikár (1993: 33–39), who had first-hand knowledge of the region, Finno-Ugrian folk music is characterised by the repetition of very simple elements, but these simple motifs are repeated and varied in a sophisticated way.³ From north to south, the strophes and melody lines become longer and longer and more regular. Traditional Finno-Ugrian melodies are preserved within the framework of the pentachord, in quiet, sometimes monotonous, unassuming performance, although Turkic influence is also found here, and in some areas even the pentatonic scale and ornamented performance style can be dominant. Still, the Finno-Ugrian layer is characterised by a high degree of informality, with a modest tonal range but a strong variation of

¹ Cf. AGYAGÁSI Klára, A mari nyelv kapcsolatai a volgai török nyelvekkel [Links of the Mari tongue with Volga Turkic languages], In *Párhuzamos történetek*, conference proceedings, Budapest, 2021, Pázmány Péter Tudományegyetem, eds TÜRK Attila, KLIMA László.

² VARGYAS 2002: 238–323.

³ VIKÁR 1993: 33–39.

small motifs. There is also variation in form, line length, syllable number and intonation of tones. They improvise easily, without the rigid constraints of strophic performance and a single set of tones. In contrast, the Turkic peoples of the area are keen singers, with a variety of showy, strophic melodies with a range of notes that can reach or even exceed the octave. The situation is not simple here either, of course, because the Turkic peoples also have simpler melodic styles, and some more distant Turkic peoples, such as the Azeris, Turkmens or Dobrujan Tatars, sing only songs of such styles. Vikár observed that the Volga-Kama material becomes increasingly more regular in melodic structures as one proceeds from east to west, up to the Cheremis-Chuvash (quintal-shift) boundary. Up to that point, the so-called small form predominates in the Cheremis material and the three-line structure in the Chuvash stock, forming a transition between looser and more strictly regulated melodies.

In any case, simplicity is often behind the variety of melodic forms in the region. If we dispense with repetitions, transpositions and lesser or greater rhythmic and melodic changes, we are left with one or two simple musical kernels or just a single motif.

In short, the most ancient style in the Volga-Kama-Belaya region is represented by the *do-re-mi* tunes of the Votyaks, which, together with *la*, form a larger group also in Mordvin music, and are also sporadically found in Cheremis and Chuvash folk music. The *Zuryens* (the closest language cousins of the Votyaks, who live further away) repeat four-note major motifs, but major and minor pentachords and hexachords occur, too. Most of the melody forms are constructed from repeated motifs in a descending melody contour, which sometimes traces a convex start. However, all forms of pentatony are absent. In the collections of the more distant Estonians of a high culture, the number of more advanced major melodies is also increasing. Among the Eastern Cheremis we find a 'small fifth shifting' dance-tune style with the specific motive structure A⁴⁻⁵BAB as well as semitonal pentatony.

In contrast to the above, on both sides of the Cheremis–Chuvash boundary, there are almost exclusively major-key fifth-shifting melodies. Among the Kazan Tatars, on the other hand, we find a non-fifth-shifting pentatony of terraced descent in a closed quatrain form. In the gradual descent, the fourth correspondence and its fifth, sixth and even second variations appear in several places, as can be seen in Cheremis and Chuvash folk music. I have myself thoroughly examined the phenomenon of fifth shifting among the Turkic peoples, the Hungarians, the Mongols and the Evenki. Pentatonic fourth- and fifth-shifting is also found in large numbers in Outer and Inner Mongolia, hence in the case of the fifth-shifting style in the Volga-Kama region we may suspect a Mongolian influence during or after the Golden Horde. This assumption is strengthened by the fact that the Bashkir and Tatar *uzun küy* 'long song' also points towards Mongolian folk music.

The study of the tune groups has revealed that the Cheremis and Chuvash styles are the closest to each other, with the Hungarian style joining them from a distance. On the other side is Mongolian music, with the closely related Evenki and North Chinese tunes. The two blocks are linked by the melodies of *la*-pentatony with 8 (5) 4 cadences and, although less dominantly, of *so*-pentatony with 7 (4) b3 cadences.

The following is an overview of the folk music of the area, illustrated with musical examples. Because of the Hungarian connections, we will now deal not only with Turkic-speaking peoples, but also with one or two Finno-Ugrian groups.

Some Finno-Ugrian peoples in the Volga-Kama region

If we visit a group of Finno-Ugrian people today, the first thing we encounter is certainly many-part music, which was influenced by the Slavs, although polyphony was originally alien to these folk

musics, as to Turkic-Mongolian or Hungarian folk music. Beneath the polyphonic layer, there are adaptations of Turkic tunes, and at the bottom, often hidden and more or less forgotten, there are simple tunes of the oldest layers, variations of motifs. Within this simplicity, however, there is a diversity of motifs and forms. What is more, as many Finno-Ugrian peoples, as many kinds of motive stocks: for example, a motive descending on three adjacent notes is very different from one that jumps on notes a fourth or fifth apart. And what may be particularly thought-provoking for those who are looking for Finno-Ugrian traces in the motivic layers of Hungarian folk music: the Hungarian motivic material has survived primarily in children's songs, and the most typical motif, the one moving around the middle note of the three-note motif, is not strongly present in the music of any of the Finno-Ugrian peoples. On the other hand, it is an important motif in the German–Germanic or Anatolian Turkish children's songs.

Let's take a closer look at the melodies of three Finno-Ugrian peoples.

Mordvins

The Mordvins are the fourth largest Finno-Ugrian people in terms of population after the Hungarians, Finns and Estonians. They are divided into two ethnic groups: the larger Erza group lives further east and the Moksas further west in the Republic of Mordovia (40%), with the rest of the Mordvins scattered among other peoples. Typically, at the time of Vikár's and Bereczki's collecting fieldwork, there were one and a half million of them⁴, now numbering around one million, and like other Finno-Ugrian peoples in the former Soviet Union, they are rapidly dwindling and assimilating. Most of them do not use their mother tongue. From the 14th century they came under strong Russian rule, and under this influence they left off their pagan faith for the Orthodox religion. At the same time, some of their minority groups preserve ancient, presumably archaic Finno-Ugrian traditions.

