

## UZBEK MUSIC ART AS THE SPIRITUAL WEALTH OF THE UZBEK PEOPLE

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**Annotation.** This article discusses the idea that Uzbek national music art, reflecting the ethnic development, cultural worldview, rich values, traditions, and customs of the Uzbek people with their long history, is a spiritual treasure of the nation. The article also presents the view that the musical culture of Eastern peoples forms the basis of the national music of each nation and discusses the history of its origin.

**Keywords:** National music, spirituality, art, artistic creativity, performance skills, status, tone, ability, passion, tradition, value, musician, singer.

The development of the spiritual and moral qualities of young people, as well as their upbringing as physically and morally well-rounded individuals, is one of the urgent issues in the field of education. This issue is specifically addressed in the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, PF-3907, dated August 14, 2018, titled "Measures to raise the system of educating and bringing up young people in a spiritually, morally, and physically well-rounded manner to a new level" [1]. The role of art in expanding the spiritual worldview of young people is invaluable.

It is well-known that among the examples of art and creative works, there is a wealth of knowledge reflecting the ethnic development, cultural worldview, rich values, traditions, and customs of a certain nation with a long history. The role and significance of art and creative works in human life is emphasized by the great Eastern philosopher and universal scholar Abu Nasr al-Farabi, who said, "This science (i.e., music) is useful in such a way that if someone's character has lost balance, it restores order; it brings the imperfect to perfection and preserves the balance of those who are already balanced. Musical knowledge is also beneficial for the health of the body" [2].

The musical knowledge that recognizes the rich spiritual heritage, customs, values, and traditions of the Uzbek people has deeply embedded itself in the hearts of the nation. This is not an exaggeration. To this day, Uzbek musical art has been showcased on a wide international stage. Uzbek musicians, singers, and folk ensembles have successfully demonstrated their skills in various republics and foreign countries. Their performances in all these places have aroused genuine interest among listeners. The process of enriching the musical culture of the Uzbek people is multifaceted and complex. For example, the emergence of Uzbek opera and ballet marks a significant achievement in the development of Uzbekistan's musical culture.

In Uzbek music art, classical music holds a leading position [3]. Classical music is distinguished by its perfection, concise form, the multifaceted meaningfulness and elegance of its images. Abdurauf

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Fitrat, through his research on the forms and types of musical creativity that have existed for centuries, defines classical songs as follows: “Songs, poems recited with melody, arranged into sequences, are called folk songs.” In fact, classical music emerged as a result of human material and spiritual life requirements, needs, and relationships with the surrounding environment and other people. The feelings, worldview, aspirations, and dreams of the people are reflected in the melodies of music. These musical examples have been shaped, polished, refined, and elevated over thousands of years, becoming part of the artistic heritage and a cultural-spiritual wealth of the nation.

**Creative work of the people is an immense ocean.** It is constantly enriched with the products of the creative minds and continuously expands. Every example within this ocean is explained by its unique secrets, national traditions, national spirit, and national values. The foundation of the formation and development of Uzbek national music and literature is based on these principles. If a talented individual creates based on national traditions, their works are marked as bright examples of our national culture. Over time, these works pass from generation to generation and become part of the vast ocean of culture, turning into a legacy [4].

The term **classical** refers to works of art, especially those that stand out for their excellent qualities, important positions in the literature and art of a particular nation, and are regarded as symbols of the nation’s glory and pride.

In the context of classical music, it refers to the musical pieces, songs, and compositions created by talented musicians and composers over centuries, which are part of the music tradition of the Uzbek people. These include instrumental compositions, songs, and choral music [5]. Classical music stands out from other forms of musical creativity due to its oral transmission, traditional nature, eloquence, locality, and professionalism.

