

REGIONAL SCHOOLS OF UZBEK TRADITIONAL SINGING: FERGANA, BUKHARA, AND KHIVA STYLES

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Abstract

This article presents an artistic analysis of the three main regional schools of traditional Uzbek singing: Fergana-Tashkent, Bukhara, and Khiva styles. The aesthetic characteristics, performance techniques, melodies, instruments, and poetic materials of each school are described. The article also reveals the musical and cultural uniqueness of each regional school through the work of famous singers. Additionally, it provides insights into the interrelation between these schools and their roles in the development of national art.

Keywords: Singing schools, Fergana style, Bukhara maqom, Khiva song, traditional music, maqom, melody, performance style, national art, Uzbek culture.

Introduction

The main element of regional schools in music education is the master-apprentice tradition. Singers acquire their knowledge directly from their mentors. This system exists alongside formal education in conservatories and art schools and is enriched through private studio lessons, masterclasses, and concert activities.

In recent years, with the inclusion of Uzbekistan's maqom art in UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, regional music schools have gained international recognition. This has led to the need for new methodological materials in education, the development of online platforms, and collaboration with foreign specialists. Today, Uzbek vocal schools are being integrated into the global musical landscape through conservatories, international seminars, and festivals.

Uzbekistan's rich cultural heritage includes the art of traditional singing, which has developed through three main regional schools — the Fergana-Tashkent, Bukhara, and Khiva schools. Each of these schools possesses unique stylistic features, poetic content, musical instruments, and melodic structures. These characteristics have shaped the schools not only as practical forms of art but also as distinct methodological approaches within the music education system. Uzbek traditional vocal art has a long history, enriched with region-specific performance techniques, melodies, poetic selection, and musical instruments. The Fergana, Bukhara, and Khiva schools represent the three primary directions of this art form, each with its own musical aesthetics, expressive tools, and spiritual-philosophical orientations.



The singing style of the Fergana Valley and Tashkent region is mainly distinguished by its lyricism, melodiousness, and softness. Songs from this school are often rooted in folk traditions, yet are performed with high artistic expression.

Famous artists: Komiljon Otaniyozov, Sherali Jo'rayev, Nodira Pirmatova. This school widely uses instruments such as the dutar, doira, and ney. The themes of the songs often revolve around longing, love, and the philosophy of life. The melodies are refined and infused with poetic sensibility.

Analysis of literature on regional singing schools shows that the styles developed in Uzbekistan's regions are based on unique musical, performance, and poetic principles. In Kh. Islomov's work *"The History of Uzbek Musical Art"*, the lyrical style and delicacy of the Fergana-Tashkent school are extensively described.

The works of A. Rajabov and F. Almatov on maqomology deeply analyze the Bukhara school, especially its elevated role within the Shashmaqom system and its complex musical structures.

A. Zohidov's research focuses on the folk-like spirit, instruments, and unique forms of performance in the Khiva school.

Additionally, online sources such as maqom.uz provide relevant information about the continuity of regional styles among modern singers and their contemporary interpretations. Overall, the literature reveals the significance of regional schools in the landscape of art and culture.

This study is based on the following research methods: Descriptive method – the specific features of the Fergana, Bukhara, and Khiva schools are described.

1. Historical-analytical method – the formation, development, and historical background of the regional schools are examined.
2. Artistic-analytical method – poetic and musical expressive tools used in songs are analyzed.
3. Comparative-creative method – the stylistic characteristics of the three schools are compared.
4. Cultural approach – each school's connection with its regional cultural environment is analyzed.

These methodological foundations serve to fully, systematically, and accurately reveal the essence of the regional singing schools.

The Khiva school is renowned for its bright, folk-based, and celebratory tones. Its performances are close to folk songs but rich in unique stylistic nuances.

Famous artists: Matyoqub Matchonov, Sayyora Yo'ldosheva. In the Khiva style, vocal performances often feature improvisational qualities. Traditional instruments such as the tanbur and gijjak are widely used.

Although the three schools differ in style, melody, content, instrumentation, and performance technique, together they form the rich foundation of traditional Uzbek vocal art. Each school reflects the spiritual, cultural, and historical context of its respective region through musical imagery.

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