The Slavic–Turkic–Finno-Ugric stratification is also characteristic of their music. In their polyphonic melodies of Slavic origin, in addition to parallel thirds, there are also parallel seconds, fourths and fifths, and the accompanying part can be either the upper or the lower. In polyphonic pentatonic tunes, the dominant role is not played by vertical chords but by accidentally coinciding horizontal chords. Their repertoire includes minor and major penta- and hexachord melodies, and exceptionally anhemitonic pentatonic tunes.

The melody line of the lament sung to this day is typically tottering on the *do-re-mi* trichord (*Ex. 172a*). Even more typical of the Mordvin repertoire is the unsteady movement up and down the *(mi)-re-do-la* trichord-tetrachord, as seen in the bridal song in Example 172b. Even in their epic songs of 50–70 stanzas, every line often descends on *(so)-mi-re-do-la*. Exceptionally, one may chance upon a semitone *so*-pentatonic scale (*Ex. 172c*). All this shows that, in line with most Finno-Ugrian folk music in the Volga-Kama area, traditional Mordvin melodies are also characteristically based on one or at most two short motives with a narrow ambitus.

a)



b)

⁴ Vikár–Bereczki's Mordvin collection: 157 tunes from the Chuvash, Tatar and Bashkir ASSR in 1968, 1970, 1975 and 1977 (VIKÁR 1980).



Example 172. Mordvin tunes a) *(so)-mi-re-do* motive (VIKÁR 1993: Mordvin-1), b) *re-do-la* motive (VIKÁR 1993: Mordvin-2), c) semitonal *so*-pentatonic wedding tune (VIKÁR 1993: Mordvin-6)

Votyaks

The Votyaks (Udmurt)⁵, together with the Zuryens, belong to the Finno-Permic branch of the Finno-Ugric language family. The majority of them live in the Udmurt Republic, but significant groups are also found in the Bashkir and Tatar Republics, as well as in the Kirov and Perm areas. Their capital is Izhevsk. They have a total population of around 750,000, about 70% of whom speak Udmurt.

In the 9th and 10th centuries, they were engaged in fishing, hunting and partly in agriculture. Later they were under the influence of Volga Bulgars, and after the latter's fall they fled to their present place of residence, while their southern groups came under the rule of the Golden Horde and then the Kazan Khanate. From 1552, they became part of the Moscow Principality, and from the 18th century, with the massive influx of Russians, their mass conversion to Orthodoxy began. During the Soviet period, there was also violent collectivisation and the village communities were broken up. As in many other minorities in the former Soviet Union, education in the mother tongue was limited to the lower school grades in villages of 200 to 800 inhabitants (it still is), and Russian is the dominant language in offices and the cultural life. Despite all this, the Votyaks still fiercely guard their national autonomy, keep alive some of their traditions and even some of their ancient religious rites.

The simplest and probably the oldest Votyak melodies are dominated by descending or hill-shaped motives on three notes (the intonation of the third may be uncertain). This simple melody realm is still alive today, and despite their small tonal range, the songs are enriched by the rhythms of 5/7, 6/7 and 7/7. Examples of *do-re-mi* trichordal tunes include a single-core wedding song with *do-re-mi mi mi-re / do-do-do do* outline, and a two-part 'summer pagan song' on the *mi-re-do-so* semitonal tetrachord, which is strongly suggestive of the motivic structure despite its two-line overall form. Another less frequent trichordal motif is *do-re-fa (=so-la-do)*.

From their history it is easy to understand that similarly to Mordvin music, Votyak folk music is strongly influenced by (pentatonic) Turkic and (polyphonic) Russian tunes. I will not deal with the Slavic influence, but it is indicative of the Turkic influence that all the songs of the Votyaks, who are scattered among the Tatars and Bashkirs, have anhemitonic pentatonic scales ending on *do-*, *so-* or *re*, and that they are performed with rich ornamentation similar to that of the neighbouring Turkic peoples.

Among the pentatonic, 'Tartar' forms, I cite a song sung at spring floods, the lines of which move up and down on the *so-mi-re-do* tetratony (Ex. 173a). The three-line *so*-pentatonic melody of

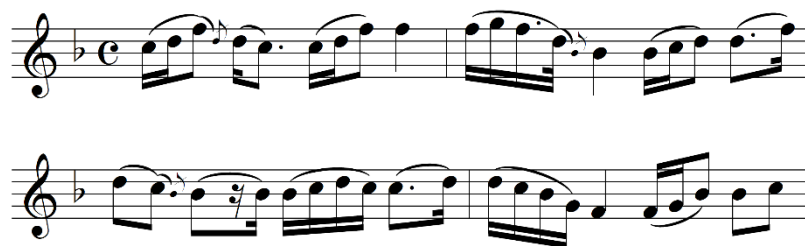
⁵ Vikár-Bereczki's Votyak collection: 686 tunes from the Cheremis, Tatar and Bashkir ASSR in 1966, 1968, 1970 and 1974 (VIKÁR-BERECZKI 1989).

Example 173b, with its lines undulating up and down on the *so'-mi-re-do* and then *mi-re-do-so* tetratony, recalls the characteristic melody motion of the Mongolian Kazakh tunes. Rarely, a semitonal pentatonic scale also occurs (Ex. 173c).

a)



b)



c)



Example 173. Votyak songs a) *so'-mi-re-do* tetratony (VIKÁR 1993: Votyak-5), b) three-lined *so*-pentatonic tune with undulating melody outline (VIKÁR 1993: Votyak-8), c) *do-re-mi* trichord (VIKÁR 1993: Votyak-6)

To sum up: most Votyak melodies have a tri- or tetratonic motivic structure, the pentatonic scale suggesting a Tatar or Bashkir origin, which is confirmed by the characteristic, advanced ornamentation.

