



UZBEKISTAN MAQOM ART: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL TRADITIONS

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Abstract:

This article explores the historical development and regional traditions of Uzbek maqam music. It analyzes key schools such as the Bukhara Shashmaqom, Khorezm maqams, and the maqam repertoires of Fergana and Tashkent, highlighting their aesthetic and cultural significance. Special attention is given to the scholarly contributions of Dr. Ishoq Rajabov, the sacred status of maqams, and the continuity of oral traditions. The maqam is presented as an invaluable cultural heritage that reflects the spiritual and national identity of the Uzbek people.

Keywords: Maqam, Shashmaqom, Duvozdahmaqom, Khorezm maqams, Fergana maqams, Ishoq Rajabov, musical heritage, oral tradition, national music culture.

INTRODUCTION

The art of maqom, deeply rooted in the ancient cultural heritage of the Eastern Muslim world, is distinguished by its complex and profound philosophical essence. Maqom is not just a musical direction, but an art system that embodies the historical, cultural and aesthetic views of the entire people. The concept of maqom has been formed in different peoples and regions in its own way, and each region has named it based on its own musical traditions and thinking. For example, in Uzbek and Tajik culture, this concept is referred to as "maqom", among the Uyghurs - "muqam", among Azerbaijanis - "mughom", and among Arabs and Turks - "maqam". In Iranian music, a similar system is known as "dastgoh", and in Indian classical music - "raga". These different names and



interpretations are a practical expression of the historical connection between the peoples of the East, the interaction of musical thinking and the rich process of cultural exchange.

According to scientific research, the roots of maqom music are associated with the 7th century AD, with the name of the famous musician Borbad Marvazi. His musical legacy served as an important basis for the formation and development of this field. Initially, the term "maqom" meant a specific "position" - a place where the fingers are placed on stringed instruments to produce sound. Over time, as Eastern musical theory and practice developed, the term maqom acquired a broader meaning, becoming a symbol not only of the technical aspect, but also of a certain melodic structure and emotional expression. Etymologically, the word "maqom" comes from the Arabic word "makān" - that is, "place", "address", and initially meant a specific point on the string of a musical instrument where the finger is pressed. However, over time, this concept has become one of the central theoretical and aesthetic elements of Eastern musical culture. Maqom is now considered not only a musical system, but also a musical expression of national thought, state of mind and historical memory.

Despite the fact that the term "maqom" is familiar to many today, its true essence, historical roots and place in the musical system are not sufficiently understood. As a result, a lack of deep understanding of this rich artistic heritage often leads to an inability to fully appreciate national musical traditions. Especially in the modern era, when musical genres such as rock, pop and jazz are becoming popular all over the world, it is important to reconsider and reassess the centuries-old legacy of maqom music.

Therefore, a deep study of maqom traditions and their reanalysis in the musical culture of the present day is of particular scientific and practical importance not only from the point of view of art history, but also in the preservation of cultural heritage. Because maqams are not simple musical tones, but a symbol of a common cultural, artistic, and historical identity for the peoples of the Muslim East. As a complex and beautiful musical system, these maqams retain their significance as a high artistic heritage, inspiring not only the past, but also modern musical thought.



Literature analysis:

By the 9th century AD, the maqom system began to take on a more refined form throughout the Eastern region. It was during this period that the famous Duvozdahmaqom — that is, the “Twelve Maqom” system — was formed, serving as the theoretical and practical basis for the musical culture of the Muslim East. There are many sources in historical manuscripts and musical treatises on this twelve maqom system, through which one can determine the formation, content, and stages of development of this complex musical system. Unfortunately, musical notations and precise performance instructions of that period have not reached us in full. This encourages today's researchers to reconstruct maqoms based on oral traditions and historical context.

By the 18th century, musical culture in Central Asia had become even richer, and maqom systems had developed into more specialized ones. In particular, in the city of Bukhara, a unique musical genre known as Shashmaqom (i.e. “Six Maqoms”) was formed and became widespread. This system consisted of the following six main maqoms: Buzruk, Rost, Navo, Dugoh, Segoh and Iraq. Each maqom had a complex structure and included musical suites consisting of several parts. Shashmaqom samples were performed in prosr (poetic songs) and mushkulot (complex instrumental paths), expressing not only the musical, but also the philosophical and aesthetic complexity of this genre.

