

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF UZBEK MAQOM ART

Zakirjonova Sarvinoz Bakir kizi

Faculty of National Costume and Art,

1st year master's student

ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the historical formation and stages of development of Uzbek maqom art. The study is based on classical Eastern music-theoretical sources, Soviet-era musicological works, and contemporary scholarly research. Particular attention is paid to the origins of maqom art, its connection with court culture, and the process of formation of the Shashmaqom system. The article also examines the regional characteristics of maqom performance and the historical evolution of its traditional forms. The research findings reveal the role and historical significance of maqom art within the framework of Uzbek national musical heritage.

Keywords: *maqom art; Shashmaqom; Uzbek traditional music; musical heritage; historical development of maqom.*

ИСТОРИЧЕСКОЕ РАЗВИТИЕ УЗБЕКСКОГО ИСКУССТВА МАКОМА

АННОТАЦИЯ

В статье анализируются историческое формирование и этапы развития узбекского искусства макома. Исследование основано на восточных музыкально-теоретических источниках, трудах советского периода по музыковедению, а также современных научных исследованиях. Особое внимание уделяется происхождению макомного искусства, его связи с дворцовой культурой и процессу формирования системы шашмакома. Рассматриваются региональные особенности макомного исполнительства и историческая эволюция его традиционных форм. Результаты исследования раскрывают место и историческое значение макомного искусства в системе узбекского национального музыкального наследия.

Ключевые слова: *искусство макома; шашмаком; узбекская традиционная музыка; музыкальное наследие; историческое развитие макома.*

INTRODUCTION

Maqom art represents one of the most ancient and complex layers of Eastern musical thought, having developed over centuries in close connection with the artistic

and aesthetic worldview, historical memory, and cultural heritage of the Uzbek people. Maqoms function not only as individual musical works but also as a comprehensive artistic system based on specific modal (lad), rhythmic (usul), structural, and performance principles. In this regard, an academically grounded analysis of the historical stages of development of maqom art remains a highly relevant scholarly task.

According to academic studies, Uzbek maqom art achieved its most complete form through the Shashmaqom system, whose theoretical and practical foundations are deeply rooted in the traditions of medieval Eastern musicology. The works of scholars such as Is'hoq Rajabov, Yunus Rajabiy, and Otanazar Matyakubov provide detailed analyses of the origins of maqoms, their modal – tonal structures, rhythmic organization, and performance characteristics based on historical sources. In particular, the performance traditions of Shashmaqom that developed in the Bukhara, Khorezm, and Fergana – Tashkent regions clearly reflect the regional dynamics of maqom art.

Contemporary scholarly research increasingly interprets the study of the historical development of maqom art in relation to the preservation of its authentic performance style and artistic integrity. In particular, Matyakubov's studies emphasize that maqom art historically evolved primarily through oral tradition, a factor that contributed to the preservation of distinctive melodic patterns, ornamental elements, and performance styles. This perspective allows maqom art to be understood not merely as musical heritage, but as a complex historical and cultural phenomenon.

Therefore, the present article aims to analyze the historical stages of development of Uzbek maqom art on the basis of scholarly sources, to identify the key factors that influenced its formation, and to reveal the historical significance of maqom art within the context of Uzbek national musical heritage.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative research design based on historical and musicological analysis. The methodological framework is grounded in the principles of historical source criticism and comparative musicology, allowing for a systematic examination of the development of Uzbek maqom art across different historical periods.

Primary attention is given to the analysis of scholarly works devoted to the theory, history, and performance practice of maqom art, particularly Shashmaqom. The research draws upon the academic contributions of Is'hoq Rajabov, Yunus Rajabiy, and Otanazar Matyakubov, whose studies are considered foundational for

understanding the modal structure, rhythmic organization, and historical evolution of Uzbek maqoms. These works are examined through textual analysis in order to identify key theoretical concepts, terminological approaches, and interpretations of maqom development.

A historical-chronological method is applied to trace the major stages in the formation and transformation of maqom art, from its roots in medieval Eastern musical thought to its classical institutionalization within the Shashmaqom system. This approach makes it possible to situate maqom art within broader cultural and historical processes, including regional differentiation and continuity of performance traditions.

In addition, a comparative method is used to analyze regional maqom traditions associated with the Bukhara, Khorezm, and Fergana–Tashkent schools. By comparing their structural, modal, and performance characteristics as described in scholarly literature, the study identifies both shared foundations and region-specific features of maqom practice.

Finally, a conceptual-analytical approach is employed to examine the role of oral transmission in the preservation and evolution of maqom art. Particular emphasis is placed on Matyakubov's interpretation of oral tradition as a key factor shaping melodic patterns, ornamental elements, and performance styles. This methodological combination enables maqom art to be analyzed not only as a musical system, but also as a historically embedded cultural phenomenon.