Cheremis people

Besides the Mordvins, the Cheremis (Mari) are the other group of the Volga Finno-Ugrian people, numbering about 670,000. The Cheremis live in the Mari El Republic, their capital is Yoskar Ola. They used to live further south, but in the 7th and 8th centuries they came into contact with Turkic groups and were incorporated into Volga Bulgaria (700–1236).⁶ In any case, they were under Turkic influence in Volga Bulgaria for several centuries, as the abundance of Bulgar-Turkic words in their language attests. In 1236, the Mongols smashed Volga Bulgaria and organised the Golden Horde.

⁶ This process is refuted by Klára Agyagási in the Appendix (The Cheremis in the Volga Region, pp. 247–259) of her book *Chuvash Historical Phonetics* (Wiesbaden, 2019).

From that time on, the Cheremis, who had allied status, were subject to strong Tatar influence. In 1552, the Russians captured Kazan, the capital of the Tatar Khanate, which marks the beginning of the strong Russian influence that continues to this day.

Compared with other Finno-Ugrian peoples, the Cheremis have remarkably few songs related to specific days and the rites of passage, and there are no lamentations or epic songs, which are otherwise characteristic of the Finno-Ugrian peoples. Conversely, their famous lyrical melodies are the more widespread, and have been greatly Turkified under the influence of the neighbouring Chuvash and Tatar peoples. Nearly all these tunes are *so-*(or to a lesser extent *do-*) pentatonic, have an octave or broader range and descending character. The melodies are basically motivic in structure, and even the longer songs are characterised by their single-core nature and the variability of the number of syllables to the lines.

The typical melodies of the three large groups of the Mari are as follows:

1) *Forest Cheremis*. This group and their music can be divided into several subgroups.

In the southern border region, where they mainly interact with Tatars (less so with Chuvash people), they are characterized by large-scale realistic *so-pentatonic* fifth-shifting songs. As the lines are exactly repeated, one half of the melody can take on a life of its own (*Ex. 174a*). In contrast, the fifth-shifting songs of the Mountain Cheremis are *la-* or *do-* pentatonic, tonal, and the Mountain and Forest Cheremis do not know each other's fifth-shifting tunes(!).

The songs of Forest Cheremis living further to the north and east are shorter and simpler, with a closing *do* or *so*. Their four-line tunes are characterised by the so-called *small form* A⁵BAB, A⁴BAB and a similar ABCB form in which the C line is lower than the A. These songs are characterised by short lines and relatively simple motives (*Ex. 174b*).

The Sernur region is characterised by a semitonal (!) *so-pentatonic (so)-mi-re-do-ti-so* scale with the 2nd degree being a major third distance away from the key note. Here, too, the small-form is common, but many other songs are also sung, characterised by *so-pentatony*, short lines and a varied, but mostly descending, structure (*Ex. 174c*).

a)





Example 174. Forest Cheremis tunes a) so-pentatonic with real fifth shift (VIKÁR 1993: Cheremis-6), b) A⁵BAB or A⁴BAB small form (VIKÁR 1993: Cheremis-3), c) so-ti-do-re-mi-so semitonal pentatonic northeastern tune (VIKÁR 1993: Cheremis-2)

2) The *Mountain Cheremis* (about 100,000) live in the south, close to the Volga, in the vicinity of the Chuvash. They are dominated by tunes of four long lines of broadly arched, anhemitonic *la-* or *do-*pentatony with tonal fifth-shifting (i.e., within the frames of the tonality). Typical forms are A⁸A⁵A⁴A, A⁷A⁵A³A and A⁵A⁵AA. Two-octave ambituses are also possible, so it is not uncommon to have an octave break, even in mid-line. These Cheremis songs seem to be relatively recent and may have developed under Turkic influence (Ex. 175).



Example 175. *La*-pentatonic Mountain Cheremis tune (VIKÁR 1993: Cheremis-8)

3) Outside the republic, some three or four hundred kilometres to the east, in Bashkir territories live the *Eastern* (or *Ufa*) Cheremis,⁷ who are the representatives of the oldest traditions and way of life. Their songs (and language) show strong links with the Forest Cheremis group, but they do not know either the small form or the quintal shift in music. Their songs are mainly *so-* and *do-*pentatonic, characterised by a structure based on a few motifs and their variations (Ex. 176a). There are also four-line songs of larger tonal range with 8, 7, 8, 7, and 7, 4, 7, 3 syllabic lines,

⁷ Cheremis diaspora live in the Kirov area.

although the latter can also be evaluated as 7+4, 7+3 syllabic two-line forms (*Ex. 176b*). Typically, however, they have a narrow (sometimes tetratonic) ambitus, with occasional semitone steps.

On the whole, their music is closer to that of the Finno-Ugrian peoples than to the southern fifth-shifting tradition. This also points to the fact that the northern and eastern Cheremis music is the older, and the southern–western quintal shifting music is the more recent development.

a)



b)



Example 176. Eastern Cheremis tunes a) *so-pentatonic* song (VIKÁR 1971: 54), b) *do-pentatonic* song (VIKÁR 1971: 7)

Turkic peoples in the Volga-Kama-Belaya region

The ethnogenesis of these peoples is also very complex: it includes old Ugrian and Iranian layers, as well as a number of Finno-Ugrian peoples who still live as separate ethnic groups in the area. The Finno-Ugrian peoples appeared here in the 3rd–2nd millennia BC and the Iranians in the 2nd millennium BC. The Turkic tribes arrived with the movement of Eurasian nomads beginning around the 2nd century, culminating with the arrival of the Volga Huns around 350 AD. From then on, the area was dominated politically and economically by Turkic peoples. In the Genghisid era, large ethnic blocks were displaced, and the final form was shaped by tsarist and later Soviet power, in many cases uniting peoples that could have become separate ethnicities.

