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A NEW LOOK AT TURGUN ALIMATOV'S PERFORMANCE STYLE

Xodjaeva Ruzibi Madievna ¹

¹ Department of Performance on Folk Instruments, State Conservatory of Uzbekistan

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Abstract

Turgun Alimatov is a great musician who left an indelible mark on Uzbek national music. He gave concerts in leading concert halls of the USA, Germany, France, Great Britain, introducing Uzbek national classical music to the European world. The famous American musicologist Theodore Levine said in his speech at a conference held in New York in January 2012: "We, European musicologists, consider Turgun Alimatov to be the Bach and Mozart of Uzbekistan and see him among them". The master's concerts abroad were met with enthusiastic applause from music lovers, and received recognition and high praise in the media.

Keywords: *dutar, music, musician, style, skill, ensemble, ustoz, school*

When he became known as a tanbur player in the 1940s and 1950s, the famous musician and master of the nai soz, Mahmudjon Muhamedov, gave him the title "Golden Nail", which was an assessment of the musician's performance skills. Turgun Alimatov, who brought the performance of the tanbur soz to the highest level, created a new style in it, rediscovered the sato soz, and brought the performance of national classical music to an unprecedented level, entered the world of music through the dutar soz.

He was born in 1922 in Tashkent, in the Chuvalachi neighborhood of the Old City. The family owned large plots of land in the village of Chuvalachi, between Kokterak and Hasanboy, near Tashkent, and were engaged in farming. His father, an entrepreneur, Alimuhammad, had teahouses in the villages of Kokterak, Koplonbek, and Chuvalachi in Tashkent. People of various professions, writers, poets,

and artists also visited those places. T. Alimatov often went to the teahouse with his father and enjoyed the work of artists, which led to his interest in music. Visitors often asked his father to play a tune on the dutar. Watching his father play the dutar, he gradually began to practice the dutar at home. Meanwhile, for a year or two, he practiced the tunes he heard on the ear radio on his own.

One day, a stranger was reading a newspaper in a teahouse. Taking advantage of the fact that his father was not in the teahouse, he took out a dutar from a corner and began to play a melody he had heard and learned. This was the melody of a song that began with "Fabrikani yolida...", which was composed in connection with a new textile factory being opened in Tashkent at that time. As soon as he finished the melody, the stranger asked: "Hey boy, whose son are you? Who taught you to play like this?" The boy was ashamed

and ran out into the street. When people on the street asked: "Who is this boy?" they said: "The son of the teahouse owner, Alimat aka". The stranger had been sent from the city to the village to promote state policy among the population and attract women to the textile factory. In the evening, he gathers the residents and holds a meeting, during which he talks about the young Turgun playing the dutar, about finding and helping talented people in the village, and expresses deep gratitude to Alimat aka for the upbringing he has given to many. The father, who is in awe of this, comes home and tells his wife. This incident gives Turgun a strong motivation to enter the world of music in his life.

Before long, a great misfortune befell the family. It was 1934. They were living in a city courtyard due to the cold weather. Their father, as usual, went out into the street in the morning and disappeared for the rest of the day. After that, the mother was forced to take her poor children and go live with her brother. Turgun was studying at school, and did not want to live with his uncle, and with the permission of the school principal, he continued to study by sleeping on the sofa in the lobby. During the day, he sold water in the market and earned his bread. When a group of criminals were arrested and tried in 1936, they were found guilty of, among other crimes, the murder of Alimat aka. An unquenchable pain began to burn in Turgun's heart. After graduating from school, he entered the Pedrabfak Technical School on Sagbon Street in the Old City and continued his studies, living in a dormitory. The technical school had an amateur art club, which was attended by students and children from the surrounding area. Of course, there was a dutor there. By becoming a member of the club, he had the opportunity to play the dutor. Now, the only thing he cared about in this world was this dutor. In the evening, when everyone left, he would go into the club room and slowly begin to learn other instruments on his own.

By the time he graduated from the technical school, he could play the chan, flute, violin, and tanbur with ease and became known as a young musician around the Old City. As he passed by a teahouse there, the teahouse owner called out: "3-4 of my friends have come. I told them about you, please play a dutar".

Turgun played a tune and was applauded by the guests. As he was leaving, a Russian man sitting in the teahouse came up to him and said that he wanted to record a tune he had performed. Together, they sat in Jangoh Park and wrote down the tune Turgun had performed. It was "Dilkhijro". At the end of the conversation, he advised him to choose a field of music and introduced himself as V. Uspensky. Turgun said goodbye, saying that he dreamed of becoming a literature teacher.