Also, unique maqom traditions were formed in the Fergana Valley. Here, the Chor Maqom (Four Maqom) system and the seven performance styles of Dugoh Husayni were widespread. In addition, the six distinct performance styles of the Chorgoh maqom, the Shahnozi Gulyar maqom, and the various melodic directions of the Bayot have brought richness and diversity to the music of the region. Each of these has been perfected by local artists and has become its own unique means of musical expression.

In Khorezm, the maqom traditions have developed in a more complex and diverse way. Although the six main maqoms of the Shashmaqom system have been preserved in this region, they are distinguished by the performance styles specific to the Khorezm musical school. In particular, the Panjgoh maqom, which developed later, has become recognized as the seventh maqom and has become an integral part of the Khorezm maqom heritage.



This regional formation of oriental music reflects not only historical memory, but also the constant movement of creative thought. Each region, based on its aesthetic views, attitude to poetry and music, has not only preserved maqoms, but also enriched them and supplemented them with new directions. This makes the art of maqom a unique cultural phenomenon that is still relevant today and requires in-depth study.

Research Methodology:

Regional characteristics of maqom systems in the musical spaces of the East

Bukhara maqom school: Shashmaqom system

Bukhara maqom school is one of the most perfect and systematically formed directions of maqom music in Central Asia. By the end of the 18th - beginning of the 19th centuries, the Shashmaqom system was formed as the highest example of this school, systematizing the theoretical foundations and performance styles of maqom music. Shashmaqom consists of the following six maqoms: Buzruk, Rost, Navo, Dugoh, Segoh and Iroq.

Each maqom is built in the form of a unique suite (sequence), which includes several parts: Sarakhbor, Talqin, Nasr, Ufar, Sabo, Tanbur Ifigori, etc. Bukhara Shashmaqom is distinguished by its compositional complexity, inter-maqom modulation, harmony with the poetic text and clarity of the performance style. In particular, prose (i.e. maqom songs) was formed inextricably linked with the oral poetry of Uzbekistan - ghazal, rubai and masnavi.

In this school, the aesthetic and philosophical content of music was combined with the perfection of the performance style, and maqom was considered not only a musical process, but also a means of moral and spiritual education. The art of shashmaqom developed, especially during the Bukhara Emirate, as court music, and musicians - hafiz and sozandas were specially trained.

The Fergana Valley is famous for its rich folklore traditions, and the formation of maqom music in this region is also deeply rooted in this oral tradition. The Chor Maqom (Four Maqom) system was formed here, which differs from shashmaqom in its structure and performance technique. The main maqams of the Fergana maqam school include Dugoh Husayniy, Bayot, Chorgoh, Shahnozi Gulyar and other melodies.



A distinctive feature of the maqams of this region is the tendency to improvisation and expressiveness of performance. In particular, the Dugoh Husayniy maqam was performed in various variants and had seven different ways or styles. The Chorgoh maqam, on the other hand, was enriched with six different performance variants, demonstrating a high level of creative thinking. Fergana maqams were often performed at folk holidays, religious ceremonies and household events, that is, they were inextricably linked with the life of the people.

The art of hafiz was particularly developed in the maqam school of the Fergana Valley, and the hafiz enriched their repertoire not only with maqam melodies, but also with folk songs and lyrical songs.

The maqam culture of the Khorezm region was also formed as an independent and unique school. Although the maqams in this region are composed of the six main maqams of the Shashmaqom system, they differ completely in terms of performance style and musical methods. In the Khorezm maqam school, maqams are performed in a more epic spirit, and folklore elements, local modes and rhythms are clearly felt in their internal structure.

One of the most important aspects of the Khorezm maqams is the introduction of the Panjgoh maqam, which was later added to the system as the seventh maqam. The Panjgoh maqam is distinguished by its complex compositional structure and musical drama.

In Khorezm, maqams were performed in a more Sufi-philosophical context, and were also associated with dhikr and religious rituals. Instruments such as the doira, gijjak, and tanbur were used in the performance, which created a synthesis of traditional and modern expression in terms of style.

