

STRUCTURAL CLASSIFICATION OF UZBEK NATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

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Annotation

This article provides information on the emergence of traditional Uzbek music, highlighting the role of national instruments and their classification in presenting it to the public. It discusses the significance of traditional instruments, the variety of musical styles, and details about how, in what manner, and by whom they are performed.

Keywords

"Traditional instrument performance," "Diverse instruments," "Performance practice."

In the rich musical history of the Uzbek people, vocal artistry holds a significant place. One of the reasons for this is its development in a melodic form. The musical artistry of the Uzbek people continues to evolve in a fresh manner, preserving its traditions, performance regulations, and artistic essence throughout its centuries-long history. It is flourishing in a new wave, embracing innovative trends without losing its cultural heritage.

Precise information about the exact time when ancient musical instruments like the harp were invented is not available, just like other ancient musical instruments. However, depictions found in archaeological excavations provide evidence of the antiquity of this instrument. The homeland of the harp is Egypt, and its ancient form has been discovered in archaeological findings dating back to around 3000-2500 BCE. Experts have confirmed the existence of five types of harps, namely three with triangular shapes and two with rectangular shapes, based on the depictions found.

In 1940, during archaeological excavations in the vicinity of Ayritom village near Termiz city in Surkhandarya region, an ancient harp with a triangular shape was discovered in a grave of a woman. This harp had three angles and twelve strings. As the historian K. Trever noted, "All the harps found in Ayritom village were crafted by local craftsmen and date back to the early 18th century and earlier."

Musical compositions, as expressive forms resonating with human spirituality, are artistic products of the people. They have been shaping gradually among the

masses, refined by skillful wordsmiths, and perfected into marvelous and expressive tools. Each nation's cultural pride, traditions, and values find their manifestation in these compositions, and the voices harmonize with these elements. All these diverse compositions are instrumental in forming the structure and national heritage of creative works. Throughout history, musical compositions have always commanded significant attention, both in terms of artistic and educational aspects.

The traditional performance of our distinguished Uzbek music has evolved over time within the realm of folk practices. It has taken shape through various styles and structures, rooted in traditions. Primarily, each traditional composition boasts a high degree of individuality and professionalism. In the context of folk performance, this individuality translates into diverse performance possibilities, conditions, and styles. The practice of performing compositions, both traditional and folk, in groups has also been prevalent for centuries. Consequently, compositions have been meticulously crafted by composers, tailoring them to the specific vocal capabilities and group formations, ensuring a seamless integration into practical performance contexts.

The process of categorizing traditional folk compositions, also known as "Instruments," was initiated by the renowned scholar Al-Farabi, who is honored as the second teacher in the world of knowledge. Subsequently, various scholars described the classifications of different compositions in their treatises and elaborated on the famous compositions of their contemporaries.

Studies from the past eras, contemporary scientific achievements, and the natural evolution of compositions indicate their remarkable consistency over time. Therefore, Uzbek musical compositions can be broadly classified into three main categories, as recognized during the categorization process. Scholars have acknowledged the fundamental elements underlying this categorization.

The first essential factor is the medium through which each composition is vocalized, i.e., the source of sound production. In some compositions, it is as simple as a string instrument or a reed, while in others, it involves the vocalization of words or specific body parts. Some compositions are sung using air as a medium.

The second crucial factor is the performance technique, i.e., the means of producing sound from the composition: whether through blowing, plucking, striking, or rubbing instruments.

The third factor is the function of the compositions. In this case, the musical environment and conditions for performance are closely considered, leading to the recognition of more compositions.

The classification of traditional Uzbek folk compositions was extensively discussed in the scholarly works of V. Belyayev and F. Karomatov. Their research findings have been published and widely used in educational contexts. Based on their natural structure and performance capabilities, Uzbek traditional folk compositions are categorized into three groups. Each group is further divided into subcategories based on their specific characteristics.

1. Various folk compositions are classified into four categories based on their performance capabilities:

- a) Chertma instruments - Compositions played by plucking with fingers.
- b) Plektorli instruments - Compositions played using a special pick.
- c) Kamonli instruments - Compositions played by striking with a mallet.
- d) Urmali instruments - Compositions played using specific mallets.

2. In terms of their structural and performance characteristics, puffing-and-blowing compositions are categorized into three groups:

a) Naysimon - Compositions played by blowing air through a flute-like instrument.

b) Tilsimon - Compositions produced by manipulating the sound from the vocal cords, separated from the main vocal sound.

c) munshtukli⁴⁰ - - Compositions played using special reeds or mouthpieces.

The diverse performance and technical capabilities of Uzbek musical compositions should be acknowledged. The practice of musical composition in Uzbek traditional folk music, alongside various musical examples from different cultures and world classical music, demonstrates the potential to perform them in harmony. This variety highlights the richness of compositions and their compatibility with both folk and professional performance practices.

Different types of compositions have evolved over time, finding their development within the practices and traditions of various cultures. Establishing precise historical origins for these compositions is challenging. According to historical sources, the first recognized type of composition was called "Barbat," named and created by the renowned ancient Greek scholar Pythagoras. Indeed, Barbat was a simple and basic instrument at its inception and later evolved. The musicologist Ishoq Rajabov states: "In the period following Pythagoras, musicians further developed the 'Barbat,' and based on its structure, musical instruments with 2-3-4 strings were created. It is indicated that the Barbat was the basis for the emergence of various string instruments." Barbat itself is a stringed instrument, and

⁴⁰ Munshtukli – a type of special instrument.

its creation played a foundational role in the development of other string instruments, as stated in many sources.

In the Middle Ages, scholars living in those times mentioned the descriptions of various ancient compositions in their treatises. Instruments such as *nayxa*, *nay*, *chang*, *qonun*, *rubob*, *ud*, *rud*, *tanbur*, *do'mbira*, and *dutor* were described in historical sources. In the 20th century, Abdurauf Fitrat described Uzbek folk compositions in his work titled "Uzbek Classical Music and Its History." The advancement of musical compositions primarily depended on practical performance.

The completion of compositions or their position in the musical performance context is characterized by their role within the performance framework. Thus, in the treatises written in the Middle Ages or in literary works, the names and practices of musicians and singers are indicated in the historical context and have been expressed in words.

In traditional Uzbek folk music, various compositions, both plucked and blown, feature instruments like the *dutor* and *do'mbira*. These compositions have gained significance in practice due to their unique performance techniques, nature, and vocal nuances. Moreover, in folk performance practices, these compositions have retained their position and direction.

Performers and singers, known as "méhtar" or leaders, play a crucial role. Their ensemble comprises three individuals – *surnay*, *karnay*, and *doirachi* players, along with up to fifteen singers. Méhtars are performers who play in open air and are tasked with intimidating the enemy through powerful musical sounds such as *sas* (trumpet), *dabdaba* (kettle drum), and *asas* (club). They also provide spiritual assistance to the soldiers, encourage them during battle, announce victories, celebrate the retreat, the victory of the army, the beginning of the war, and other events and celebrations.

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⁴¹ Mehtar – group of ensembles from ancient times.

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