Chuvash people

The majority of Chuvash people, about one and a half million, live in the Republic of Chuvashia, with about 300,000 living to the east of it.⁸ Their capital is Cheboksary. This people is a mixture of Eastern Finno-Ugrian, Bulgarian Turkic and Tatar peoples, and in a sense constitutes a transition between the Finno-Ugrian peoples of the northern Middle Volga region and the Turkic peoples who had been pushing up to here. Chuvash belongs to the Oghuric branch of Western Old Turkic, which was the official language of vast Volga Bulgaria of the 10th–13th centuries, to which the ancestors of the Chuvash also belonged. Later, the Kazan Tatars and, from the 16th century, the Russians became the

⁸ Vikár–Bereczki's Chuvash collection: 651 tunes from the Chuvash, Tatar and Bashkir ASSR in 1964, 1966, 1968, 1970, 1974 and 1975. See Vikár–Bereczki (1979).

rulers of the region. Like other peoples in the area, they repeatedly rebelled against the Russians, but eventually most of them converted to the Orthodox faith. Small groups of them migrated eastwards to escape Christian conversion.

According to some theories, the ancestors of the northern Chuvash people are the Finno-Ugrian Cheremis, Burtas and Udmurts, who were assimilated by the Volga Bulgars.⁹ In any case, there is no doubt about the linguistic connection between the Volga Bulgars and the Chuvash. In her book *A Chuvash Historical Phonetics* (2019), Klára Agyagási uses linguistic material to prove that Chuvash is the 3rd dialect of Volga Bulgarian.¹⁰

The problem, however, is the lack of Islamic traditions among the Chuvash, which were very strong among the Volga Bulgars. There is no record that the Chuvash ever called themselves Bulgarian.

It is likely that the Chuvash people emerged in the period after the Mongol conquest. Bulgarian and Oghuric-speaking, perhaps non-Islamicised, elements migrated to the Finno-Ugrian area before and after the break-up of the Golden Horde, where they mixed with the local population, creating the Chuvash people. It is also possible that Oghur elements, not yet seriously affected by Islam in the interior of the Bulgarian Empire, had already become somewhat unified on the fringes of the Finno-Ugrian world and, fleeing the Mongols, pushed deeper into the Finno-Ugrian zone. Some Soviet scholars suggest that the Bulgars fled from the Mongols into pagan forest areas where they converted from Islam to pagan religions.¹¹ We do not know when the process of Oghurisation reached a critical stage. Bulgarian influence had been continuously affecting the Finno-Ugrian elements even before the Mongols arrived. The Mari language, for example, is full of Islamic terminology, which was transmitted there by Volga Bulgarians.¹² The formation of the Chuvash people is most probably a product of the turmoil and population displacement in the Mongol period.¹³ The Kipchak-Tatar influence reached them when they were subjects of the Kazan Khanate.

The most typical genre of Chuvash music is the short lyrical song, associated with the calendar year and rites of passage (wedding, choosing a mate, death, fasting, feast of spring sacrifice of the earth, etc.). Most of the songs are in anhemitonic *so-*, *do-* or *la-*pentatony, but in the south and east the use of semitonal pentatonic scales and uncertain thirds is not uncommon. They are usually sung in *tempo giusto* (*parlando* is rare) and frequent is a change of metre, even within a line, e.g. 2/4, 5/8 or 3/4, 7/8. There are also lines that cannot be broken down into simpler parts (7–11 syllables), lines with short appendages (7+3, 8+3, 7+4, etc.), and more complex forms in which two simple lines are joined together. Chuvash folk music has many links with Cheremis and Tatar folk music.

Like the Chuvash people, their folk music can also be arranged into three groups.

The *Virjal* (Upper) Chuvash live in the northern third of the Chuvash Republic. This is the economically most advanced area in the region, and their typically four-line folk music is also the most developed and probably the newest in the Chuvash-inhabited areas. They mainly sing four-line descending melodies in the form of AABB, ABAB, AABA, etc., with few tunes containing three or four different lines. The lines are very rarely ascending, as we also see in the music of most Turkic peoples. The *Virjal* Chuvash also have tonal fifth-shifting melodies, which bear a strong resemblance to the real fifth-shifting tunes of the mountain Cheremis they are in contact with. Such melodies are abundantly represented in the chapter of the present volume dealing with the eastern connections of Hungarian folk music. For now, let us just say that they can be found within a circle of 100 km in diameter on the Cheremis-Chuvash border, as well as in a longer but narrow border zone. Their fourth-shifting tunes show similarities with Tatar fourth-shifting melodies.

⁹ KAHOVSKY 2003: 220–231.

¹⁰ AGYAGÁSI 2019: 160–180.

¹¹ KUZNECOV 1976: 49.

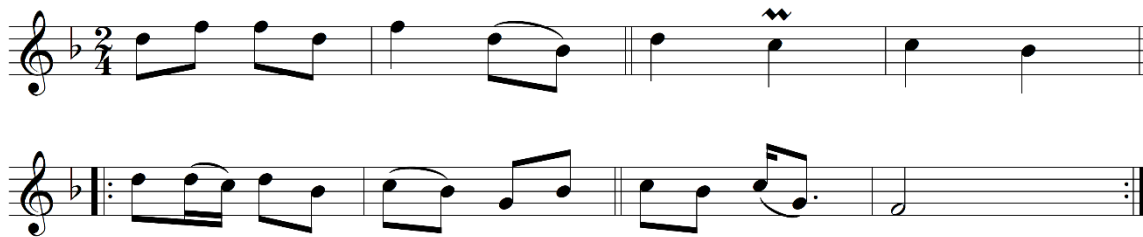
¹² AGYAGÁSI 2017: 36–45.

