Educator Insights: A Journal of Teaching Theory and Practice
Volume 01, Issue 05, May, 2025
brightmindpublishing.com
ISSN (E): 3061-6964

THE HISTORY OF THE TANBUR: FORMATION, DEVELOPMENT, AND LEGACY

Zufarov Abror Mahamad-Sadikovich
Associate Professor of the Department of "Maqom Instrumental Performance"
at the Y. Rajabi National Institute of Music Art
abrorz@mail.ru

Abstract
This article discusses the tanbur, one of the oldest musical instruments. It presents the history of its evolution, various forms, and provides information about the musicians and researchers who have performed and studied the tanbur, as well as the master craftsmen and teachers who dedicated their lives to its creation and enhancement.

Keywords: Tanbur, sato, instrumental art, Usmon Zufarov, Turgun Alimatov, national art, music, Shashmaqom, parda, history.

Introduction

Centuries of musical practice have given the world a variety of musical sound systems. The most famous of these are the “shi er lui” system in traditional Chinese music theory, the Indian “shruti”, the Western musical system (the Pythagorean system, the pure system, the equal temperament system), etc.

In the Renaissance and Baroque periods, the choice of temperament in tuning musical instruments was a creative process. Each performer, along with choosing his musical instrument and tuning, tuned them to a certain temperament. Currently, this issue is not relevant due to the “monopoly” of equal temperament. Due to the dominance of this temperament, the use of other temperament methods has been almost forgotten, and the traditions of musical performance have changed significantly[1].

Indeed, once the issue of the sound system was definitively resolved by the equal-temperament system, other sound systems fell out of people's minds. However,

[1] Клишин Александр Геннадьевич “Проблемы музыкального строя в начале нового времени” nomli ilmiy ishidan. Moskva 2010y.

Educator Insights: A Journal of Teaching Theory and Practice
Volume 01, Issue 05, May, 2025
brightmindpublishing.com
ISSN (E): 3061-6964

the ancient sound systems (which were used up to the equal-temperament system), which were one of the main factors in the formation of maqoms, were once recognized as a sacred scientific musical foundation.

American writer and musicologist Isakoff Stewart says in his book "How Music Became a Battleground for the Great Minds of Western Civilization": "Not all music lovers know, but the usual sound range of the modern piano keyboard was once considered a crime against God and nature, and this issue was debated by philosophers and scientists such as Pythagoras, Plato, da Vinci, Newton and Rousseau. From ancient times to the Age of Enlightenment, the relationships between the notes of the musical scale were considered the key to understanding the structure of the universe.[2]".

But, what is the state of the musical sound system in our current situation? When we study the maqoms, it is clear that the basis of such factors as instruments, word system, and tones is related to the sound system and this issue still needs research, but there is nothing new in this regard in recent times. Whatever work is done in this area, as mentioned above, is carried out under the banner of a standard temperament system. However, research and studies on the musical sound system in the world have not stopped.

LITERATURE ANALYSIS

The famous Russian musicologist Y.N. Rags in his article "Stroy v muzyke" (System in Music)[3] gives the following interesting information: "In the mathematically calculated pitch system, each pitch is represented by only one value (frequency). This situation constantly gives rise to attempts to create a new, more perfect musical pitch system. In the 19th century, the 40-pitched system of P. Thompson, the 32-pitched system of G. Helmholtz, the 36-pitched system of G. Appun and H. Engel, the 53-pitched system of R. P. Bozanquet and S. Tanaka, etc. appeared.

In the USSR, the 17- and 29-pitched temperaments of A. S. Ogolevets, the 22-pitched system of P. P. Baranovsky and Ye. Ye. Yutsevich, the 72-pitched system of Ye. A. Murzin, the 84-pitched system of D. K. Guzenko, etc. were proposed. The best of them is the 53-pitched temperament, which is a combination of pure,

[2] Rus tiliga Lev Gankin tarjimasi https://www.rulit.me/books/muzykalnyj-stroj-kak-muzyka-prevratilas-v-pole-bitvy-velichajshih-umov-zapadnoj-civilizacii-read-713399-9.html
[3] https://www.belcanto.ru/stroy.html Ю.Н.Рагс

Educator Insights: A Journal of Teaching Theory and Practice
Volume 01, Issue 05, May, 2025
brightmindpublishing.com
ISSN (E): 3061-6964

Pythagorean and equally tempered systems in different keys. allows for precise repetition of the interval."