After graduating from the technical school, he managed to enter the Tashkent Pedagogical Institute. At the institute, he studied with Umar, the son of the famous master Usman Zufarov, and became friends. As a result of this friendship, they later became close and related to the famous master's family. At that time, students were allowed to work in their free time. Turgun went to the Young Spectators Theater in Old Juba and entered the music ensemble room. There were several musicians and singers there, and the leader of the ensemble was the famous musician and master of the skrika soz Mama-daziz Niyazov. When he asked which soz he could play, Turgun played the violin in his hand. Niyazov immediately took him to the theater director's office, and the matter was resolved and he was accepted to work. Thus, while studying at the institute, he worked as a musician in the theater ensemble.

In June 1941, the war began, and he and his friend Umar were drafted into the army. He was sent to the front in the Smolensk region of Russia. In the summer of 1942, he was seriously wounded in three places in his leg during a battle and ended up in a military hospital unconscious. The chief physician was a woman and knew music. When she heard Turgun playing the violin, she brought him an instrument. Turgun continued his exercises and became a balm for the pain of those around him. In the meantime, he also began to play Russian folk music that was broadcast on the radio. When he played the melodies "Katyusha" and "Suliko", which were especially popular among the military, the patients forgot about their pain and joined in. After Turgun recovered a little, he did not return to the front because of the doctors, but played music in the hospital. After arriving in Tashkent, a flute player named Askar Ubay-

dullayev took Turgun to the Yangiyul Theater and introduced him to the orchestra leader Doni Zakirov. Since he was also a violinist, he accepted the job as soon as he heard the musician play. He worked there until the end of the war. He got married and had a daughter. Now he was known not only as a violinist, but also as a tanbur player with a wonderful style. Having learned about this, Yunus Rajabiy, the head of the folk instrument ensemble of the Radio Committee (now the National Television and Radio Company of Uzbekistan), expressed his desire to see the young musician. Turgun tuned the tanbur differently and suddenly played the melody "Rohat" that he had previously played on the dutor. "When Turgun aka played the melody "Rohat", all the artists in the ensemble, starting with Y. Rajabiy, were amazed, because it was the first time they had enjoyed the melody "Rohat" (from Hasan Rajabiy's article in the magazine "Art").

Thus, his life was closely connected with music. In 1957, he rediscovered the sato song, which had been forgotten and out of use, and popularized its new form. His work on the tanbur was fruitful, creating tanbur versions of melodies known mainly in the dutar performance. Today, the tanbur and sato songs have developed, and the number of performers has increased, mainly using the style of Turgun Alimatov. The master worked in the maqom ensemble and retired in 1985. Due to his diverse and unique activities, his work was widely used in films, radio and television productions. He also created many new melodies. Until the end of his life, he taught young people at the national music department that he started working at the conservatory. He trained many students.

After independence, in 1991, he went on his first trip abroad, performing Uzbek nation-

al music in several states of the United States. The Western world became acquainted with the Uzbek national musical culture. After that, he visited Germany, France, and Great Britain, and in addition to concerts, audio recordings were recorded in European music studios. During the trips, articles were published in the media one after another. At the same time, international conferences on the topic were held, in which the master himself participated. Despite the unprecedented difficulties he experienced throughout his life, he always looked to the future with hope and, finding strength in himself, continued on his path. In the 50s and 60s of the last century, his performance style and approach to music contradicted the ideology of that time. They knew and recognized that their executive abilities were superior, and the fact that this was contrary to ideology bothered the leadership, and strong psychological pressure was exerted on them. Various reasons were sought, they were fired several times with excuses, but thanks to the efforts of Yunus Rajabi, they were invited back to work. In the end, they were even brought to prison, but they did not break their spirit, on the contrary, upon their release, they again strived towards the goal they had set for themselves.

The forces that had prevented him from recording for 16 years had no choice but to yield to the will of the master, and since 1976, he has been allowed to record his works without any artistic council or censorship. More than 100 tanbur, sato and dutar performances, works that were accompanied by singers in their own style, have become a legacy for the current young generation. In 1992, he was awarded the title of "People's Artist of Uzbekistan", and in 1997, he was awarded the Order "For Great Services". The life, experience and perseverance of the master remain a huge school.

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Contact: navouzbek@mail.ru