¹³ KUZNECOV 1976: 49–52.

The *Anatri* (Lower) Chuvash live in the southern part of the Republic. They are characterised by anhemitonic *so-*, *do-* and *la-*pentatonic scales and simple song forms, the most common being the $ABB_{(v)}$, $AA_{(v)}B$ three-line structure. The semitonal pentatonic (*so-ti-do-re*) scale, the hesitant third and the repetition of one or two motives are not uncommon (*Ex. 177a*).

Eastern Chuvash are found in Tatar, Bashkir and West Siberian regions. They sing simple, single- or two-section melodies of 3–4 notes (*so-ti-do-re*) (see the Sernur Cheremis), with few motives, a stable melodic line but often with varying rhythm (*Ex. 177b*). Their ornamentation shows Tatar influence. Here, among the southern Chuvash, and also among the Tatars, the A^cA and the three-line form are typical.

a)



b)



Example 177. Chuvash tunes a) southern three-line form (VIKÁR 1993: Chuvash-3) b) eastern motivic tune (VIKÁR 1993: Chuvash-1)

Tatars and Bashkirs

At the confluence of the Volga and Kama rivers lies the Tatar Republic (Tatarstan), with Kazan as its capital, inhabited by some 4 million Kazan Tatars and numerous minorities. Around half of the Tatars live outside the republic, mainly in Bashkortostan, the northern regions of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, Siberia and Kazakhstan. The Tatar and Bashkir languages belong to the Kipchak language family and are so close that the two peoples can easily understand each other and sometimes cannot even tell whether they are Tatars or Bashkirs. This is not surprising, as they have lived side by side for a long time, interacting closely.

The ancestors of the Tatars lived in Volga Bulgaria (660–1238), then they were conquered by the Mongols under Batu Khan in the 13th century. The present-day Tatar population emerged from an intermingling of Mongol and Kipchak Turkic soldiers of the Golden Horde, while the role of the Kipchak-speaking Turkic population of the Golden Horde increased significantly, and in 1430 they seceded as the independent Kazan Khanate. In 1552, the armies of Tsar Ivan IV captured their capital, which marks the beginning of the conversion to Orthodoxy among the Tatars, who had adopted Islam around 922. At this time, a new style of music, that of the highly ornamented, broadly arched, mostly sad or emotional long songs (*uzun küy*), evolved and quickly became popular among them and

the Bashkirs. Only a minority of them converted to Christianity, and these Christian Tatars found it easier to preserve their old customs and simple songs under the new faith.¹⁴

The Tatars exerted a great influence on the surrounding peoples, while their music remained in contact with the pentatonic music of distant regions, and its study is therefore of special importance. The Tatar and Bashkir peoples, before forming their national communities through the partial assimilation of the Finno-Ugrian peoples, lived in Asia, from where they brought several characteristics of their culture.

To the east of the Tartars lies *Bashkortostan* on the western slopes of the southern Ural Mountains, on the border between Europe and Asia, with Ufa as its capital. The 4 million Bashkirs make up a third of the population, the rest being Russian, Tatar, Chuvash, Cheremis, Votyak and Mordvin. Their ancestors lived here as early as the 9th century. (By the 14th century they had converted to Islam, but Islam was less widespread among them than among the Tatars.) In the 10th–13th centuries they belonged to Volga Bulgaria, and in the 15th century their territory was divided between the Tatars of the Kazan Khanate, the Siberian Khanate and the Nogais. By 1579 they had fallen under Russian rule (Ivan the Terrible). Although geographically the Bashkirs were farther from the Russians than the Tatars, they had better relations with them and often fought alongside them.

The same Oghur, Kipchak and Finno-Ugrian elements were involved in the ethnogenesis of the Bashkirs as in that of the neighbouring Volga Tatars, but in different proportions. In today's Bashkir language there are two main dialects, Southern and Eastern, in which we find the features that separate the Bashkirs from the Tatars. The north-western dialect is much closer to Tatar.

The Bashkirs are of particular importance for Hungarian prehistory. The name *bashkort* already appears in Islamic geographical literature (e.g., in the form *bashgirt*, *basjird*), in al-Kashgari's work *basgirt*, which is close to the Ilkhanid Persian form.¹⁵ The name was also often used for Hungarians, e.g., in the form *bazhgir*. Ligeti assumes that *bazhgir* is a Turkish version of the Hungarian word *bazsgir*, which was passed on to the Kipchak people who took the place of the tribal confederation led by the Hungarians who left for the Pontic steppe.¹⁶ And indeed, travellers to 'Magna Hungaria/Bashkiria' still found Hungarian-speaking people there in the 13th century, that is, on the eve of the Mongol invasion.¹⁷ The Kazakhs and the Kyrgyz used the term *Ishtek/Istek* for the Bashkirs, which was used for the Uralic peoples. However, no Hungarian elements were found at all in the Bashkir tongue.¹⁸

Kuzeyev, while not denying the Finno-Ugrian elements, takes a slightly different view. According to him, nomadic elements speaking Shaz Turkic languages flooded into the Bashkir Country in the 7th to 10th centuries from southern Siberia and northern central Asia. They were in contact with the Oghurs, and got incorporated into the Volga Bulgarian state at the end of the 9th–beginning of the 10th century, absorbing some Finno-Ugrian peoples and driving out others, such as the ancestors of the Hungarians. The Kipchak language began to spread in the area in the late 10th–early 11th century, and this relationship was further strengthened in the Genghisid period. According to Kuzeyev, the ethnogenesis was completed by the 16th century, after the Bashkirs were incorporated into the Russian state. After that, even smaller numbers of Kalmyks, Central Asian Sars, Tipter Tatars and Misher Tatars merged with them.¹⁹

In fact, the two theories touched on above can be combined. The Hungarian confederation contained many (not only Oghur) Turkic elements, which may have been involved in the formation of the Bashkirs. It is clear that prior to their shift to the Pontic (Black Sea) steppes the Hungarian alliance

¹⁴ Vikár-Bereczki *Tatar collection*: 580 tunes from the Tatar and Bashkir ASSR recorded in 1968, 1970, 1974, 1975 and 1977 (VIKÁR-BERECZKI 1999). *Bashkir collection*: 634 tunes recorded in the Bashkir ASSR in 1975, 1977 and 1979. The Bashkir material has not come out in book form.

