

MILITARY MUSIC IN HUN PERIOD

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ABSTRACT: The Huns, who reigned between the fifth century B.C. and the fifth century A.D., had their own unique music. The origins of the Huns' music are in army and religious musical traditions too, like the other Turk tribes. The Huns' musical tradition is dated to ancient times, and can be distinguished from the world's other military music through performance, performance location, and ritual aspects. The military music community was called "tuğ team" in the Hun period. The first Hun military music ensembles consisted of yırağ (surnay, shawm), borguy (pipe), t mr k (drum), k vr k (drum) and  eng (bell) in this age. We are able to obtain information about the Hun period from Chinese and Byzantine sources and archaeological findings, which are an important cultural element to the Tug team. This study will exhibit the historical journey of the Huns' military music traditions. This military music ensemble's tasks in the imperial palaces, entertainments, wars and religious rituals will be discussed.

Key Words: Military Music, Music In Hun Period, Musicology, Turkic Music.

Hun D nemi Asker  M ziđi

 Z: Kendilerine  zg n m zikleri olan Hunlar, M . 5 ile MS. 5 yy. arası h kimiyet s rm şlerdir. Diđer T rk topluluklarda olduđu gibi Hunlarda da m zik orduya ve dinsel geleneđe dayanır. Hunların m zikal geleneđi,  ok eski zamanlara dayanmakla birlikte, diđer d nya  skeri m ziklerinden  alınıřı, icra yerleri ve rit elleri ile ayrılmaktadır. Hun d neminde bu asker  m zik topluluđuna "tuđ takımı" denilmiřtir. Bu devirdeki ilk Hun, tuđ takımı "yırađ, borgan, t mr k, k vr k ve  eng"den oluřmuřtur. T rk k lt r n n  nemli bir par ası olan tuđ takımına y nelik sunulan bilgiler,  in, Bizans yazılı kaynakları ile arkeolojik bulgulardan faydalanarak sunulmuřtur. Bu  alıřmada Hun asker  m zik geleneđi tarihi akıř i inde

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sergilenmiştir. Bu askerî müzik takımının saraylarda, eğlencelerde, savaşlarda ve dini ayinlerde aldığı roller aktarılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Askerî Müzik, Hun Dönemi Müziği, Müzikoloji, Türk Müziği

1. INTRODUCTION

All nations have a distinctive music of their own and all music styles have a particular style of performance. Turkish music takes its roots from its military and religious music. In other words, it can be suggested that the point of origin for Turkish music dates back to its army and its military music which was mostly incorporated with religion. This tradition, which goes way back in history, shows different characteristics than world's other military music not only in terms of place of performance and usage, but also of its rituals. What is more, it has inspired other nation's military music bands.

The Turks are known for their rooted history that dates back around 5000 years. In the light of historical and archeological findings, the information on Turkish culture has started to be brought together since the Hun Period. According to Gazimihâl, it is the Turks that expanded the military music towards the West. It is not only acknowledged that various musical instruments, namely drums (davul), shawm (zurna¹), fretless trumpet (boru) and cymbal (zil), were used in the palaces, armies and official ceremonies of the Hun, but also known that this musical band was called "The Tuğ Team" (Gazimihal and Ak 1955-2002: 1, 36).

Tuğ Teams, which are one of the most prominent symbols of Turkish states in history, were also characterized as a "Sign of War". What is more, it was a war weapon, too. Tuğ teams were given various different missions during wars. Horse tail attached to tuğ sticks' tips. Tuğ Teams demonstrated places and movements of particular level military units. They also organized the movements of the army by the melodies and rhythms they played. Additionally, "hakani kös (khan's kettledrum)", which moved together with the chief commander or khan of the time and which was played according to his orders, was another instrument that arranged the actions of the army with its loud tone. The Huns believed that divine powers played these drums and that their tone deeply moved people as a supernatural phenomenon just like thunders did (Ögel 1987: 19-20). These beliefs must be the reflection of the military music that the Turks,

¹ We learn information from Ögel's and Budak's works about using shawm in this period. But these instruments must be a prototype of today's shawm.

who had attacked the Chinese with regular armies since 3000 BC, (Gömeç 2009: 1) had traditionalized and internalized since the same date.

2. HISTORIC TOUR IN HUN STATE'S MILITARY MUSIC

For Huns, music was an inherent element of daily life, and it was also an indispensable part of religion, official ceremonies and festivals. Palaces of the Hun emperors as well as the places where Hun governors reside were not only governmental centers of the state and their community, but also the most prominent center of attraction for culture, music and art. Music was especially given utmost importance; therefore, such centers welcomed musicians and music bands, and people attended concerts and recitals (Uçan 2000: 22).