Analysis and results:

Maqom heritage: regional wealth, scientific research and cultural value

The maqom traditions of the Bukhara, Khorezm, Fergana and Tashkent regions are considered to be the invaluable musical heritage of the Uzbek people, honed over the centuries. These regional maqoms have come down to us in the form of unique songs (short melodies and songs) and large songs (complex, long musical suites), which embody the artistic thinking, aesthetic views and spiritual world of the people.



The art of maqom is transmitted from generation to generation not only through oral tradition, but also through scientific research. The contribution of Professor Ishak Rajabov to the development of modern maqom studies is incomparable. He studied in depth the modern theoretical and historical foundations of maqom music and scientifically proved that the Shashmaqom system was formed in the middle of the 18th century on the basis of Duvozdakhmaqom. Rajabov's research shows that Shashmaqom has become a common musical heritage of the Uzbek and Tajik peoples, was performed in the palaces of Bukhara and was considered a model of high culture and artistry.

Khorezm maqoms are distinguished by their special performance style, musical content and structure. In Khorezm, maqoms are traditionally divided into two main sections: Manzum (mainly instrumental works) and Mansur (vocal - that is, sung parts). Although this structure is similar to the Shashmaqom system, Khorezm maqoms are distinguished by their own unique melodic directions, tone system and rhythmic complexity. They are musical examples that reflect the rich historical and cultural life of the Khorezm region.

In the Fergana Valley and the Serunum regions around Tashkent, the art of maqom developed in a popular, accessible form. The maqom yulk performed in these regions are often based on simple but deeply emotional expressions of melodies and songs, and are widely known among the people. Famous musical suites include Bayot I–V, Chorgoh I–V, Gulyar–Shahnoz, and Dugoh–Husayniy I–VII. With their musical diversity, richness of melodies, and historical layers, these suites have not only musical significance, but also cultural and educational value. Maqoms have long been considered sacred art. Artists performing them were required not only to have musical knowledge and skill, but also to have spiritual purity and aesthetic sensitivity. In the 18th-19th centuries, arbitrary changes or incorrect performance of maqoms were strictly prohibited in Uzbekistan, and such cases resulted in serious punishments for the artist. This once again confirms the influence of maqom art in cultural life, deep respect and attention to it.

A maqom is not a simple melody, but a musical expression of the people's soul, a melodious symbol of national identity. Through it, our ancestors conveyed their sorrows, joys, philosophical views and worldviews to generations. Preserving,



deeply studying and correctly conveying the art of maqom to new generations is an important task facing not only cultural historians, but also the entire society.

Conclusions and suggestions:

The art of maqom, a high example of the musical culture of the East, is a musical expression of the artistic thinking, aesthetic views and spiritual world of the people formed over the centuries. Maqoms are an art form that embodies not only complex melodic structures or performance styles, but also meaningful layers of historical memory, national identity and cultural heritage. Each of the maqom schools of Bukhara, Khorezm, Fergana and Tashkent has acquired its own uniqueness, and united on common theoretical foundations, they reflect the possibilities of regional musical thinking and creativity. The development of Shashmaqom from the Duvozdakhmaqom system, the verse and mansur divisions of Khorezm maqoms, the folk maqom paths of the Fergana-Tashkent regions - all this is a complex but harmonious system formed within the framework of the rich musical culture of the Uzbek people. The scientific research of scientists such as Professor Is'hoq Rajabov serves as an important scientific basis for a deep understanding of this heritage and its preservation.

Historically, the art of maqom has been considered a sacred art, and it has been approached with great respect and aesthetic responsibility. This approach is still relevant today, encouraging the modern generation to appreciate this invaluable cultural wealth, study it in depth, and continue the traditions of practical performance. Therefore, maqoms should be considered not only as a monument of the past, but also as a cultural foundation for the present and the future.

Deep development of maqom studies, introduction of maqom traditions into the educational system, involvement of the younger generation in this art, and scientific and cultural promotion of maqom on an international scale are among the main tasks in this regard. After all, maqom is not just music, but also the deep melody of the soul of the nation.

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***Modern American Journal of Engineering,
Technology, and Innovation***

ISSN(E): 3067-7939

Volume 01, **Issue** 03, June, 2025

Website: usajournals.org

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