¹⁵ LIGETI 1986: 377–378, 397–399.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 400.

¹⁷ GYÖRFFY 1986: 61–62.

¹⁸ VÁSÁRY 1985: 201–232.

¹⁹ KUZEYEV 1974: 241–242.

was dominant in the Bashkir region. We do not know to what extent the area remained Oghuric until the arrival of the Kipchaks. It is probable that Kipchakisation occurred here in the same way as in the Volga Bulgarian areas, as evidenced by the strong similarity between the Tatar and Bashkir languages. At the same time, the Bashkir ethnonym, which cannot be derived from Turkic, points towards the Ugrian world, as Zimonyi wrote in detail in his book *Muszlim források a honfoglalás előtti magyarokról* [Muslim sources on Pre-Conquest Hungarians].²⁰

The Bashkirs have no real national identity, their history being moulded since the Mongol invasion mainly in subordination to the Khanate of Kazan or Siberian Khanate and the Nogai Union. There are mainly economic differences between them and the highly urbanized Tatars, in this sense the Bashkirs as a people are a Soviet creation.²¹ Thus, in the final analysis, the Tatars and the Bashkirs can be considered as identical, or at least potentially as constituents of a common nation. There have also been attempts to unite them politically.²²

Tatar and Bashkir folk music

Several Tatar and Bashkir tune types and even styles are so similar that it is impossible to separate them. Both peoples sing exclusively anhemitonic songs based on pentatonic scales with different endings, and have many melodies in common that fit well into both the Bashkir and Tatar traditions. They also like to perform long songs (*uzun küy*) in unfixed rhythm, richly ornamented and with room for improvisation. The tonal range of a man singing a long song can reach two octaves, but, unlike the Cheremis, singers with an average vocal range do not resort to octave breaking. However, when they sing together, they mostly sing 'short songs' (*kiska küy*) in set rhythm and without ornamentation.

Tatar and Bashkir songs are mostly in four lines and contain at least two different lines, the stichic form being as rare as those containing four different lines. However, they also have songs with two lines and, less frequently, three or five lines.

Both peoples also have simpler, less ornate older musical layers, but tritonic, tetratonic sets are rare. The songs mostly move on anhemitonic pentatonic scales without *pien* notes, the most common being the *so-* and *do-pentatony*, which Mongolian researchers believe are the older tonal scales. The semitonal *so-ti-do-re-mi* pentatony also occurs.

In Tatar and Bashkir songs, the lines are generally of similar length, and the most common syllable counts are 7, 8, 9, 10 and variations of these. In many Tatar songs, lines 1 and 2 are the same, and even line 3 begins similarly (AAA_cB form). A quarter of the songs collected by Vikár and Bereczki were *poco rubato*, the rest were performed in tight rhythm (2/4, 4/4, 6/8). Not only the meters and lines but also the ornamentation show regularities.

Tatar and Bashkir musical and other influences are predominant in the area: it is typical that while the Votyaks or Chuvash sing in Tatar, the Tatars and Bashkirs never sing in any other language. It is possible that the Tatar *mi-re-do* tunes are of Votyak origin and that their A⁴⁻⁵BAB small form may have been borrowed from the Cheremis, although they may also be part of an older tradition.

There are also differences between Tatar and Bashkir songs. The Tatars' broadly arched tunes are supple, moving on adjacent pentatonic notes, and are crowded with relatively smooth and easy-to-sing ornaments. The motifs in the songs are proportionally spaced, and in addition to the 4-line strophe, there are also 3- and 5-line forms. Even in their tunes of unfixed rhythm, repetitions of motifs, possibly slightly varied, are common, not infrequently a fifth or fourth lower. However, a fifth response affecting the whole melody is unknown. In contrast, in the melismas of the Bashkirs' otherwise similar melodies, there are frequent large leaps and ornamentations, and the syllabic parts alternate more irregularly. The reason for this difference may be that the Tatars mixed with several

²⁰ ZIMONYI 2005: 53-55.

²¹ BENNINGSEN-WIMBUSH 1986: 247-248.

²² ZENKOVSKY 1967: 165-178.

peoples, while the Bashkirs remained closer to the Mongols' manner of singing, for example. Perhaps because of the influence of Islam, songs associated with customs, with events or occasions in general, are few among the Tatars, while among the Bashkirs they are practically unknown.

In Bashkir music, the heroic song (*kubair*) represents an old, simple style, where the *do-re-mi-so* tone set is arranged in lines. There are no ornaments or major leaps, and the melody moves in small intervals close to speech (Ex. 178a). Some laments and farewell songs of brides can also be classified as part of this old stratum.

