

DOI:10.29013/EJA-25-2-59-61



FROM THE HISTORY OF UZBEK FOLK INSTRUMENTS

Khaydaralieva Durdona Erkinovna ¹

¹ Department “Performance on folk instruments” State Conservatory of Uzbekistan

Cite: Khaydaralieva D.E. (2025). *From the history of Uzbek folk instruments*. *European Journal of Arts* 2025, No 2. <https://doi.org/10.29013/EJA-25-2-59-61>

Abstract

It is known that Uzbek national musical instruments are considered to be one of the oldest and most diverse in the world. We can find valuable information about the origin of these instruments from scientific treatises of our world-famous scientists. Our national culture and values are expressed through the sounds of national instruments, especially the *dutar*, which has long been a favorite instrument of the Uzbek people due to its mournful and melodious sound.

Keywords: *science, history, culture, art, instrument, performance, dutar, gidjak*

Common features of the cultural life of the peoples of the Middle Ages are the sharp development of written sources of knowledge, and in general, the book culture. Written sources have always played a leading role in the development of various arts. In Central Asia and the territory of Uzbekistan, located between it, an independent and specialized field of knowledge arose – the universal science of music. It became customary for scientists and musicians, philosophers and poets to express their musical views in written form, in the form of scientific works – musical treatises or sections in the structure of research on philosophical, mathematical and other scientific fields. It is especially noteworthy that dozens of copies of works of this type, written in Arabic, Persian and Turkic languages, created during the 9th – 19th centuries, have reached us, and most of them were created directly in the territory of Uzbekistan or beyond by scientists who came from this land, in other cultural centers and,

most importantly, in a way that is related to the traditions of the native land.

For example, Abu Nasir al-Farabi was born near Turkestan and studied in Tashkent and Bukhara. However, he served for a lifetime in the palace of the sultans of Aleppo. Abu Ali ibn Sina was born in Bukhara and studied there. As a prominent scholar, he lived and worked in Old Urgench, the capital of the Khorezmshahs. It is worth noting that he had close contacts with Abu Raykhan al-Biruni, another scholar, and conducted scientific discussions there. Ibn Sina's treatise «Jawomi ilmi musiqi» in the *Shifa* encyclopedia was written in Urgench. However, the later life of the sage was spent in Khorasan.

From this it can be seen that the classical forms and varieties of musical values that emerged in the urban environment have become the main source of research for science.

Important and valuable information of a popular nature about music is reflected in many comparative sources. Therefore,

thoughts and considerations about music occupy a wide place in literary works, historical books, philosophical, ethical, jurisprudential and other works.

Among the sources on the musical culture of the 9th – 12th centuries, a special place is occupied primarily by books by encyclopedic scholars on the fundamental issues of musical culture. It was during this period that musicology developed to a high level and rose to high levels. The musical treatises created during this period are significantly different from the musical treatises created in recent times in terms of their quantity and quality, potential, scope and coverage of scientific issues, and unparalleled achievements.

We witness that the classical works of the Renaissance contain a variety of reliable information related to the musical ideology of their time, fundamental issues of musical theory and practice, categories and directions of genres and forms, and the study of performing and instrumental sciences. This information is of unique importance in studying the history and theoretical foundations of Central Asian culture, and Uzbek music in particular. In short, it is difficult to overestimate the importance of the heritage of scholars in preserving and continuing national and universal values.

According to historical data, the dutor was considered a chamber instrument mainly due to its low timbre. For many years, our instrument makers have been experimenting with the aim of increasing this timbre and expanding its performance capabilities. In order to organize various ensembles, the instruments also needed to have a wide range and a sound level that met the requirements. It is well known that in 1927, under the leadership of Yunus Rajabi, an ensemble of singers and musicians was organized under the Tashkent Radio Broadcasting Committee. After the formation of the ensemble, in the process of creative research, Yunus Rajabi began to think about improving the instruments.

Eastern thinkers Abu Ali ibn Sino, Al-Beruni, Abu Nasr al-Farabi, and Alisher Navoi wrote many scientific works for the enlightenment, science, art, and the bright future of humanity, and in their works they deeply analyzed issues such as the science of music, its scientific-theoretical and scientific-

practical foundations, performance styles, national musical instruments, and their use as a means of education.

The history of musical instruments of the Uzbek people goes back to ancient times. From these literary sources and finds, we can learn that musical instruments of various peoples were used in palaces, cultural festivals, festivals, and hunts. Cultural monuments, wall paintings, and ceramic sculptures testify to the existence of musical instruments as early as the 7th century AD. According to these sources, percussion instruments first appeared, since ancient labor songs were associated with the rhythmic structure of work. Later, stringed-mizrob and stringed-bow musical instruments appeared, and these instruments were used in palace ceremonies and military campaigns. Uzbek folk instruments have also been shaped over long periods of time, retaining their own unique sound characteristics. The traditional forms of the national instruments of the Uzbek people, such as the flute, trumpet, tanbur, dutor, rubob, gijjak, and qobuz, have survived to our times. Historical monuments found at the archaeological site of Samayli-Tash, dating back to the second millennium BC, depict musicians playing circular instruments (Vizgo T., 1980, 15).

