



Article

Nationality is the Mirror of a Nation

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Abstract: In order to preserve and advance Uzbekistan's national identity, this study examines the cultural and historical significance of the Chanqovuz, a traditional Uzbek musical instrument, and its fusion with Bakhshi. Scholarly research on the Chanqovuz is still lacking, despite its ancient roots and regional variances. The study finds gaps in our knowledge of its standards and musical potential. The study looks at historical documents, cultural narratives, and real-world uses of the Chanqovuz using an interdisciplinary approach. Its distinctive tone, function in oral traditions, and relationship to the country's spiritual ideals are all demonstrated by the findings. The study ends with suggestions for improving the musical potential of Chanqovuz, standardizing its production, and incorporating its legacy into contemporary cultural and educational frameworks. The goal of these initiatives is to preserve its legacy for upcoming generations.

Keywords: changqubiz, changqovuz, bakhshi, epic, terma, repertoire, teacher, creativity, art, bone, wood, reed, pledge, metal

1. Introduction

The art of Bakhshi, which embodies the national identity of our people, their ancient history and language, their way of life, traditions and customs, and is recognized as an integral part of universal culture, has been passed down from century to century with the selfless work and creative thinking of our outstanding Bakhshi poets and folklore scholars. The widespread use of national customs and traditions in the education of members of society, the restoration of our ancient values, and the formation of a national ideology in the minds of young people through them have become one of the important tasks. After Uzbekistan gained independence, the attitude of our people to the history, past, customs, values, and cultural heritage has changed. In this process, simple musical instruments that were previously not used at all in music performance and had reached the point of oblivion were revived [1].

Changqubiz, changqovuz — a reed instrument. There are plate-shaped and bow-shaped types. It is made of bone, wood, reed, metal. It is widespread under various names in the peoples of Asia (Siberia, the Far East, Central Asia), Africa and Europe, and is an instrument belonging to the musical folklore layer. In the past, Uzbeks had bone Changqo'biz (the epic poem "Alpomish") and iron Changqo'biz, which were mainly used by women. Now in Uzbekistan, iron Changqubiz is mainly distributed in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, Surkhandarya, Kashkadarya, as well as Samarkand and Bukhara regions. Since the 1990s, it has been widely used by some folklore and ethnographic communities. Changqubiz is also known as iron changqo'biz. not related to the ceremony, simple (sometimes in the style of badiha) small melodies ("Changqubiz kuy" or "Changqubiz

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chertit") are played in it. Also, in Changqo'biz, analogies are made to the sounds of various animals[2].

One of the musical instruments widespread in the Surkhan oasis is the chanqovuz (chang qubiz). The chanqovuz is a stringed-percussion or tongue-shaped chettim instrument. The chanqovuz is played more often by women. Sometimes the chanqovuz is also played by men. In particular, Juma Abaykulov from Qumkurgan is considered a skilled chanqovuz player. The chanqovuz is shaped like a round horseshoe, with a steel tongue passed through the middle.

The performer presses the chanqovuz against his teeth with his left hand and moves the tongue of the chanqovuz with the index finger of his right hand. The movement of the tongue creates sound through air and percussion. Until the second half of the last century, there were three types of chanqovuz: iron chanqovuz and bone chanqovuz. Bone chanqovuz is made from a camel rib, a tongue is cut in the middle and a string is tied to it. During the playing process, the tongue is vibrated by pulling the string, creating sound.

Wooden chanqovuz, like bone chanqovuz, is made from walnut, mulberry, and juniper wood [3].

2. Materials and Methods

Although the chanqovuz instrument is considered an ancient instrument, information about it was included in historical sources quite late. This is because scientific articles on musical instruments do not provide information about this instrument. Because it was believed that the chanqovuz did not have the ability to create a particularly perfect melody. However, two facts can be cited to prove that the chanqovuz instrument is a very ancient instrument: The existence of types of the chanqovuz instrument made of metal and camel bone indicates that this instrument existed even before the era when metal was used, and the fact that instruments similar to the chanqovuz were found among the Eastern Turkic peoples, northern peoples, Central Asian peoples, including Tatars, Bashkirs, and even Germans, indicates that it is a very ancient instrument.

The iron chanqovuz consists of an 8-10 cm long iron branch with a thin steel tongue in the middle. The tongue is 7-9 cm long and has a curved tip. The performer places the chanqovuz in his mouth, pinches it with his lips and teeth, and holds it in his left hand. When the steel tongue is struck with the index and little fingers of his right hand, it produces several different ringing and buzzing sounds. The pitch of this sound depends on the length and thickness of the chanqovuz tongue. The performer creates a melodic structure by changing the pitch of his mouth in a half-open shape. This process, i.e., 2-3 bars, changes each time, sometimes changing the third up.

The chanqovuz is not only limited to a narrow range, but also very modest in terms of emotion. But still the melody is played. Because its sound is very beautiful, with pleasant timbres and an attractive and gentle sound. The chanqovuz instrument has long been widespread in all regions and cities of Uzbekistan. Even elderly people living in the largest cities say that they know the chanqovuz well and have played it in their youth [4]. The performers of the chanqovuz instrument have always been women and girls. The chanqovuz was performed both alone and together. Sometimes there are cases when up to 10-15 performers played together. The most widespread period of the chanqovuz can be cited as the period of World War II. During this period, it became widely popular in collective labor groups where women worked together, and each woman always carried her chanqovuz with her and during her free time they played the chanqovuz together and rested.