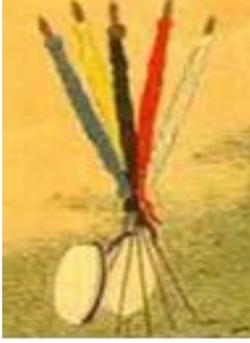
Huns constructed a common language for Turkish music by passing their musical culture onto all peoples and provinces they ruled. Huns, who helped Turkish music become widespread, also influenced other music cultures as well as being influenced by them. This paved the way for the Hun music to improve in many terms such as style, form, and variety of instruments (Vural 2011: 57).

The Tuğ Team, which was the military music unit of the Hun period, primarily consisted of yırağ (shawm), borguy (trumpet), tümrük (drum), küvrük (kettledrum) and çeng (cymbal). Another source states that “the Hun Tuğ Team, which constitutes the origin of the Mehter Team (Ottoman janissary Band), was made up of instruments such as tuğ (flag), davul (drum), boru (trumpet) and zil (cymbal).” (Erendil and Anadol and Uçan, 1992-2007-2002,: 15, 623, 22) The military music in Huns accompanied official and military ceremonies as well as wars and marches. Several written sources report that screams of the Huns in war combined with the tone of their drums and this frightened their opponents (Erendil 1992: 15).

Some Chinese and Byzantine sources, which mention about the wars and weapons of the Huns and Kök Turks, confirm the information above:

The Huns and Kök Turks not only had various weapons such as bows made from animal horns, whistling arrows, bayonets, knives, lassos and hammerheads used during sieges, but also musical instruments such as drums and pipes and shawms made either from animal horns or other metals. (Gömeç 2009: 6)

This information on the origin of the trumpet and the shawm correspond to that given by other historical sources that belong to subsequent periods. The trumpets which were originally made from animal horns in the early period were later started to be produced using metals.



Picture 1- Tuğs and Drums details Form Hun Pe-riod (Wang Family, Gift of The Dillon Fund, 1973, 1973.120.3, early Ming dynasty, AD.1368)

In another Chinese source on Huns, it has been reported that the Turkish cavalry that climbed over the Great Wall of China were seen having with drum-like instruments with them (Özkan 1994: 17). The Drum, which was assigned many meanings in many terms, had been used as a weapon of war since the early times of the empire. According to Vural, various sources in literature report that “screams of the Huns in war and the tone of their drums combined and this frightened their opponents.” (Vural 2011: 58)

In front of the pavilions (state tents) build before the war, Huns sacrificed animals for the Hun flags and tuğ teams gave concerts (nevbet) in front of those flags. Furthermore, drums accompanied the military march behind the Hun flags just like they did in Ottoman Empire (Ögel 1987: 99). There are various reports which state that those tuğ teams were nine-layered (that means nine pieces each instrument). This corresponds to the fact that the number nine is considered sacred by the Turks (Doras, No date: 11).

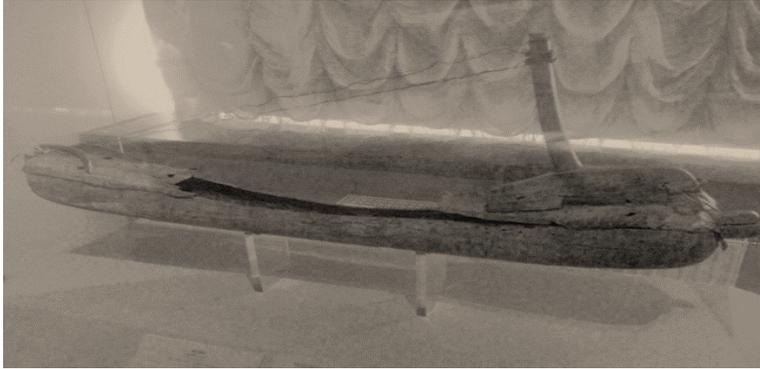
Turks in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region have been very useful in bringing the Hun period into daylight by their studies on ancient Turkish history. Yusupcan’s words give significant information as to the Hun music culture of that time:

It is known that Turkish music had a great influence in China in the middle of the Chou period. In 6th century BC, a group of Turks moved to China and founded the il Dağça state. It is understood that those Turks, who lived on by singing and dancing among Chinese, brought new elements of art to China. (Yusupcan 2009: 2356)

In this period, which we can call the early Hun period, Turks and the Chinese were in constant interaction. The Chinese must have started imitate and replicate the Turkish military music just like they did other cultural assets.