Since the middle of the 17th century, the Tatars and the Bashkirs have also sung historical songs. These songs do not lead into the world of myths, unlike the heroic song, but recount events of the recent past, in tunes of four 7- or 8-syllabic lines. Lines 1–2 and 3–4, resp. belong together, with a musical half-close at the end of line 2. The second half of the melody may be a transposed-varied version of the first line or new music. A line usually consists of two motives (a+a, a+a_v, a+b). The style of performance is simple, restrained, unadorned syllabic, mostly tempo giusto, sometimes recitative (Ex.178b).

a)

b)

Example 178. Christian Tatar songs. a) old tune style (VIKÁR 1993: Tatar-2), b) historical song (VIKÁR 1979: p. 265, No. 24)

Several villages have their own sparsely ornamented, four-line tunes (*aul küy*) performed in moderate tempo. These tunes are divided into two parts: the second half is below the first, and although there is no fifth-shifting, a partial fourth shift is not uncommon (Ex. 179). This may be explained by the fact that most of the old melodies are built from the *so-la-do-re* tetratony, which remains within the same pentatonic system a fourth lower [*re-mi-so-la*], while transposed a fifth, *fa* below *do* leaves the system.

Example 179. Village song (VIKÁR 1993: Tatar-4)

The short songs (*kiska küy*, *takmak*) developed and spread in the last one or two centuries, especially after the Russian Revolution, influenced by the Russians' dance music in kolomeyka rhythm. They are pentatonic, four-line isorhythmic songs, characterised by syllabic singing, faster tempo, relatively smooth melodic lines without major leaps, and rhythmic simplicity. The short songs

are reminiscent of the *chastushka*, which is very popular among Russians, but their tone, musical form and motifs fit in with traditional Tatar and Bashkir folk music.

The genre of the long song (*uzun küy*) is completely unknown among the Christian Tatars, while the other Tatar groups (Kazan, Mishar, Astrakhan) and the Bashkirs consider it the most valuable part of their tradition. The long songs express the feelings and thoughts of individuals, each having a designation indicating a tune type. The few but widespread long songs live on the surface of the repertoire and vary widely. It is possible that the Islamic schools (*madrasa*) played a role in their dissemination, as patriotic themes were also included. According to local researchers, this melodic form cannot be older than the *bayet* (mid-17th century), as it is not found among Christian Tatars who separated in the 16th century. It is also telling that their lyrics are poems by 19th century poets. According to Bashkir scholars, most of today's Bashkir songs are a product of the last two or three centuries, or at least of the Islamic era.

The long songs are longer and more complex than other Bashkir and Tatar melodies, but the overall picture fits into the typical Tatar-Bashkir repertoire. Usually, four lines of roughly equal length make up a melody, but sometimes there are 5-6-7 lines, some shorter and some longer ones. The first half of the tunes start high and then gradually descend. The second half of the melody starts somewhere around mid-range, then rises before reaching the close (*Ex. 180*). Similar melodies can also be found in the music of other Turkic peoples (for example, Bartók's (1976) *Anatolian Song No. 8a*).



Example 180. Long song (Uyel) (VIKÁR 1979: p. 261, No. 16)

The lyrics of the long songs are much simpler than the melodies. However, the ornamentation makes the lyrics difficult to follow, even though there are hardly any filler syllables. The latter are more audible in the giusto syllabic dance songs. It is often not easy to pick out a main note from the rich cluster of grace notes. Because of its complexity, the long song requires solo singing. Three types of ornamentation can be distinguished: 1) in the *circumscribing* ornamentation, the main melody note is flanked by a prefix and/or a suffix, usually with the range of a second or third, 2) the *connecting* ornaments are very attractive melismata of up to 10–15 notes, used in place of longer notes or pauses, 3) the role of the *closing* ornamentation is that of a cadenza, a summing up before the end, which reinforces or even defines the (pentatonic) mode. Most of the longer ornamentations either move only upwards or both up and down. The tonal range of long songs is 12–14 notes, and the range of one or another broadly arched line can be an octave. The songs generally move on *so-*, *do-* (less frequently *la-* and *re-*) pentatonic scales, in which *pien* notes may also occur.

Example 181 presents a long song which, with its *la*-pentatonic scale, descending character and several melodic turns, recalls old-style Hungarian tunes.

UCSPILI, 1975. AP 9549 e

zängär külmägön-nön, aj(z), zän(z)-gä-rön
 zül-lär ala, zül-gä el-mä-göz.
 jäs-lök süjgän jä-rön jat-ka ka-la.
 jäs süj-sägöz, ü-zü-lüp süj-mä-göz.

Example 181. Long song (VIKÁR 1999: 258)

The most important tune groups of Tatar and Bashkir folk music, and their connections with Hungarian folk music

In addition to the above general correlations, it is particularly true of Tatar and Bashkir folk music that the researcher bumps into more or less exact equivalents of Hungarian scales, motifs and structures at every turn. Moreover, although there is no definite fifth-shifting, there are numerous melodies with fourth/fifth-shifting details. The descending four-line melody of anhemitonic (*la*-, *do*-, *so*- and *re*-) pentatony is dominant, and most of the most populous groups have Hungarian connections.

Convincing parallels are the easiest to find among *la*-pentatonic tunes. One is the tune group with 7/8 (b3) b3 cadences and high moving first lines (Ex. 182c), and this is joined by melodies that fall between the small-form tunes and those with 5 (b3) b3 cadences, because their second line descends to *la* instead of remaining on *do* (Ex. 182b). In terms of melody outline, here belongs Example 182a and perhaps *also* Example 182d, whose cadences are rather difficult to determine. We can also include here two Tatar melodies with 7 (b3) b3/1 cadences in *do*-pentatony(!) (Ex. 182e,f).

a-b)

Three staves of musical notation in G minor. The first staff (a) shows a melodic line with various ornaments and phrasing. The second (b) and third (c) staves show a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes.

c-d)

Three staves of musical notation in G minor. The first staff (d) shows a melodic line with eighth notes and some phrasing. The second (e) and third (f) staves show a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth notes and some phrasing.

e-f)

Three staves of musical notation in G minor. The first staff (g) shows a melodic line with a triplet and various phrasing. The second (h) and third (i) staves show a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth notes and some phrasing.

