



## The Origin of Musical Art of Uzbekistan

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### **Abstract**

The article considers the main milestones in the development of Uzbek musical culture, in each of which many aspects were laid down that determine, in a certain sense, the dynamics of social processes, artistic and musical values of enduring significance were created. The author seeks to trace the process of the significance of the richness of musical history, instruments, famous musicians of these eras, who played an important role in the development of the musical culture of modern Uzbekistan.

**Keywords:** “Central Asian Antiquity”; *Corner Harp*; “Muslim Renaissance”; “Mutrib”; “Musikar”; “Navozanda”; “Shashmakom”; “Composers”

### **Introduction**

The history of music in Uzbekistan is one of the sources of knowledge that is vital for a modern specialist to successfully solve problems in the field of music education and upbringing. The author believes that the upbringing and formation in the younger generation of the need to communicate with national art, a sense of preserving national musical traditions in the modern world is one of the main tasks of music education.

The musical art of Uzbekistan arose in ancient times and significantly changed its appearance throughout the history of its development. The development took place under the influence of many factors, such as historical conditions, the development of public consciousness, folk traditions, the influence of other ethnic cultures, other types of art.

Music in the life of a primitive man on the territory of present day Uzbekistan, as well as in other parts of the world, is associated with the development of mankind in the early stages of its history of rhythm and dance. It can be assumed that their means of expression were imperfect and arose in the very midst of their harsh life and everyday life. An example is an ancient example of Mesolithic cave painting depicting *a ritual hunting scene* on a rock in the Zaraut-Kamar grotto (Surkhandarya region of Uzbekistan).

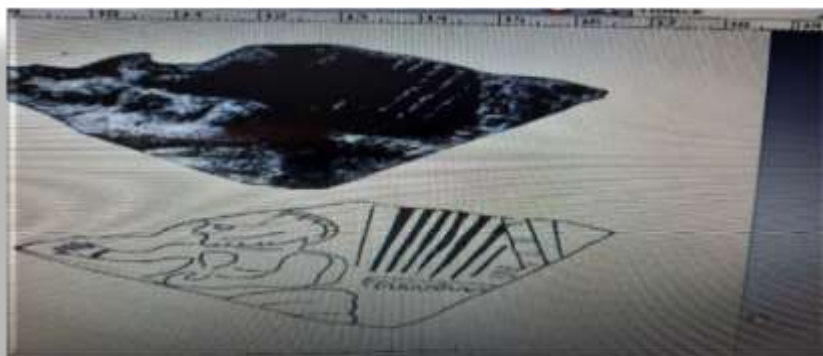


Painted images from this grotto were discovered in 1939 by a local hunter I.F. Lamaev, and were repeatedly published and studied in sufficient detail by different authors.

The so-called “*Central Asian antiquity*” [2] in the history of the settled agricultural regions of Central Asia fell on the period from the 4th century BC to the 3rd century AD and was one of the significant pages of musical culture. Geographically, these were the regions of **Sogd** (Sogdiana), located in the valleys of the Zeravshan and Kashkadarya rivers; **Bactria**, which lay in the upper reaches of another great Central Asian river - the Amu Darya; **Khorezm** was located in the lower reaches of this river; in the east of Central Asia were **Chach** (Tashkent) and **Ferghana** (Fergana Hollow). [1].

The richest archaeological materials of that time, unique artistic finds, documented the variety of forms of musical art, the widespread use of instruments, and types of performance. These materials allow us to say that music occupied a rather important place and performed various functions in the life of the settled agricultural population. On the territory of Bactria, Sogd, Khorezm, Parthia and Margiana, judging by the large number of images found, the main groups of instruments were represented: *percussion*, *wind*, *strings*. So, for example, the percussion group included: tambourines, one-sided and two-sided drums. The corner harp, the short-necked lute, and the double-ended drum are the most typical instruments of the era in question.

**Harp**s are one of the amazing musical instruments of Ancient Central Asia. Such, for example, is the image of an *angular harp* on a fragment from a clay road flask discovered in Karakalpakstan during excavations of the ancient Khorezmian fortress-temple “Koy-Krylgan kala” - “Fortress of the Dead Sheep”. It is the only evidence of the existence of a large corner harp in Central Asia:



The skull with the image of a harp dates back to the 4th-3rd centuries BC. [3].

“The corner harp is like a triangle. Sometimes it is called the triangular harp. It is not large, light, and bears little resemblance to modern harps, bulky, though beautiful structures. They played the corner

harps standing, sitting and walking. If the musician played while sitting, then the harp was placed on the side, usually on the left, and wrapped around it with his left hand. The fingers of the right gripped the strings. Harps, including angular ones, accompanying instruments. To the accompaniment of harps, the whole ancient East sang, danced, lined up in battle formations, marched, buried and prayed". [3]



Music was also widely used in various folk festivals of the spring and autumn equinoxes - Navruz and Mehrگان holidays in the rituals of major religions that were common at that time among the peoples of Central Asia (Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, etc).