The **oral nature** of classical Uzbek music refers to the creative products that have been passed down through generations, from one person to another, from teacher to student. In ancient times, oral folklore examples and classical works were performed by the people. By the medieval period, skilled musicians, singers, and composers began to create and compose songs. Over time, the authorial creativity in oral tradition, which was widely practiced by the people, has remained alive because of its accurate, clear, and artistically perfect performance that matches the demands and desires of the people. Therefore, the history of the creation of classical music is closely linked to the living oral tradition.

**Tradition** refers to the preservation of classical music examples as a legacy, which have been passed through the people’s experience over time, transforming into customs. The traditional creation, performance, and spread of these works are reflected in their musical and poetic texts, which, in terms of genres, have been regularly repeated over time.



The **more ancient the cultural history of a nation**, the deeper its moral beauty, the richer its customs, and the more profound its educational and training roots. This is because any culture, morality, customs, and education arise from human activity, trials, and experiences. The best of these pass from generation to generation.

The local styles within our national classical music include the **Fergana-Tashkent, Bukhara-Samarkand, Surkhandarya-Qashqadarya, and Khorezm** styles, each with its unique characteristics, similarities, differences, and the tendency to grow closer over time. These features define the broad scope and diverse genres of our contemporary musical culture.

In the changing society, restoring national values and raising the spiritual level of individuals is one of the key tasks for the formation of a healthy social environment, ensuring the spiritual and moral maturity of the people. This has been raised to the level of state policy, with education being purposeful, systematic, continuous, and consistent. These efforts have opened broad opportunities for raising the younger generation as well-rounded individuals.

These reforms also hold special significance in the development of the personal abilities, performance skills, potential, and moral qualities of students studying in the music field, as well as in shaping their emotional state.

**History teaches us** that every people on earth has its own culture and art, as well as a musical culture, which is considered a part of their spiritual wealth. In particular, the musical culture of Eastern peoples forms the foundation of each nation's national music, which has a theoretical and practical performance school. The musical wealth of Eastern peoples, such as maqom, mugham, nawba, raga, and kyui, represents distinct genres of musical performance, which have been performed, developed, and passed down through various stages and directions over time.

The **maqom genres**, including "Shashmaqom," are regarded as the great musical wealth of both Uzbek and Tajik peoples. They were formed and enriched through the creative works of the people's composers. Today, we can confidently say that we fully possess the specific forms, characteristics, and traditional performance styles of these genres. This is, of course, due to the monumental creative efforts of the past masters and composers. Since maqom performances constitute the foundation of our musical culture, it is appropriate to focus more on this subject.

The lexical meaning of the word "Maqom" comes from Arabic, where it means "place" or "location." In the musical context, it can be understood as the place where sound is produced or a specific pitch. Indeed, music cannot be performed without sound or without a clear pitch, and it is impossible to discover a distinct musical melody without it. Thus, it is natural for the term "maqom" to have this meaning, as it refers to a collection of melodies and songs that start and end with a specific pitch.



The term "maqom" began to be used after the Arabic translations of the musical theory works of Greek scholars like Euclid and Aristotle in the 8th-10th centuries. However, in the 9th century, the scholar Yahya bin Abu Mansur, in his work on music theory, notes that the peoples of the Muslim East had their own indigenous music theory even before the Greek music theory reached them.

The theoretical and practical aspects of maqoms were extensively elaborated in the scientific works of many prominent scholars from the 9th to the 15th centuries, such as al-Kindi, al-Farabi, al-Khwarizmi, Ibn Sina, al-Urmavi, ash-Sherazi, al-Husayni, and al-Marwazi, who provided deep academic explanations of the maqom system.

Historical sources indicate that in the 14th-17th centuries, twelve maqoms (known as **duvodakh maqom**) existed in Central Asia, Khorasan, and Azerbaijan.