The fact that the Chinese imitated the Hun music lets us reach significant evidence as to the Turkish music of that time. Hun military music or drum music was imitated to a great extent either due to the mutual commercial relations and cultural interaction or maybe because of the fact that the Chinese music was underdeveloped. It is known that the Chinese name Chan's Drum Music, which they imported to their palaces, as the living fossil music. This music has been acknowledged as one of the relics of Tang period palace music (Ekrem 2012: 122).

Chinese sources report that Hun emperors had an interest in music in their palaces and they had music groups to perform for them (Budak 20096: 22). A significant part of the information on the Hun period has been obtained from archeological findings, especially from Hun burial sites called "cairn" (kurgan). The musical instrument in Picture 2² is a Hun harp, which was found in the second Pazırık cairn and believed to date back to 5th-4th century BC. This instrument made from leather and wood is significant artifact that demonstrates how sophisticated the music culture was in Hun period. This and the Sumerian harp shows similar characteristics in that they were both produced as open harps which can stand firmly and they had similar timbre cases. Such instruments prove to be good examples of interaction between cultures. "A drum-like percussion instrument made of horn was also found next this harp in the same cairn." (Diyarbakirli and Çoruhlu 1972-2007: 17, 93) The findings from these cairns indicate the importance that the people of rank in the Hun Empire attach to music.



Picture 2- Harp Instrument In Hun Period BC.5-4 (Personal Photo Archive From Hermitage Museum)

² St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, 1684/126, 2. Pazırık Crain Site, Feyzan&Timur Vural's personal photography archive

Of all the distinct common features between the Chinese and Hun cultures, it is the similarity between their music which is very prominent. According to the Chinese sources, Middle Asia Turks had an advanced military music in 3rd century BC. The influence of this music continued to prevail even after the centuries AD (Kamacioğlu 2004: 450). The music of Huns who resided in the north and that of other city-states founded around the oases in the south of Mount Tian Shan were recorded as “Hu Music” (Foreign Music) in the Chinese sources.

Chinese researcher Yang-Yin-Lu reports that Hu music showed similar characteristics. Uyghur Turk scholar A. Muhammed Emin has stated that the cultural elements transferred to the Chinese from the Huns and other city-states near the Tarim River were not limited with Hun Burga (pipe) and military music. According to him, several instruments such as *berbap* (pi-pa), *balman* (bi-li), *ğungka* (kung-hu), *burga*, reed flute, drum, and *buriya* (hu-jie) entered China during Hun period. Emperor Han-ling-Di liked “reed flute” a lot. Ban-Chao used *burga* in many marches. Sao-Sao played *balman* during his march on Oghans (Yusupcan 2009: 2360).

According to a Chinese inscription, a Chinese general was welcomed as a guest with a political mission by the Turkish Khan in his palace in Balasagun city. The general likes the *tuğ* instruments, to which he listened during his stay, so much that he takes a set of these instruments back to his country. He establishes a *tuğ* team in his palace, in that very moment and Turkish music enters China only to expand more in the years to come. One of the instruments the general took was *Hou-Kya*, a type of pipe which had a front-pointed neck, pitch holes and a marvelous tone (Doras No Date: 10).

The following statements from Chinese sources are significant: “In 119 BC, the famous Chinese general Ho Ch’ü-ping attacked the Hun’s left grand general and captured many prisoners together with the flag and the kettledrum.” Also, the following information was noted earlier: “*Under the Hun furred flag cast in front of the Left Governor’s tent, Hun and Chinese soldiers fought hand to hand.*” (Ögel 1987: 41) The drum they captured was of great importance since it was a sign of Turkish sovereignty and honor. Similarly, Chinese sources state that “*The Chinese general Li Ling who used Hun tactics as he proceeded with his small army against the Huns, ordered to move by the sound of bells and to stop by drums.*” (Ögel 1987: 41) This was advanced war tactics of the time. This inscription is a significant source as to the use of bells for military purposes in Turks.

According to *Şan-kiyen*, who was a Chinese general and politician that advanced up to Ferganaya and Baktriyān between 138 and 115 BC, the Chinese made use of music during the battle, but the Turks had a greater variety of musical instruments at war (Kösemihal 1939: 7-8). On his way back home to the Chinese palace, this fellow general took many Turkish military musical instruments with him. Among those instruments was a wind instrument, namely dual whistle (*çifte düdük*). This instrument was called “koş-ney” in Turkistan. The use of the word “koş” with the meaning of “double” created the name “dual reed” (Gazimihal 2001: 32) The fact that the presence of dual whistle was established as a part of tuğ team in this source shows that many musical instruments of that period may have been used in the military units and that the tuğ music which was based on tunes and melody was first established by the Huns.