The direct influence of Buddhist musical symbolism is found in the images of musicians on the temple sculpture of this time. Such, for example, is the image of five musicians with instruments (harp, lute, drum, aulos, cymbals) on the famous frieze from the city of Airtam (*Airtam (Bactria) frieze with a stone image of musicians*) [4], which was found 13 km from the city of Termez in the south of Uzbekistan, dating back to the 1st-2nd centuries AD (now located in the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg).





Professionalism in the musical art of the Uzbek people was formed at the beginning of the 1st millennium of our era. Professional musicians, like artisans, were united in artistic *mechterlik* workshops. The musicians were famous for their high performing skills in various genres. Despite the fact that certain signs were found in the ancient Sogdian manuscripts of the 7th century, indicating a certain prototype of musical writing, nevertheless, all the numerous genres of Uzbek professional music were transmitted and preserved through their oral transmission, and each master-performer contributed to the creation unique pieces of music.

The fame of the performing skills of the musicians of Central Asia spread throughout the Great Silk Road. Music, dance, instruments, performers penetrated China, Korea, Japan and other countries as a dowry of royal brides, diplomatic offerings and other ways. From historical sources it is known about the popularity of Sogdian musicians in China, in particular, about the unprecedented success of the orchestra from Anga (Bukhara) at the court of the emperors of the Sui dynasty in the 6th-7th centuries AD. “...During the Sui (581-618) and Tang (618-907) dynasties, the ancient nationalities of the Turks and Chubo played an important role in the history of Xinjiang. The Turks are an ancient nationality that roamed in the northwest and the northern steppes of China in the 6th-8th centuries”. [5]. V. Gusakov in his article “Written Chinese sources about ancient Central Asia” on the basis of the most ancient manuscripts confirms this idea. [6].

The next huge period in the development of musical culture falls on the Middle Ages (9th century - first half of the 19th centuries). the appearance here already at the stage of the early Middle Ages in the 9th century of an independent field of knowledge - *the science of music*.

The true founder of musical science in the East is considered to be Abu Nasr al-Farabi (870-950), an outstanding scientist in many fields of science in the Middle Ages. Being a native of Central Asia (the Farab area, near the Syr Darya), before leaving for Baghdad, Farabi received his initial education in his homeland - in Shash, Samarkand, Bukhara. He was known not only as a virtuoso performer of musical compositions, but also as the author of the fundamental work on the theory of Eastern music, *The Big Book of Music*. The text of this book has 1208 pages.

Farabi, in his scientific works devoted to music, defined all the main means of expressiveness of musical art and the power of the emotional impact of music. Considering music as speech, as a means of communication, Farabi determines the power of its influence by internal perfection - harmony. The more harmonious the music (speech), the stronger its impact.

The subsequent flourishing of musical culture in the X-XI centuries, a period characterized by the rise of spiritual culture, science, literature, art, crafts, architecture, philosophical freethinking, is defined as the era of the “**Muslim (Eastern) Renaissance**”. In cities such as Merv, Samarkand, Bukhara,

Tashkent, Nishapur, Gurganch, Kyat, Khiva, Khujand, cultural life is being revived and enlivened. Musical art is enriched with new content - mixing of various ethnic, artistic traditions, the secular beginning began to prevail in it. Music, designed to delight the life of the feudal elite, was given one of the main roles. Knowledge of music and the ability to play musical instruments was considered an attribute of a secularly educated person, his intellectual entertainment. Not only the *nadim* were close interlocutors of the ruler, but also many of the rulers were quite enlightened, they understood the scientific and practical issues of music and poetry. Thus, the great historian A. Biruni noted the penchant for poetry and music of Khorezmshah Mamun (999-1017), who created the first library in Central Asia, Dar al-Ilm (Academy), in Kunya-Urgench.

In the 9th-12th centuries, the profession of a musician was hereditary, passed down from father to son, from master to apprentice, and included several types of performing activities. The general meaning of a musician was conveyed by the terms “mutrib”, “musikar”, the performer of an instrumentalist – “navozanda”, “sozanda”.

Professional Uzbek music reached its peak in the Timurid era. In such centers of education and art of the 15th century as Samarkand, Bukhara and Herat, the performing musicians Usta Kul-Muhammad Udi and Sheikh-Nai became famous for their skill. Ustad Kul Muhammad Udi achieved perfection and fame in music thanks to the patronage of Alisher Navoi. And the outstanding poet, thinker and statesman Alisher Navoi supported talents, encouraged musical writing and himself acted as a bass player. It is known, according to Babur, that he composed *nakshis* and *peshravs*, melodic musical pieces [6]. The work of such musicians as Khoja Yusuf Andijani, Husain Udi, Khoja Abdullah Marvarid and others stood out noticeably.

