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SURNAY PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS IN UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract

This article examines the historical development, pedagogical foundations, and performance characteristics of Uzbek national wind instruments, with particular emphasis on the surnay traditions of the Khorezm and Fergana–Tashkent schools. The study explores the role of the master–apprentice system in the transmission of performance techniques, repertoire, and artistic values, highlighting its significance in preserving musical continuity across generations. Special attention is given to breathing techniques, reed construction, sound production methods, and structural differences of the surnay within regional performance practices.

Based on comparative analysis of performance traditions, the research identifies key similarities and distinctions between the two schools, including differences in circular breathing, timbral qualities, reed design, and instrumental construction. The article also addresses the historical transition from traditional oral instruction to formal music education institutions during the twentieth century and evaluates the impact of this shift on the teaching of wind instruments.

Keywords: *wind instruments, surnay, dudik, teacher-student, performance school*

Introduction

As is known, every profession has a school of continuous learning. The process of scientific research develops in accordance with the requirements and needs of the time. The study of national wind instruments consists of the teacher and his followers. Primarily, practical knowledge played a leading role in them. School representatives regularly performed exercises for correct breathing and maintaining it in the body. Students who fully mastered these were taught small examples of folk melodies. Gradual performance of maqoms and classical melodies in educa-

tional activities is permitted with the teacher's permission.

In the study of wind instruments, mentor-student relationships were not small, unilateral. When learning from the teacher, the student had to follow in his footsteps, learn his performance styles and experience, and perform actions that required specific laws in this regard. Students accept the practices shown by the teacher and learn the secrets of performance by staying with the teacher for long periods. Sometimes talented students chose the path of another teacher and studied their work independently. To preserve

the prestige of their performance school, the masters instilled in the younger generation a love for folk heritage through their art.

Methods and degree of study

Uzbek national musical instruments are diverse in their types and structures. Wind instruments hold a significant place in Uzbek music due to their antiquity and melancholic melodies, as well as their ability to stir human emotions and feelings. Legends and scholarly treatises about wind instruments provide information that performers mainly played them at public gatherings, festivals, fairs, weddings, feasts, and celebrations. These instruments were utilized by two categories of musicians depending on the circumstances. The first category comprised nay, bulamon, and qo'shnay players who performed at weddings, fairs, and private gatherings. The second category consisted of ensembles made up of surnay players, karnay players, and doira players who performed in open areas and during wedding processions. The repertoire of these musical groups, depending on the audience, ranged from maqoms, dastans, and suvoriy melodies to common tunes, songs, lapars, terms, as well as instrumental pieces and recitations belonging to folk oral traditions.

In the territory of Uzbekistan, there are mainly 2 wind instrumental styles, which are known as the Khorezm and Fergana-Tashkent schools of performance. These playing styles are quite similar to each other, but at the same time differ in some aspects.

In Khorezm surnay performance, it is performed without breaking the breath, and such performance is called continuous breathing (Matyoqubov M., 2003. 8). Achieving the technique of continuous breathing requires significant effort and hard work. Continuous breathing is a complex performance technique where breathing is initially taken through the nose and expelled from the oral cavity. At the same time, the process continues with nasal breathing. Continuous breathing is difficult to perform immediately. After practicing several times, it can be implemented. To perform this action, they first blew into a cup of water through a tube or straw, trying not to stop breathing.

In Khorezm, special "Surnay Melodies" were created for the surnay based on maqom

branches, which are reflected in the "Tanbur Notation" invented by Komil Khorezmi, which are the maqoms "Iforiy," "Zangboziy," "Zuvoniy," "Marviy I–II," "Gulho gulim," "Alaming yomon," "Yor-yor," "Qorako'z," "Puxtaro giyr." Similarly, works such as "Muxammasi Rost," "Muhammasi ushshoq," "Saqili Navo (this work was also called "xon chiqar"), "Muhammasi bayoz," "Ufori Navo," "Peshravi Dugoh," "Peshrav zanjiri," "Hafifi Segoh," "Ufori Iroq" are among the maqoms, while folk melodies such as "Aliqambar," "Nadromaddin," "Birollayim," and from the paths of masxaraboz: "Qum pishigi," "To'rg'ay," "Chogolloq," "Zumlaq," "Rotollo" and others are still famous today. Variations of the surnay, performed mainly at weddings, circumcisions, and other ceremonies, are widespread. Most of these are dance melodies, including cyclical compositions such as "Shodiyona," "Katta o'yin," "Tanovar," "Munojot," "Orazibon," "Norim-norim," "Ushlini uforisi," "Elapasalandi," and "Birolloym" (songs like the latter were performed by powerful singers accompanied by surnay, a practice unique to Khorezm). Especially "Surnay lazgisi" is considered an internationally renowned dance melody. Dance melodies are often performed with the accompaniment of qayroq (percussion stones).