Specific information about the twelve maqoms can be found in the works of scholars Najmiddin Kavkabiyy Bukhari and Darvesh Ali Changi, who lived and worked in the 16th-17th centuries. Their writings describe the twelve maqoms performed during the Bukhara Khanate period, the melodies and songs composed based on them, and the composers of these works. From this, it can be concluded that the twelve maqoms were still in use until the 18th century. By the mid-18th century, it is reasonable to state that the Shashmaqom system had emerged based on the twelve maqoms. This is because many of the names in the twelve maqoms did not have a musical notation, and some of the maqom genres in performance may not have survived. It is also possible to encounter the names of all the branches of Shashmaqom within the subdivisions of the twelve maqoms.

Najmiddin Kavkabiyy compares the structure of the twelve maqoms to the twelve star constellations based on the zodiac signs, and arranges them in the following sequence:

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|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Hamal - Rohaviy     | 7. Mezon - Rost     |
| 2. Savr - Zangula      | 8. Aqrab - Hijoz    |
| 3. Javzo - Buzurg      | 9. Qavs - Iroq      |
| 4. Saraton - Husayniy  | 10. Jadiy - Busalik |
| 5. Asad - Ushshoq      | 11. Dalv - Navo     |
| 6. Sunbula - Zirolfand | 12. Xut - Isfahon   |

The zodiac signs mentioned above are the names of the constellations located along the sun's path through the sky, with the sun spending one month in each sign throughout the year. The arrival of the Aries (Hamal) month at the beginning of the zodiac circle marks the start of the new year, corresponding to the celebration of Navruz, and this is explained by the sun's entry into the Aries constellation on that day.

The history of the development of the maqom system can be conditionally divided into two stages. The first is the nominal stage, meaning it has a name, description, and definition, but its performance and melody remain vague to us. In other words, it is "known by name but lacks detailed



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information." The second stage refers to the written notation, where the melodies are recorded in musical notation, or the pieces that are still performed today as part of living traditions. There is an organic connection between these "living" and "non-living" layers of tradition. However, in scientific analysis, it is necessary to consider the distinctive aspects of each. The new forms of the Shashmaqom tradition that emerged in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are rooted in these general foundations. Their structures and forms have been adapted to modern-day conditions, with melodies and techniques enriched with the spirit of contemporary songs and compositions. Today, these modern performance versions are increasingly common and preferred. Thus, it can be observed that for nearly a century, the maqom system has been manifested in various forms, influenced by time and place. Importantly, the introduction of new practices does not negate previous traditions; on the contrary, the diversity of maqoms and their mutual enrichment create the conditions for their natural development.

In maqom performance, there is an excellent tradition known as the master-apprentice (*ustoz-shogird*) system. Thanks to the preservation of this tradition until today, our classical works have reached us in their original form. In the past, when the technology was underdeveloped and musical notation had not yet been invented, songs and melodies were passed down orally, from one generation to the next. Every performer would interpret these works in their own style, making them more refined and perfect. The best performances became widely known among the people, and the performers gained fame. Fathers, who recognized the musical talent and passion of their children, would send them to a master to apprentice.

Historically, the relationship between the master and apprentice was not superficial. The master, who valued his disciple as his own child, would pass on all his knowledge. The responsibility of the master is profound and requires great care, as it involves guiding the disciple's consciousness and instilling the light of knowledge within them. This is a complicated and challenging task, as the trust of the people must be justified. Similarly, the disciple also has responsibilities, and earning the master's trust and attention is no easy task. It requires dedication and hard work.

The concept of the master-apprentice relationship is considered one of our high national values, and over the centuries, a system of rules and principles has been developed and followed.

In conclusion, Uzbek national musical art is the spiritual wealth of our people. Its history not only reflects a long past but also embodies the values, customs, and traditions unique to our nation. Although the life of a performer may be short in relation to the lifespan of traditions, it is precisely the continuity of the master-apprentice system that ensures the perpetuation and integrity of these traditions. The legacy of masters is passed down through two or three generations, forming a specific school. The living tradition encourages the apprentice to exactly replicate the master's path. Each new generation is expected to add something of its own and enrich the master's legacy. In this way, constant renewal becomes the law of life in traditional art. Such knowledge is indeed the spiritual wealth of our



people.

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