Notation known from the Middle Ages (according to the treatises of Farabi, ash-Shirazi, etc.) was not used in musical practice. Even the Khorezm tablature (notation), created in the 80s of the 19th century by the famous tanbur player Pakhlavan Niyaz-Mirzaboshi, came into use by a narrow circle of musicians, although Khorezm maqoms were recorded using it.

**Bukhara Shashmakom (“six maqoms”)** is one of the main types of classical music, which was formed over several centuries in the context of the ancient musical traditions of Bukhara. Shashmakom absorbed the bright traditions and stylistic features of the musical culture of this ancient city.

Written evidence of Shashmakom, as a type and form of music, is found for the first time in a musical treatise by an unknown author at the end of the 18th century, and **bayaz** composed in the 19th century in Bukhara.

Bukhara Shashmakom is equally the legacy of both the Uzbek and Tajik peoples. Contains six maqoms - from six large, monumental instrumental plays and songs – maqoms.

“Buzruk” (“Big”);  
 “Growth” (“True”);  
 “Navo” (“Melody”);  
 “Dugoh” (“Two-part”);  
 “Segokh” (“Three-part”);  
 “Irok” (“Far”).

Each of the six maqoms is a separate cycle of a fairly detailed volume and includes from 20 to 40 large and small maqom pieces of vocal and instrumental sections.

Each instrumental section includes several completed pieces - *Tasnif*, *Tarji*, *Gardun*, *Mukhammas* and *Sakil*, which differ in melodic and rhythmic constructions.

Each piece from the instrumental sections is independent and the poppy to which this instrumental piece belongs is included in the title. For example, *Tasnifi Buzruk*, *Tarjei Buzruk*, *Sakili Navo*, *Samoyi Dugokh*, *Mukhammasi Irok*, etc. These instrumental parts are very complex, perfect in their melodic structure, rhythmic organization, modal structure.

The vocal section of Shashmakom consists of several furrowed pieces with a wide range and a characteristic structure. In each maqom they form two groups.

Maqoms are performed on the verses of classical oriental poets such as Lutfi, Atoi, Fuzuli, Bobur, Guvaido, Mashrab, Munis, Uvaisiy, Ogakhiy, Amiriy, Mukimi, Furkat, Miskin, etc., but most of the maqoms are performed on Alisher Navoi's ghazals.

The most famous musicians of the 20th century in Uzbekistan made a huge contribution to the development of modern musical culture. The greatest connoisseurs of Shashmakom were the singer from Bukhara - Ota Jalol Nosirov, the instrumentalist Ota Giyos Abdugani, the singers Domulla Halim Ibodov, Khoji Abdulaziz Rasulev and others.

Outstanding connoisseurs of Shashmakom Ota Giyos Abdugani and Ota Jalol Nosirov, professional musicians renowned in the urban folk environment, were attracted from a young age and lived at the court of the last Emir of Bukhara Said Alimkhan. In 1923, musicologist V. Uspensky from Ota Giyos Abdugani and Ota Jalol Nosirov made the first musical notation of Shashmakom. At that time, Ota Jalol Nosirov was 80 years old, despite this he surprised everyone with his knowledge and performance.

Musicologist-ethnographer V. Uspensky cited the following data regarding his biography: "He is the last and only representative among the living, who deeply knows and retains Shashmakom in his memory". The name of Ata Jalal and his contemporaries, numerous students and followers is associated with the bright flowering of the performing arts of the Bukhara Shashmaqom, which falls on the second half of the 19th - the first half of the 20th century. The entry made by V. Uspensky was published in 1924. This event was of great importance for the musical culture of Uzbekistan, which laid the foundation for further work in this direction.

Of particular note is the activity in collecting the pearl of the musical heritage of Uzbekistan - the composer, academician, people's artist of Uzbekistan, laureate of numerous state awards **Yunus Rajabi** (1897-1976). He collected, systematized and recorded more than one and a half thousand folk songs and instrumental music, including the six-volume "Shashmaqom". The compositions of "Shashmakom" were recorded on gramophone records. Thus, they were able not only to preserve classical musical traditions, but also to create the foundation for their further development. Huge contribution of Y. Rajabi glorified Uzbek music all over the world.

In 2003, Shashmakom was recognized as one of the masterpieces of world heritage, and in 2008 it was included in the UNESCO Reprisal List as an object of the intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (Uzbekistan-Tajikistan).

In conclusion, I would like to note that traditional Uzbek music has not become the past, it has entered modern artistic life as its most important component, foundation, foundation. As the musicologist N. Yanov-Yanovskaya, doctor of art criticism, professor, author of monographs, fundamental research, notes: "... the new system arises in close interaction with the system of traditional musical realities, which ensures the originality of the national style. This is especially clearly demonstrated by the so-called "maqom symphony" - an original fusion of the two top genres of each of the traditions: the serious genres of traditional music - **maqoms** - seem to gravitate towards the serious genres of polyphonic music - **symphonies**". [8].



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