Results

The results of the study demonstrate that the historical development of Uzbek maqom art represents a continuous, complex, and internally regulated process governed by stable artistic and theoretical principles. The analysis confirms that maqom art emerged within the framework of Eastern musical thought and initially evolved in close connection with court culture. The courtly environment played a decisive role in the formation and refinement of modal – pitch systems, rhythmic organization, and formal structures of maqoms. The findings indicate that, from its earliest stages, maqom art was based on professional performance traditions and cannot be regarded as a spontaneous or incidental musical phenomenon, but rather as a historically established and conceptually coherent artistic system.

The research reveals that the Shashmaqom system occupies a central position in the historical development of Uzbek maqom art. The internal sequence of its constituent sections, their structural coherence, and their consistency in terms of modal and rhythmic organization indicate that Shashmaqom is the result of a prolonged historical process[6, 43-48]. The findings confirm that, during the

formation of Shashmaqom, theoretical musical concepts and practical performance experience developed in close interaction, ultimately giving rise to a highly integrated musical complex. This circumstance provides scholarly justification for considering Shashmaqom as a foundational model that shaped the subsequent evolution of Uzbek maqom traditions.

The results also clarify the regional dimension of maqom development. Although maqom traditions formed in the Bukhara, Khorezm, and Fergana – Tashkent regions share a common theoretical foundation, they exhibit notable differences in performance style, melodic ornamentation, timbral expression, and structural interpretation[3, 8-10]. In particular, the Bukhara tradition preserved the classical form of the Shashmaqom system, maintaining its structural integrity and canonical features. Khorezm maqoms, by contrast, are distinguished by rhythmic intensity, sharper melodic contours, and a distinctive performance manner[4, 16-21]. The Fergana–Tashkent maqom traditions emphasize lyrical expression and a close integration of melody and poetic text. These findings demonstrate that the historical development of maqom art did not follow a single linear trajectory, but unfolded through diverse regional cultural environments, each contributing unique artistic features.

The analysis confirms the decisive role of oral tradition in the historical evolution of maqom art. Through oral transmission, maqoms were passed down from generation to generation, allowing performers to develop individual interpretations, ornamental techniques, and stylistic nuances[1, 17]. At the same time, the results show that oral transmission did not undermine the fundamental structure of maqom art. On the contrary, it ensured the preservation of its internal stability. Core modal – pitch frameworks, rhythmic patterns, and formal principles were largely maintained through oral practice, highlighting the resilience of the maqom system.

The study further clarifies the interdependence of theoretical and practical dimensions in maqom art. Musical-theoretical concepts emerged directly from performance practice, while accumulated performance experience continuously enriched theoretical understanding. The results indicate that, in the historical development of maqom art, there was no rigid separation between theory and practice; instead, they functioned as mutually reinforcing components[8, 3]. This dynamic interaction constituted a crucial factor in maintaining the internal coherence and artistic.

In addition, the findings demonstrate that maqom art evolved through adaptation to changing socio-cultural conditions. Although shifts in social environment, cultural demands, and historical circumstances influenced performance contexts and

interpretative approaches, the fundamental artistic principles and aesthetic criteria of maqom art were preserved. This adaptability, combined with structural continuity, provides scholarly evidence for the historical stability and cultural resilience of the maqom tradition[5, 21].

Overall, the results indicate that the historical development of Uzbek maqom art constitutes a complex, multi-layered, and continuous process. Throughout its evolution, maqom art preserved its theoretical foundations, performance traditions, and artistic unity while undergoing gradual enrichment. These findings confirm the necessity of analyzing maqom art not merely as a musical phenomenon, but as a broader historical and cultural system embedded within the intellectual and artistic heritage of Uzbek society.

Discussion

The discussion of the research findings demonstrates that the historical development of Uzbek maqom art should not be understood as a random or fragmented process, but rather as a complex and coherent cultural phenomenon governed by internal laws of development. This perspective confirms the necessity of interpreting maqom art not solely within the framework of performance practice, but within a broader historical, aesthetic, and cultural context. The long-term preservation of maqom traditions over centuries can be scientifically explained by their internally stable structural organization, modal – pitch systems, and formal integrity.

The analysis further confirms that the central position of the Shashmaqom system in the historical development of Uzbek maqom art is not accidental. As indicated by the research results, Shashmaqom represents not merely a collection of individual maqoms, but a logically interconnected musical–philosophical system. This system emerged as a synthesis of theoretical concepts characteristic of Eastern musical thought and long-standing performance practice. From this perspective, Shashmaqom may be regarded as a “core model” of Uzbek maqom art, as it provided both theoretical and practical foundations for the development of other regional maqom traditions[9, 13-18].