It is about the use of this 53-note system in today's Turkish music that Turkish musicologist Nail Yavuzoglu writes in his book "Theory of Turkish Music in the 21st Century":

"According to the Pythagorean theory, we cannot return to the same sound by adding successive fifths. By adding successive fifths, we get 3.678 cents closer to the sound we started with in the 53rd fifth. Since it is the closest point of two sounds of the same name, it is accepted that there are 53 commas in an octave. Let's look at this basic system, which includes the 17th, 24th, and similar systems that are still used today. The 53 comma system is usually developed gradually, starting with one sound, using fifths and fourths. When a series of 53 sounds is formed, other new sounds are added and the series is expanded (In fact, the difference between the new sounds added and the previous ones is so small that it is indistinguishable by the human auditory system. Therefore, they are not perceived as new sounds.)"

In the Middle East, the theory of the musical sound system was also created by Central Asian scholars. These issues were widely covered in the studies conducted by thinkers such as Abu Yusuf Yaqub Al-Kindi (870-873 died), Abu Nasr Al-Farabi (873-950), Abu Ali ibn Sina (980-1037), Safiuddin al-Urmawi (1216-1294), Qutbuddin Al-Shirazi (born 1236), and Abdurahman Jami (1414-1492). If we study the scales of the shashmaqom and all the maqoms included in it in terms of their sound system, we can encounter the pentatonic scale, which is said to belong to ancient China, the Pythagorean sound system, the Natural Sound System, and even the sound series of the Indian shruti.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

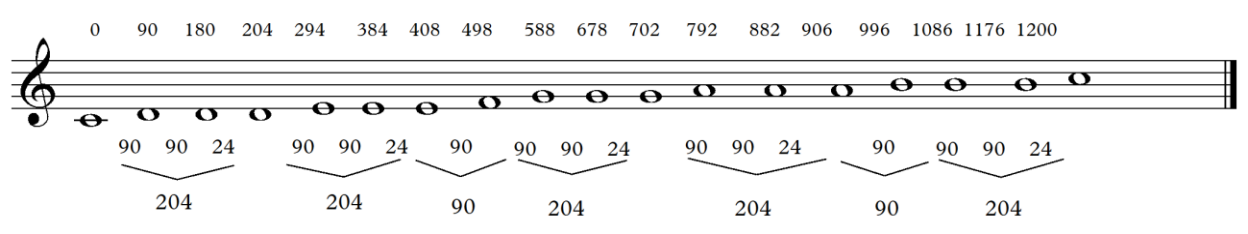
Any researcher should specifically and consistently study the uniqueness and all its features of ancient sound systems. It is natural that in addition to the theoretical study of these issues, other problems arise in practical experiments.

Historical sources say that in the following centuries (XIV-XV) many more innovations were created in the development of the Eastern musical sound system. At first, the sound systems developed by Greek and then Eastern scientists were repeatedly reformed. The Eastern musical sound system was based on the sounds of the ancient sound system, which were illuminated by Pythagoras

Educator Insights: A Journal of Teaching Theory and Practice
Volume 01, Issue 05, May, 2025
brightmindpublishing.com
ISSN (E): 3061-6964

and Al-Kindi, such as baqiyya - 90 cents, baqiyya mujannabi - 114 cents, taniniy-204 cents, taniny mujannabi-180 cents. They were brought into a whole, and the famous "Ilmi-advor" was created in the history of music. The inventor of this musical system is Safiuddin Urmavi.

Safiuddin sound system:



This created music-theoretical doctrine later caused other authors to write musical treatises. Abdurahman Jami's works on music included the achievements of his predecessors - al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Safiuddin Urmavi, Abdulkadir Maroghi. His work "Risalai muziqiy" became the most famous and unique work in the world of musicology and maqamat of the later period. The first part of the work is devoted to the doctrine of composition, the second to the doctrine of rhythm-method. Jami studies the sound system of maqamat by studying intervals and sound systems (genus, jams and other sound systems based on the 17-step octave scale of the oud).[4]

In the sources on the sound systems related to maqoms, we can mainly find the above information. These are the sound systems created by Pythagoras, Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Al-Urmawi, Abdurahman Jami. If we observe within the framework of our topic, we can see that all the above-mentioned sound systems are based on the sound system created by ancient Greek scholars, and it is known that this has been covered in a number of literature.

In later studies, other conclusions are also drawn about the sound systems in the formation of Uzbek traditional music, in particular the shashmaqam curtain system. Fitrat's book "Uzbek Classical Music and Its History" contains the following thoughts: "One of the Ottoman musicologists, Qantemir oglu, writes that Ottoman tanburs have thirty-three frets. He calls sixteen of these "complete frets" and seventeen "incomplete frets". He shows the positions of the "incomplete frets" between the "complete frets". The information we copied

[4] https://wiki2.org/ru

Educator Insights: A Journal of Teaching Theory and Practice
Volume 01, Issue 05, May, 2025
brightmindpublishing.com
ISSN (E): 3061-6964