That is why our grandmothers did not forget to give girls a chanqovuz as a dowry. Currently, the chanqovuz instrument is mostly preserved in the Surkhandarya and Kashkadarya regions. The previous name of the “Bulbuli go’yo” folklore and ethnographic folk ensemble operating in the Shorchi district was also “Chanqovuz”. The songs performed by chanqovuz performers such as Bobokhonova Jarqyn momo from the Shorchi district, Nurmatova Sofiya momo, and Nazira momo Ramazonova from the Muzrabot district are distinguished by their unique sounds [5]. They are called “Yorga salom”, “Sevgi” and “Yor kelur”, which express human inner feelings, or “Shaboda” and “Tashqin soy”, which express natural phenomena.

The late Juma Baba Abraykulov, who revived the performance of the chanqovuz, described the chanqovuz as follows:

It has paved the way for the heart of a lover, it has shed light on the heart of a friend.

Various flowers have bloomed in the garden, the song is my chanqovuz,

My song is my chanqovuz.

Juma, a chanqovuz player, has been interested in art since childhood. Both his grandfather and father played the dombira well. His aunts played the chanqovuz magically. Thanks to the inspiration he received from them, Juma Abraykulov also mastered the chanqovuz perfectly from a young age [6].

There is a legend among the artists of Surkhandarya: Sodiqboy, having driven his sheep to the field, hid under a large rock and began to play the dombira. Then a caravan of loaded camels came across it, went around the rock and stopped. The bride and her companions in the northern camel caravan, unable to walk their camels, finally dismount and sit, mesmerized by the drumming. Upon hearing this, the caravan leader arrives and asks why the camels are sitting down. Then the rich man's family members say, "What should we do if your camels won't walk?" "Why won't the camels walk?" the rich man asks. "Someone is beating his drum under the stone, that's why the camels won't walk," they say [7].

After that, the rich man himself becomes enchanted by the drumming and stops to listen for a while. Then the rich man says, "Whoever you are, show yourself." The honest drummer comes out from under the stone, greets the rich man, and asks how he is. Then the rich man said, "Oh my son, you made two mistakes today. The first mistake is that you left us on a long journey, and the second is that you are playing the drum with a wooden stick, because one day you will become as dry and brittle as this wood." Then the drummer said, "Forgive me, rich man, I will never play the drum again for the rest of my life," and smashed his drum against a stone.

3. Results and Discussion

As time passed, he began to get sick and was bedridden. One day, his aunt began to play the chanqovuz in the yard. Sadiqboy was enchanted by the melody of the chanqovuz and asked his aunt to teach him. After learning it, he recovered. The next morning, he took his stick, hung the chanqovuz on his hat, and drove his sheep to the mountains. It is said that when Sadiq played the chanqovuz in the mountains and steppes, his sheep would stop grazing and surround him, and birds and grouse would join in and dance. It is clear that Juma Abraykulov inherited this unique art from his grandfather. Juma also began playing and practicing the dombira and chanqovuz at the age of five. According to the customs of that time, every Uzbek's home should have a dombira and chanqovuz. His grandmother would play the chanqovuz for him and entertain him. At a ceremony held at their home, they played a drum and a chanqovuz for a young man and enjoyed it. Then the village elders said, "He will take the place of our merciful grandfather, Sodiqboy." [8].

Juma Abraykulov is originally from Baysun and lived and worked in the Kumkurgan district. Until the 1980s, Juma aka did not touch a chanqovuz at all, because of the saying that women played the chanqovuz, and it was a shame for a man. He would play the drum and sing in circles. One day, he heard chanqovuz songs on the radio and learned that the performer was a man. In fact, by this time the word chanqovuz had been forgotten in our country. Taking this into account, Juma aka went to Boysun, inquired, found masters who made chanqovuz, made 4 chanqovuz, and opened a club at the school where he worked and began to train students [9].

From these years, he and his family members brought chanqovuz songs to the big stage. Juma Abraykulov restored more than 70 chanqovuz melodies. Among them, melodies such as "Yor soginchi", "Sevgi nidosi", "Yoshlik raqsi", "Uchrashuv", "Intizor etma", "Navruznomi", "Ot chapish", "Koshikh o'yini" and "Chanqovuz raqsi" are included in the golden fund of our people's musical art [10].

Currently, the people of Karakalpakstan and Jizzakh also play the chanqovuz in their own style. The Jizzakh chanqovuz differs from the Surkhandarya and Kashkadarya chanqovuz in that it is two times smaller in size. Currently, iron chanqovuz is widespread in Uzbekistan, mainly in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, Surkhandarya, Kashkadarya, as well as Samarkand and Bukhara regions. Since the 1990s, it has been widely used by some folklore and ethnographic communities. Folk oral creativity has developed in its own way in the spiritual culture of the inhabitants of the Surkhan oasis. The possibilities of the chanqovuz instrument have not yet been fully explored, and research in this direction should continue. For example, masters do not even think about which sound the pitch of the main sound produced by separately made chanqovuz corresponds to, and no attempt is made to create chanqovuz that produce the same sound. This is not a very difficult task. The chanqobiz, whose "tongue" is the same length, width, and thickness, can produce the same basic sound [11]. By shortening or lengthening the tongue, the width, height, or length can be easily adjusted (tuned) to the sounds used in music. All sizes of chanqobiz have been developed and are tuned to specific sounds. We have come across chanqobiz types imported from there that are tuned to the sounds re, sol, si, and do.

4. Conclusion

The study emphasizes the cultural and historical significance of the chanqovuz musical instrument and the art of Bakhshi in Uzbekistan, highlighting their role in preserving and promoting national identity, oral traditions, and spiritual values. Findings reveal that despite its ancient roots and wide regional variations, the chanqovuz remains underexplored in terms of its musical capabilities and standardization. This underscores the need for further research to systematize its production, enhance its sound precision, and document its cultural significance comprehensively. These implications highlight the potential for integrating this heritage into modern educational and artistic frameworks, ensuring its transmission to future generations while enriching Uzbekistan's cultural legacy.

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