A range of Chinese sources report the following information regarding the Turks and the drum: Various Turkish tribes lived in the Hun city Talas around 43 and 36 BC. The Chinese depicted this city with a square shape surrounded by two-layered walls. Five-colored flags of Shan-yü flapped continuously. The Chinese conquered the city in 36 BC. Commencing the battle with sound of drums, Shan-yü and his soldiers defended the city by shooting arrows from the towers until the last man standing was eventually dead, including Sahn-yü’s own wife and other women (Esin 1972: 139-140).

Another example as to how musical instruments are tools of political recognition and respect is as follows: The Northern Hun envoys that arrived at the Chinese palace in the year 52 BC demanded Chinese musical instruments such as Yü, Se, Kung-hou from the palace by the authority of the Khan’s council on the grounds that the instruments given to “Huh an ye” a century ago had worn off (Sinor 2004: 144-145). The communication achieved through the exchange of these musical instruments carried messages such as respect, peace and the willingness to understand the counter party’s culture.

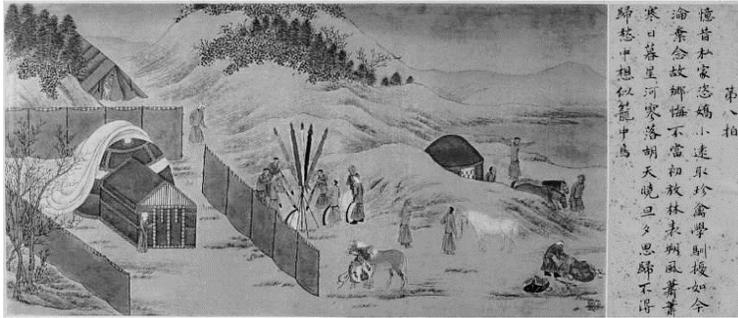
It can be understood from the following evidence that the Chinese adapted Hun music by adding their own lyrics in order to use as battle songs:

Udun-Hoten melodies were accepted and used by the Han family in the palace, and additionally The Chinese ambassador Chang-Chien, who came to Middle Asia to find military allies, took “Mahadur mukam” (Mahadur Scale), which became widespread in the city of Kumul, back to China as he returned to his home country.

A musician named Li-Yuan, who managed the musical palace of the Han State, invented 28 different modes using this mode. The same melodies later became a battle march with some slight changes. (Yusupcan 2009: 2360)

Attribution of battle marches or songs to the Hun period indicates how important military music tradition is as a part of Turkish identity. This tradition that has gradually lost its value well deserves to be researched and supported by new compositions. It is crucial that further and more profound research be conducted on the military music culture in order to be able to understand and appreciate the Turkish identity.

There was a noble woman named Ts'ai Wen Chi among a group of people who tried to escape from the ruins of the Chinese capital city that South Hun army occupied in 199 AD. This woman was forced to marry the left Hun governor. This princess who lived among the Huns for 12 years gave birth to two children. The princess, who eventually returned to her home country as a result of the agreements signed by the Chinese, wrote the poem “*Eighteen Songs from the Hun Flute*”, in which she recited her experiences (Baykuzu 2005: 101). These poems that were illustrated in 11th century provide invaluable information as to political and cultural life of the Huns.



Picture 3 – Epic Number 8’s Scene Burga and Drums Player

In Picture 3, we can see musicians playing Burga or Shawn (according to Ögel’s interpretation “Chinese Shawn”) around the drums placed under the flags called tuğ in front of the the Hun state tent. This instrument, which can be seen more clearly in the close up in Picture 4, seems to be a pipe-like instrument rather than a type of clarion. The instrument should be better called a burga since another source states that “*The Chinese liked Turkish musical instruments burga and drum very much*”. (Yusupcan 2009: 2359) This picture, which is a depiction from the 2nd century AD,

clearly shows how close ties the Turks had with their music. The picture can be regarded as hard evidence as to the fact that a clarion or a pipe-like instrument was a part of the Turkish military music tradition.