Example 182. Tatar–Bashkir tunes with similarities to Hungarian tunes. a) Ta5-70, b) Ta5-28, c) T0-27, d) Ta5-114, e) Ta5-II-61, f) Ta5-40

It is not hard to find Hungarian analogies to popular Tatar–Bashkir fourth/fifth-shifting melodies of 7/8 (5) x cadences in *la*- and *re*-pentatony among the descending fifth-shifting pentatonic songs (Ex. 183a,b,c). The group of AAA_cB form Tatar–Bashkir tunes with 5 (5) x cadences is also populous. Similar melodies of A⁴⁻⁵A⁴⁻⁵A_cA form occur in other Turkic folk music and in Hungarian folk music as well. In Tatar–Bashkir folk music, there are also *so*-pentatonic tunes with 4 (4) 1 cadences (Ex. 183d) and *do*-pentatonic tunes with 5 (5) 4 cadences (Ex. 183e) that are somewhat similar in form.

The 7/8 (5) b3 cadential series occurs mainly in *do*-pentatonic songs (183f), a variant of which is the *do*-pentatonic tune group with 7 (7) x cadences (Ex. 183g) and the *la*-pentatonic melody group with 8 (8) x cadences and AAA_cB form (Ex.183h) with three high-moving lines, the third line remaining on the 8th degree or descending to one of the 7th, 5th, b3rd or 2nd degrees. There are also several AABC-form and even fourth-shifting *so*-pentatonic melodies (Ex. 183i). In these groups the melody can sometimes rise very high, up to the 11th degree. Among the Tatar–Bashkir tunes, a group of *do*-pentatonic tunes of 10 (10) x cadences is also very popular, with AABC, or even A⁴B⁵AB or A⁵A⁵A³A overall form. The latter has no Hungarian counterpart.

a-b)

Four staves of musical notation in 7/8 time with a key signature of one flat. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns and melodic lines, with some notes beamed together and some measures containing rests.

c-d)

Four staves of musical notation in 7/8 time with a key signature of one flat. The notation shows more complex rhythmic structures, including many beamed eighth notes and sixteenth notes, with some measures containing rests.

e-f)

g)

h-i)

Example 183. Tatar and Bashkir tunes that are similar to Hungarian tunes. a) Ta5-99, b) T0-31, c) Ta5-58, d) Ta5-II-10, e) Ta5-II-56, f) B0-188, g) Bo-193, h) Ta5/II-39, i) Ta5-II-8

As for the two-line Tatar–Bashkir melodies, almost all of them are *do*-pentatonic, the cadences of one or two songs are b3, 4, 5, 11, while the rest have 7, 8, or 10. The higher cadencing tunes are characterized by a disjunct structure and a fourth- or fifth-parallelism between the lines (Ex. 184).

Obviously, there are many other tunes in the repertoire of Tatar and Bashkir folk songs, but the above are representative of the most populous groups.

Christian Tatars

In contrast to the Muslim Tatars, the Christian Tatars, who live separately, preserve the melodies of the old rituals in large numbers and with resolve. They speak an archaic dialect and stick to their pagan customs, but they also have songs for Christian festivals, weddings, gatherings, soldiers' farewells, etc. Their songs are characterised by a short structure consisting of the elements a_v-a or a, b and a set of 3-4 notes: *so-la-do-(re)*, *la-do-re*, *do-re-mi-(so)*. The songs are serene, without ornamentation, emotional exaggeration or improvisation. This seems to be the old melodic style of the Kazan Tatars, and can be linked to the tradition of the southern Chuvash. There is no separate group among the Bashkirs to preserve the old traditions, but the old style is also alive among them. This includes, for example, the heroic songs, the oldest genre of their folk poetry.

Mishar Tatars

Their name is either related to the Finno-Ugric *mescsera* or to the *magyar/megyer* word.²³

This group emerged in the 14th–15th centuries, their ethnogenesis including elements of Meshch, Burtas, Mordvin, Bulgarian, Kipchak and Shaz Turkic speakers, who lived in the area under Tatar rule. They are scattered and have come into contact with many peoples. They know the historical songs and the (less ornate) long song and short song (*kiska küy*) genres, but their culture differs from that of the Kazan Tatars in several respects. For example, they sing a lot of songs from the customs of neighbouring peoples (wedding songs, bridal songs). They prefer the *la*-pentatonic scale (*Ex. 185*).

²³ See NÉMETH 1972: 293–299 and in more detail, with the inclusion of onomastic material from the Volga region, VÁSÁRY 1975.



Example 185. Mishar Tatar tune (VIKÁR 1979: p. 260, No. 14)

Siberian Tatars

The least explored group are the Tatars of *Siberia*, who were mainly formed from the peoples of the *Kuchum* Khanate peoples. The *Baraba* Tatars only became Islamized as late as the 19th century. The constituents of the *Tobol* and *Irtis* Tatars are Southern Tatar tribes, Central Asian elements and Volga Tatar groups. Their tribal consciousness has hardly survived, and Islam is the main factor of their identity.²⁴ Some of their constituent elements can be traced back to the West Siberian *Kimek* unit from which the Kipchaks originated. In the Genghisid period they were enlarged with Nogai and other elements, but their exact ethnogenesis is not clear. Although linguistically they are closely related to the Volga Tatars, their origins differ in important respects. Smaller Tatar groups are also found in Belarus, Lithuania and Poland. The few Siberian Tatar songs I have reviewed are more developed, octave or wider-range four-line tunes of greater length, sometimes including fourth shifting or transposition to other intervals. The overall picture is similar to that of the Kazan Tatars.

²⁴ RADLOFF 1884–1893: 115–121.



Picture 9. The author with his wife in Turkish costume during field research in Anatolia