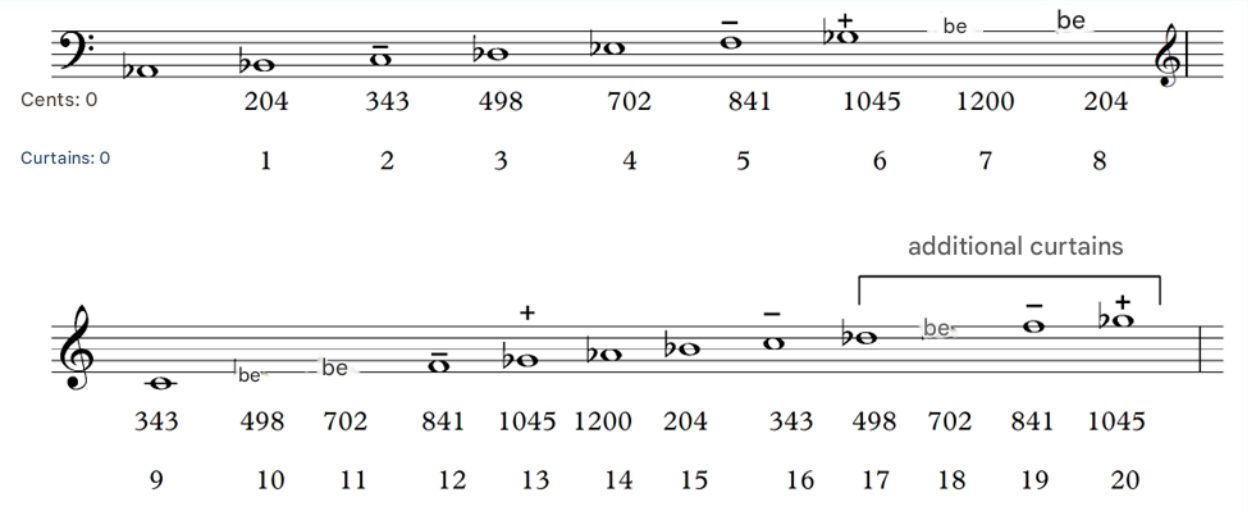
above from Jami's "Musical Treatise" about the distribution of frets in Eastern music corresponds to Qantemir oglu's fret distribution. Because Jami also accepted the tor instead of the seventeen "bam" frets from the upper half of the line, and the seventeen "zer" frets from the lower half, and showed that one of these was not taken into account. Two There are seventeen thirty-four, if one of them is not counted, there are thirty-three left - that is what Kantemir oglu means. Even though our tanbur has sixteen frets, our old tanburists would play one of the shashmakom melodies between the frets. And these "mian frets" are probably related to the "incomplete" frets.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

In the issue related to our topic, we would like to cite an excerpt from V. Belyayev's book "Rukovodstvo dlya obmera narodnykh muzykalnykh instrukturov" (Guide to measuring folk musical instruments).

In this, V. Belyaev, while indicating the dimensions of the tanbur system of those times in cents, comes to the conclusion that the tanbur frets were mainly preserved in a diatonic order, in some cases in a system called the Pythagorean diatonic scale, and also containing the remains of the old metric method. That is, in general, he said that if it was diatonic, then the intervals of the fourth and fifth were arranged in the Pythagorean sound system, and the miyon frets were arranged in the metric measure of fret binding.

Below we present another example of the tanbur fret system presented by V. Belyaev:



Educator Insights: A Journal of Teaching Theory and Practice
Volume 01, Issue 05, May, 2025
brightmindpublishing.com
ISSN (E): 3061-6964

As can be seen from the examples, the influence of the equal-tempered sound system is not felt in the instruments, especially the tanbur fret systems, at that time. On the contrary, it is said that they retained a direct tendency towards ancient sound systems.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In later periods, global work began on the issue of the sound system. In order to process and improve national instruments, many experts began to conduct a number of experiments on the sound system. In the initial attempts, the goal was to improve classical music and instruments adapted to it, and to create modern forms of instrumental ensembles. For this reason, while these processes were initially carried out within the framework of traditional musical culture, later these goals were changed towards the idea of creating a multi-voice folk instrument orchestra. Of course, it is no secret to anyone today that these actions were carried out at that time under the banner of the anti-national ideas of the former Soviet regime.