Picture 4- Detail of Tug Team

Picture 4 shows a tuğ team composed of four burgas and four drums. The same number of instruments reminds us the Mehter's layer system, in which there had to be the same number of instruments from every type. Ögel has suggested that the idle drum under the flags represented the emperor, and therefore it is there (Ögel 1987: 28). Since the team is playing under the Hun flags, it can be inferred that military music is considered as holy as flags for the Turks. The drums we see here looks like a tambourine with jingles. They resemble the tambourines that the Shamans used. Tug team's having a tambourine which is the traditional instrument of Turkish religion is a symbol of the sacredness of military music.

It is obvious that Hun played a significant role in the development of the Chinese military music during the same period. On this subject, Chinese researcher Shin-Chij-Bai wrote the following statements: "One of the northern tribes, namely Huns, constantly harassed the Northern borders of China since the Chin and Han dynasties. Therefore, the northern borders were entrenched with protective military units. The same group of soldiers heard the magnificent voices of nomadic tribes just outside the borders, mostly learned their warrior songs and started to threaten them by their own voices and cries. Later, the same songs somehow entered to the palace, and they were even sung during the great ceremonies held in sanctuaries of the palace. By this way, drum and burga music, military music in other words, became widespread in China (Yusupcan 2009: 2359). The pipes and drums mentioned here as well as the battle songs sung by the Hun soldiers reveal a highly advanced tradition within the army.

Another Chinese source reports a remarkable observation regarding the Hun musical instruments and songs:

Between the 4th and 5th century AD, 66 songs that Mu Lah sang could be recorded, who was one of the most significant protagonists of folk literature. These songs were all accompanied by instruments such as drum, flute, reed, gong, horn, cymbal, tao-pi-pi-li, pi-li, hu-chia (last three are wind instruments), pi-pa (a stringed instrument). The last four are Turkish instruments. The Chinese took them from the Turks a long time ago and adapted them. These songs were generally used as battle music at wars and in official ceremonies by the Turks. (Özerdim 1943: 90)

In the light of the information given by this source, it can be asserted that instrumental military music had always been hand in hand with oral music since the Hun period.

Hun emperor Liu Yao's (AD.319-329) father's 18 meters cairn work was stopped for the financial problems. After that to stop the rebellion of Tibetans, Yao were attacking the Ho-his area with his 285, 000 soldiers. Too long army marched with its army band. Bells and drums was available this band. The high volume of these instruments was shaking everywhere. Who hearing the voice of band was afraid of (Baykuzu 2005: 6). This resource is another example of, the using of bell in the tuğ team that period.



Picture 5- Hun Khan's Tent
Ts'ai Wen Chi Poem's Picture,
11. Century
National Taiwan Museum

The Chinese interest in Turkish music increased substantially after 4th-6th centuries. Kuça tune spread out to China in 385 AD, just as Suli-Kaşkar tune after 436 and *drum dance music* that belonged to Yabans, a branch of Huns, after the year 476. The emperors of the Norther Chi State got interested in playing reed pipe (ney) and berbab as they became more curious about learning Küsen and Sogd music to such an extent that they started to neglect state affairs and failed to respond upon their responsibilities (Yusupcan 2009: 2360).

A huge drum, decorated with golden needlework patterns of camels and dragons, was laid before the main gate of T'ung-Wan Ch'eng, which was the capital city of "Great Hsia" state that was founded in 407 AD (Baykuzu 2009: 112). This drum in the entrances of the cities stood like statues that reminded the sovereignty of the Khan both to the public and to the visitors.

Music accompanied the epic stories and sagas that would encourage the Hun armies into battle. It is known that the traditional poets who told heroic stories recited their poems with a kopuz (like lute). (Heyet 1996: 85) Epic-saga music later became a type of music that focused on themes such as victory, success, gallantry and valor, and they were first sung by kam kopuzcu (lute player shamans) and later by ozan kopuzcu (lute player epic singer). (Uçan 2002: 24)

3. CONCLUSIONS

We can see that the Huns reached a comparatively advanced stage in military music tradition. Primarily introducing some instruments such as drums, kettledrums, small drums on horseback, the tambourine, and bells into the tuğ team, Huns also used wind instruments such as burga pipe, a prototype of clarion and reed pipe (ney). Ozan kopuzcu who used the kopuz in performing epic and battle songs were regarded as military musicians due to the influence they bear upon the soldiers at wars. The origins of the Turkish Folk Music, Turkish Military Music and Turkish Religious Music date back to the Huns (Anadol 2007: 623). It is believed that the military music in Hun period transformed into a new different style with the poet-lute folk music. The tradition of having poets in armies continued in the Ottoman Period, too.

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