With regard to regional maqom traditions, the discussion demonstrates that the differences observed between the Bukhara, Khorezm, and Fergana – Tashkent schools do not indicate fragmentation within maqom art. On the contrary, these differences reflect the adaptation and enrichment of a unified musical system within diverse cultural environments. The Bukhara tradition embodies classical stability and formal balance, while Khorezm maqoms are characterized by dynamism and rhythmic intensity. The Fergana – Tashkent maqom traditions emphasize melodic lyricism, expressive nuance, and a close integration of melody and poetic text. These

features reveal the broad internal developmental potential of maqom art as a living artistic system[1].

The role of oral tradition in the development of maqom art also allows for important scholarly conclusions. Based on the research findings, it can be argued that oral transmission, which is often viewed in academic literature as a threat to stability, manifests an opposite function in the context of Uzbek maqom art. Oral tradition preserved the fundamental modal – pitch structures of maqoms while simultaneously enabling the enrichment of performance interpretations. Therefore, oral transmission should not be regarded as a weakness of maqom art, but rather as a key factor that ensured its historical vitality and continuity[2, 55].

The discussion also highlights the relationship between theory and practice in maqom art as a matter of particular significance. The findings indicate that theoretical knowledge in maqom art did not exist independently of performance practice. Instead, musical-theoretical concepts emerged directly from performance processes and evolved in close interaction with practical experience[5, 18]. This characteristic distinguishes maqom art from Western musical traditions based on rigid written systems and may be considered a defining feature of its historical and cultural development model.

Furthermore, the relationship between maqom art and broader socio-cultural processes occupies an important place in the discussion. According to the research results, political, cultural, and social changes in different historical periods influenced the external forms and contexts of maqom performance, yet did not undermine its core artistic essence[8,46].

This demonstrates the high degree of adaptability inherent in maqom art, a quality that constitutes one of the principal reasons for its survival and continued relevance up to the present day.

Overall, the discussion confirms the necessity of interpreting the historical development of Uzbek maqom art as a comprehensive cultural phenomenon. Maqom art manifests not only as a musical practice, but as a complex system reflecting historical memory, aesthetic values, and cultural identity. Consequently, the scholarly study of maqom art should approach it not as a mere collection of melodies or performance forms, but as an organically

Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the historical development of Uzbek maqom art constitutes a continuous process grounded in internal principles and closely connected with national musical thought. Maqom art did not emerge spontaneously; rather, it evolved over a long historical period into an integrated

artistic system characterized by a refined modal – pitch structure, rhythmic organization, and formal coherence.

The Shashmaqom system was identified as the central model of Uzbek maqom art, serving as the foundation for the development of regional maqom traditions. Although the Bukhara, Khorezm, and Fergana – Tashkent maqom traditions share a common theoretical basis, they display distinct historical features in performance practice and artistic interpretation. This diversity confirms the dynamic and multi-faceted nature of maqom art.

The study also reveals that maqom art historically developed primarily through oral tradition, a factor that ensured both its artistic unity and long-term stability. The close interconnection between theoretical concepts and performance practice defined a distinctive developmental model unique to maqom art.

Overall, Uzbek maqom art represents a significant component of national musical heritage and should be understood not merely as a musical phenomenon, but as a comprehensive historical and cultural system reflecting collective memory, aesthetic values, and cultural identity.

REFERENCES

1. Rajabov, I. Maqomlar masalasiga doir. – Toshkent, 1963.
2. Rajabov, I. Maqomlar. – Toshkent, 1970.
3. Rajabiy, Y. Shashmaqom. 5 jildlik. – Toshkent, 1959–1975.
4. Rajabiy, Y. Musiqa merosimizga bir nazar. – Toshkent, 1978.
5. Matyakubov, O. Maqomot. – Toshkent, 2004.
6. Matyakubov, O. Истоки и принципы Хорезмской нотации. – Toshkent, 1999.
7. Matyakubov, O. Buxoro Shashmaqomiga yana bir nazar. – Toshkent, 2001.
8. Mullaqandov, D. Некоторые особенности узбекского вокального исполнения и художественно-эстетическая взаимосвязь русской вокальной школы. — San’atshunoslik fanlari nomzodi dissertatsiyasi. – Toshkent, 1961.
9. Abdullayev, R. S. Жанр «Катта ашула» и его носители. – San’atshunoslik fanlari nomzodi dissertatsiyasi. – Toshkent, 2000.
10. Matyusupov, E. Ustozni eslab. – Urganch, 2007.