The dutor, which is the instrument of these different peoples, differs from each other in appearance, size, and various decorations. The dutor has long become a favorite of these peoples with its sad and melodious sound.

According to historical sources, the dutor instrument was first mentioned in the 15th century. The treatise “The Science of Law and Practical Music” by the musicologist of his time, Zayn al-Obiddin al-Husayni, contains information about the dutor instrument. It is known that the word dutor is one of the ancient musical instruments, and when translated from Persian, “du” means two, and “tor” means a pair of strings strung on the neck of the instrument. This indicates that the dutor is a double-stringed instrument. In ancient times, the dutor was considered an “indoor” (room) instrument and was considered mainly a women’s instrument. In ancient times, instrument makers made the dutor from mulberry wood.

Among the folk dutor players who have achieved a level of mastery in performance, such as Mahmud Yunusov, Gulomjon Koch-

karov, Fakhridin Sodikov, Zakirjon Obidov, Orif Kasimov, Nurmuhhammad Boltaev, Pakhlavon Rasulov, Yusuf Jabbarov, Turgun Alimatov, Sayfiddin Yuldoshev, Ismatilla Rahmatillaev, Abdurahim Hamidov, Malika Ziyoyeva, and Ahmadjon Abdurakhmanov have always been in the hearts of our people. The dutor is a naturally unique, technically rich instrument with bars. In Uzbek folk songs and in the works of Uzbek composers for the dutor, we see the variety of bars and their use in their place.

Master Usman Zufarov also conducted several experiments on his favorite instrument – the dutor. As a result of the experiments, the dutor family of instruments was created, and to this day, all instruments in this family are used in practice by amateur musicians, children's music schools, college, lyceum, and higher education students, both solo and as part of folk instrument ensembles and orchestras. New styles of performance and new styles of the instrument have emerged. Before the dutor instrument was improved, only simple strokes such as P–V, reverse percussion, and rez were used, but later strokes such as pizzicato and tremolo were used in various forms. As a result of changes in the appearance of these dutors, instruments such as dutor prima, dutor secunda, dutor alt, dutor bass, and dutor contrabass were created, each with a different appearance and scale, a unique sound, timbre, and, of course, performance possibilities (Vizgo T., 1980, 15).

Due to the diversity of Uzbek folk instruments, perfecting them was ultimately a difficult task. This ultimately turned out to be a long and complex process, which is why both the improvement of folk instruments, as well as the formation of multi-voice ensembles and orchestras from improved instruments, took several decades. When strings were added to instruments such as the chan and gijjak, this

significantly expanded their range of sound. Matyusuf Kharratov worked on improving the chan. The head of the national ensemble “Xalq Cholgular” under the auspices of the Radio of Uzbekistan, Yunus Rajabi, in collaboration with Master Usman Zufarov, created models of dutor-bass (large dutor), gijjak-bass (large gijjak), and gijjak-alt. This led to the creation of special workshops for the reconstruction and improvement of Uzbek folk instruments. Since the mid-1930s, work on improving Uzbek folk instruments began in earnest. Under the leadership of A. I. Petrosyants, a group of masters, including Usman Zufarov, V. A. Romanchenko, A. A. Kevkhoyants, and S. E. Didenko, began to improve the dutor and tanbur. The basic tone was a tone series that produced pure semitones, that is, a chromatic equal semitone series, divided into two stages of even tempos. Later, a series of quarta and quinta-sounding zithers was created, rubobs were improved, and the prima rubob was invented.

Each instrument has its own unique characteristics, and working on a clearer, more expressive sound on an instrument requires regular work and practice from the student. In order to produce a smooth, clear sound in performance, it is important to have theoretical and practical knowledge of the capabilities of the instrument and master the skills of playing on them.

Like all areas of education, great attention is paid to the field of music, and educational literature, manuals, and textbooks are being created. Educating students in the spirit of humanity, love for the Motherland, striving for knowledge and enlightenment, and encouraging them to appreciate customs and traditions, requires organizing music education based on modern requirements and, at the same time, improving the performance skills of students.

References

- Fitrat. Uzbek klassik musiqasi va uning tarixi. – Toshkent, 1993.
Odilov Ahmad. Uzbek xalq cholg'ularida ijrochilik tarixi. – Toshkent, 1995.
Vizgo T. Muzikalniye instrumenti Sredney Azii. – Moskva, 1980.
Zufarov Tuxtamurod. Soz va sozgarlik tarixi. – Toshkent, 2014.

submitted 27.03.2024;

accepted for publication 08.04.2025;

published 30.04.2025

© Khaydaralieva D. E.

Contact: navouzbek@mail.ru