Master performers began accepting apprentices for the surnay from the age of 12–14. Not everyone was accepted as an apprentice. Young people who met certain requirements and requirements that had to be met were accepted as apprentices.

In both performance schools, the performance of wind instruments is divided into three groups in terms of sound production:

a) whistling and flute style instruments (*nay, gajir nay and sibizik*);

b) the group of reed, in turn, is divided into two groups: single reed -*kushnay, buloman*, and double reed - *surnay*;

c) Mouthpiece (embouchure) instruments - *karnay*.

In the territory of Uzbekistan, the most commonly used national wind instruments are the nay, surnay, bulamon, and qushnay.

"The group of wind and percussion instruments, consisting of karnay, surnay, nogora, and doira, has been formed in performance practice since ancient times and has become

an active participant in all public events of our people. From traditional instruments, the qushnay and bulomon were used within ensembles based on their specific characteristics” (Begmatov S., Matyoqubov M., 2008, 13).

Until the 30s of the last century, the study of these instruments was regulated by the traditional method of teacher-student.

In music schools, educational institutions, and higher educational institutions opened during the Soviet era, only the nay classes were taught. In the performance of the surnay, bulamon, and qushnay, it was not taught that their modal structures did not correspond to modern musical notation. Surnay, buloman, and qushnay classes were first organized in the republic in 1973 at the Urgench Music College on the initiative of Abdusharif Otajanov.

The surnay is a musical instrument, consisting of 2 main parts, which are called:

- *dudik*(double reed), *mil*(conical metal sound amplifier),
- surnay’s body and *bechka*(wooden attachment).

Structurally, the Khorezm surnay differs from the Fergana-Tashkent surnay in that its lower part is thicker.

Also, there are some differences in the sound-producing part ***dudik*** – the initial sound source, ***mil*** – the initial part of the surnay that amplifies the sound, and the internal and external appearance of the surnay handle.

In Khorezm, a double reed called *dudik* in Fergana-Tashkent surnay performance it is called *naycha* or *nay pachok*. These differ not only in name but also in manner of construction and form.

Khorezm duduk is made in a unique style from local reeds. Mainly dried and characteristically shaped reeds are selected, which should be of medium thickness, wrinkled on the surface, with a medium thickness of the trunk. It should be noted that each performer or reed maker has their own unique style of reed making, which is traditionally passed down from master to apprentice. In particular, my mentor Matrasul Matyokubov taught me his method of making dudiks.

Fergana-Tashkent dudiks are made of reed with a slightly larger volume and thick-

er trunk compared to Khorezm dudiks. In this type of dudik, the raising or lowering of the tone, the vibration of the sound, and the making of glissando are mainly performed using the performer’s tongue.

One of the main performance techniques in surnay performance is tuning the surnay’s reed. Differences in the pitch of the sound arise in the performance of the dudik structure and position in the surnay. That is, when the reed is fitted onto the mil, the range of motion of the reed’s tongues changes in two ways depending on whether it is closer or farther from the mil:

- In the first case, the volume of the sound increases and more breathing is required as the reed enters the mil. The advantage of this situation is that the performer can freely perform talent and similar melisms.
- In the second case, as the reed moves away relative to the mil, the range of motion of the reed’s tongues decreases, the volume of sound decreases, and breathing is required less.

In this case, the melody is easier to play in the lower register, but higher overtones are observed when blowing slightly louder.

In terms of sound characteristics, the sound potential of Khorezm surnay performance is considered more squeaky and delicate. This feature is related to the structural features of the surnays. The main differences in the surnays of both performance schools are as follows:

- The Fergana-Tashkent surnay has a longer mil structure, a larger inner and outer diameter of the horn.
- In terms of external appearance, the structure of the lower part of the Fergana-Tashkent surnay is more delicate than that of the Khorezm surnay.
- The instrument, called nay pachok or dudik of the Fergana-Tashkent surnay, which is the primary sound source of the surnay, has a larger and thicker structure.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it can be said that both surnay performance schools have found a place in the hearts of our people with their unique performance styles. World-famous numerous

melodies performed by the Uzbek surnay, such as “Surnay Lazgi,” “Rotollo,” “Duchava,” and “Surnay Melody,” demonstrate the rich and diverse musical culture of our nation. In 2019, the dance “Lazgi,” characteristic of Khorezm surnay performance, was included by UNES-

CO in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This event marked the international recognition of Uzbekistan’s cultural heritage, taking the processes of preserving, developing, and widely promoting the “Lazgi” dance to a new level.

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