

UZBEK MAQOM TRADITIONS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON PIANO PERFORMANCE

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Abstract: This article analyzes the Uzbek maqom traditions as an integral part of the national musical heritage and their influence on piano performance. The modal system, rhythmic and melodic features of maqoms, as well as the possibilities of adapting them to the piano, are highlighted. The technical and aesthetic challenges that arise in expressing Eastern maqoms through the piano—a Western instrument—are examined along with ways to overcome them. The application of maqom elements in the piano works of contemporary Uzbek composers is also discussed. The article demonstrates how the synthesis of maqom and piano can contribute to the development of new approaches in performance.

Keywords: Uzbek maqom, piano performance, shashmaqom, maqom modal system, musical synthesis, compositional style, Uzbek composers.

Introduction

In the centuries-old musical culture of the Uzbek people, maqom art occupies a special place. Shashmaqom and other regional maqom cycles form not only the foundation of national musical heritage but also serve as a source of inspiration for Uzbek composers and performers. The piano, meanwhile, in the 19th–20th centuries became regarded as an instrument that bridges Eastern and Western musical cultures. This article examines the mutual interaction between Uzbek maqom traditions and piano performance, analyzing their commonalities and distinctions.

Maqom art is a unique phenomenon within the ancient musical heritage of the Uzbek people. It is not only the highest expression of national musical thought but also a reflection of the people’s spiritual life, traditions, and worldview. Shashmaqom and other maqom cycles, having been shaped over centuries and transmitted from generation to generation, represent a complex artistic system. This tradition has significantly influenced all spheres of Uzbek music, including modern academic performance practice [1].

The works of Uzbek musicologists such as Musulmonov, Is'hoqov, Rajabov, and Yunusov have played a key role in the study of maqom art. They have conducted valuable research on the theoretical foundations, modal-intonational systems, and historical development of maqoms.

The application of national musical traditions in piano performance has also been investigated at various times by scholars and educators of the Uzbek Conservatory and music institutes. From the second half of the 20th century, the expression of maqom intonations through pianistic works became one of the leading directions of the Uzbek school of composition.

Thus, while the synthesis of maqom and piano has been partially explored scientifically, its performance interpretation and pedagogical application require further and deeper study.

Uzbek maqoms are distinguished by their complex modal-intonational structure, unique rhythmic features, and performance styles. Their foundation lies in a modal system rich in micro-intervals, setting them apart from the diatonic and harmonic systems of European music.

A gradual development principle is fundamental to maqom melodies. For example, Shashmaqom cycles consist of the following main sections:

- **Daromad** – introduction of the theme with main intonations;
- **Miyonxat** – developmental section;
- **Ufar** – dynamic climax and conclusion.

The art of piano performance is rooted in European musical thought, primarily based on the major-minor tonal system, harmony, and polyphony. Yet the piano's wide expressive capabilities allow it to adapt maqom music. For instance, the long melismatic passages of maqoms can be conveyed through legato technique, while rhythmic complexity may be highlighted with the help of pedal and articulation [2].

Similarities:

- The legato technique in piano can effectively express prolonged maqom phrases;

Particularly for young pianists, this fosters improvisational skills and the ability to combine national melodies with contemporary compositional methods. Thus, maqom and piano fusion serves not only performance but also moral and artistic education.

Conclusion

Uzbek maqom art is a unique cultural phenomenon that has developed over centuries, embodying profound philosophical, aesthetic, and musical dimensions. Characterized by

microtonal intonations, complex rhythmic structures, modal foundations, and improvisational possibilities, maqom represents a world distinct from European tonal music. The piano, in turn, is a polyphonic instrument rooted in Western classical traditions with a tempered tuning system.

The intersection of these two musical worlds—particularly the expression of maqom melodies on the piano—creates a unique process of synthesis in both musicology and performance [4]. Interpreting maqom on the piano requires not only technical skill but also an understanding of its spirit, energy, and aesthetic essence. The challenges of rendering microtonality within tempered tuning, or conveying maqom's freedom and lyricism through the structural limitations of the piano, represent key theoretical and practical issues in this field.

Nonetheless, these challenges are addressed through creative approaches such as transcription, stylization, and innovative expressive means. Today, Uzbek composers and pianists actively incorporate maqom aesthetics into their works, combining national intonations with Western techniques. This has elevated Uzbek piano performance to a new stage, fostering the development of musical thought on both national and global levels.

In conclusion, the synthesis of maqom and piano creates a new artistic space founded on the meeting of Eastern and Western musical thinking, serving as an important theoretical and practical resource for contemporary musical practice and scholarship [5].

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