"Experimentations to expand the orchestra's range and enhance its "new" registers with additional instruments continued with increasing determination and led to the establishment of a special laboratory for the processing of folk instruments. Uzbek folk masters were also involved in this laboratory, founded in 1934 by A. I. Petrosyan. The main goal of the laboratory was to create plucked instruments based on a fully chromatic equal-tempered sound system, significantly superior to their predecessors in terms of sound power." (F.M. Karomatov. “Uzbek instrumental music” 1972, p. 241)

“In the mid-1950s, although the idea of contrasting “oldness” and “newness” had not yet been completely eliminated, a slight softening of the general attitude towards national cultures began to be felt. In the wake of these positive changes, the image of a talented scientist, a true maqom scholar, Ishaq Rajabov, emerged. His book “On the issue of maqoms” (1963) was, in fact, one of the first studies that laid a new foundation for the science of the field.” (O. Matyokubov “Maqoms” 2004, p. 24)

In this book “On the issue of maqoms”, the issues of sound systems related to the sound series of maqoms were widely and thoroughly covered. This treatise, as we mentioned in the course of our topic, is the first source after the equal-tempered sound system. The book “On the subject of maqoms” provides very valuable

Educator Insights: A Journal of Teaching Theory and Practice
Volume 01, Issue 05, May, 2025
brightmindpublishing.com
ISSN (E): 3061-6964

information on general issues related to maqoms and especially on the sound system that is our topic. On pages 29-30 of the book, it is discussed that there is an influence of a 17-step sound system in the music of the Uzbek and Tajik peoples, and in particular in the sound scales of shashmaqom. These ideas are illustrated by the sound scales of melodies such as “miskin” and “navro’zi ajam” and explained through musical notation. This book also shows the fret system of the shashmaqom in relation to the tanbur instrument, how this instrument is tuned depending on the maqoms and the existence of imbalances between the sound system of equal temperament and the shashmaqom.

“Since the maqom paths included in the shashmakom were adapted to the fret structure of the tanbur, some moments found in the twelve maqoms have been preserved in the structure of sounds and intervals created from it. Therefore, especially when listening to some branches of the Nav and Segoh maqoms on the piano or in the original performance of tanbur and hafiz, one can notice small differences between some steps. It should also be noted that even on the basis of these maqoms, composers of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan created wonderful musical works (adapted to tempered sound ranges).” (“On the issue of maqoms”, p. 131.)

This book became the main source for the development of the field as a basic encyclopedia in musicology and maqom studies of the later period. We can see new views on these issues in the experiments of L.G. Koval. L.G. Koval conducted studies on the intonation of traditional Uzbek music by measuring audio recordings of works performed on dutor and gijjak instruments with a special device (chromatic stroboscope). His scientific research was published in the book “Intonation of Uzbek traditional music” (Intonation of Uzbek traditional music, 1990). In this study, it is said that regardless of whether the works are performed on semi-chromatic (dutor) and fixed fretless (gijjak) instruments, the musician uses the necessary, characteristic intervals to express the tone of the corresponding piece. According to L. Koval's conclusion, in the sound system of traditional Uzbek music, there are many semi-tones that are not present in the equal-tempered sound system, and they are said to have their place.

Thus, we have studied how the topic of sound systems is covered in the sources, their states in two periods - before the equal-tempered sound system and after it, how it was formed and reached through sources, instruments and direct human thought, and the significant aspects of the maqoms on the pitch system. So, to

Educator Insights: A Journal of Teaching Theory and Practice
Volume 01, Issue 05, May, 2025
brightmindpublishing.com
ISSN (E): 3061-6964

what extent does the equal-tempered system affect today's maqom melodies? The question arises whether it is time to seriously study this. Yes, of course, today's opportunities require extensive research on these issues. For this, one of the main tasks of our research should be to systematically compare the sources that have emerged from ancient times and have come down to us, living traditions, today's music, in particular maqoms and their current state in the pitch system. Therefore, whether the sound system is in the musical notes of the instrument, or in various theoretical dimensions, or whether human musical thinking is primary in its transformation into melody and melody, we need to deeply and consistently research these problematic factors in the relevant sections.

REFERENCES:

1. Barkashli M. Musiqiy Forobiy. Tehron, 1350 h.
2. Begmatov S., Matyoqubov M. O‘zbek an'anaviy cholg‘ulari T.,2008
3. Fitrat A. O‘zbek klassik musiqasi va uning ta'rixi. - Tos’hkent: Fan, 1993
4. Ibrohimov O. Maqom va makon. T., 1996
5. Jomiy Abdurahmon. Risolai musiqiy. Qo‘lyozma. O‘FASHI. №1331
6. Matyoqubov O. Maqomot T.,2004
7. Mulla Bekjon Ramon O‘g‘li. Muhammad Yusuf Devonzoda. Xorazm musidiy tarixchasi. - Toshkent: Yozuvchi, 1998. - 47 b.
8. Nail Yavuzog‘lu 21.yuz yilde Turk muzigi teorisi. Istanbul. 2009
9. Oripov Z. X-XV asrlar markaziy Osiyo musiqa manbashunosligi. T.,2017
10. Rajabiy Y. Shashmaqom, (I-VI); O‘bek xalq muzikasi.(I-V) Toshkent. 1965
11. Rajabov I. Maqomlar masalasiga doir. Toshkent, 1963
12. Risolai musiqiy. (N. Shodmon tarjimasi). T., 1998
13. Safiuddin Urmaviy. Kitob ul-advor. Qohira, 1967