

THE HISTORY OF THE FORMATION OF RUBAB TYPES AND THEIR ROLE IN THE NATIONAL MUSICAL CULTURE

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18007593>

Associate Professor of the Department of Music Performance and Culture, BuxSU

O.I. Karimov

*Master's student of the Department of Instrumental Performance (Traditional
Instruments), BuxSU* **H.I. Sattorov**

Annotation

This article examines the origin, historical development and role in performance practice of the kashkar rubabi instrument, which belongs to the ancient musical heritage of the Uzbek people.

Key words

kashkar, prima, messoprana, alto, Afghan rubobi, oud, tanbur, tor, kharrak, risola.

In today's globalization environment, inextricably linked with the process of the revival of national values, the scientific study of the musical heritage of our people is gaining importance. Because through the examples of musical heritage, the spiritual world of our ancestors, their noble ideas, aesthetic views, and philosophical observations about existence are expressed. In the process of listening to national melodies and songs performed on traditional musical instruments, the centuries-old artistic thinking and subtle emotional experiences embodied in them have a strong impact on the human heart and strengthen the sense of respect for national traditions. Therefore, one of the urgent tasks is to conduct a deep study of ancient musical instruments based on traditional performance methods and popularize them among the general public.

According to sources, stringed instruments were widespread among the peoples living in the Transoxiana region in the 2nd-3rd centuries AD. However, due to the insufficient preservation of written sources related to the culture of the pre-Islamic period, it is difficult to provide complete information about the initial forms and performance characteristics of these instruments. The rubab instrument, which belongs to the stringed instrument group, occupied an important place in the musical culture of the Uzbek people.

Information related to the rubab instrument is mainly found in treatises on music theory written between the 10th and 17th centuries. In particular, Abu Nasr al-Farabi, one of the greatest representatives of medieval Eastern music theory,

mentions the rubab in his works on music as one of the instruments whose sound is closest to the human voice, emphasizing its special importance as an accompanying instrument in vocal performance. According to historical sources, the rubab originally had a very simple structure: it was single-stringed, triangular in shape, and was considered to belong to the group of bowed instruments.

Historical sources indicate that in the 12th century, the rubab instrument became widespread in the territory of Moldova and gained great popularity among the people. According to the views of the representatives of the Mevlevi doctrine, each corner of the rubab instrument had a certain symbolic meaning: the first four corners represented the east, west, south and north directions, respectively. In later periods, the shape of the rubab was changed and redesigned into a hexagonal shape, in which the fifth corner symbolized the earth's surface, and the sixth corner symbolized the sky. In terms of structure, this instrument has a certain similarity to other instruments belonging to the rubab family.

The prominent literary scholar and researcher of Uzbek classical music, Abdurauf Fitrat, in his work "Uzbek Classical Music and Its History" provides important information about the origin and structure of the rubab instrument. According to the scholar, one of the historical sources on music, the author of which is unknown, states that the rubab instrument appeared in Khorezm, during the reign of Sultan Muhammad Khorezmshah. Fitrat initially accepted this information as reliable. However, he notes that the extreme similarity of the instrument "Sorang" brought from India in the twenties of the 20th century to the rubab raised doubts about this issue.

Later, as a result of getting acquainted with the work "Risalayi musiqiy" by Darvesh Ali, it became known that the rubab instrument was created in the city of Balkh, and during the reign of Muhammad Khorezmshah, it was widely developed in the territory of Khorezm. This source also describes in detail the structural structure of the rubab instrument. According to it, the main parts of the rubab consist of four sections, which include the abdomen, chest, neck and head. The abdomen, chest and neck parts are made of a single piece of mulberry wood using the "kazma" method, while the head part is prepared separately and then attached to the handle.

The belly and chest parts of the rubab are connected by a throat of about 2.5 centimeters, forming a shape similar to two deep resonators. The upper part of the belly and throat is covered with deer or goat skin, and the chest and neck parts are covered with a thin wooden board. According to the source, the belly part is 21 centimeters long and 18 centimeters wide, while the chest part is 28 centimeters long, and its width is 10 centimeters on the belly side and 5 centimeters on the neck

side. The kharak part is located about four fingers above the lower part of the rubab body. The instrument has five main strings made of gut, which differ in thickness, similar to violin strings. In addition, the rubab has twelve auxiliary, or “underlying” strings, which are made from tanbur strings. These strings are not directly struck during the performance process, but resonate under the influence of the vibration of the main strings, giving the rubab its unique, mournful and trembling tone.¹⁰⁶

Thus, the above scientific observations and analysis of treatises written by past musicologists show that the rubab instrument is one of the most important examples of our national musical heritage, with an ancient and rich history.

The rubab instrument began to take shape as part of ensemble performance from about the 14th-15th centuries. Its early examples were much more compact than their current form. The bowl of the instrument was carved from wood (by the method of drilling), and the upper part was covered with leather. The frets on the rubab handle were fastened with special ties made of silk or gut, which made it possible to change the pitch of the sound by moving the frets up or down during the performance. The performance was mainly carried out by tapping with a soft object. The rubab consists of 18 frets, and its sound range is based on the diatonic system. This instrument is a stringed-plucked instrument, widespread in the musical practice of the peoples of Central Asia, as well as among the Uyghur people living in the Xinjiang (Kashgar) region of South China.

By the 1930s, and especially since 1935, the process of improving and renovating traditional folk instruments became a requirement of the time. The main goal of this process was to expand the performance capabilities of instruments played with the mizrab (mediator), among other instruments, in Uzbek instrumental music, and to demonstrate their diversity in terms of timbre and range. As a result, a number of new types of instruments belonging to this group were created and introduced into practice. Currently, there are the following types of instruments included in the group played with the mizrab:

- Kashkar rubab
- Prima rubab
- Mezzo-soprano rubab
- Alto rubab
- Afghan rubab
- Oud
- Tanbur

¹⁰⁶ Фитрат А. Ўзбек классик мусиқаси ва унинг тарихи Т., 1993. 29 бет.

All of these instruments are currently tempered, meaning that the octave of the sound scale is divided into twelve equal semitones.

The Kashgar rubab holds a special place among Uzbek folk instruments. This instrument, with its resonant, clear sound, closeness to the human heart, and ease of learning and playing, has become one of the favorite instruments of our people. It consists of an elongated bowl and a long handle with two horns, carved in the shape of a semicircle. The upper part of the bowl is covered with leather.

The Kashgar rubab was renovated, the gut membrane attached to the handle was replaced with a membrane made of brass, the length of the handle was shortened, the number of membranes was increased, and the playing technique was simplified. As a result, it was possible to play musical works of various nature and difficulty. It is a medium-range instrument in terms of timbre (tone). It has five strings, the first and second pairs of strings are made of steel, and the third single string is made of silk. Each pair of strings is located according to its thickness and is tuned in unison. So, the thinnest pair of strings is tuned to the sound of **Lya** of the first octave, the second pair of strings is tuned to the sound of **Mi** of the first octave, and the third single string is tuned to the sound of **Si** or **Lya** of the small octave.

The analysis of the above data shows that the rubab is one of the national musical instruments that has undergone a long historical development and occupies an important place in the rich musical heritage of the Uzbek people. The information provided in historical and scientific sources about the structure, shape and symbolic meanings of the rubab confirms that this instrument has not only musical, but also spiritual and philosophical significance. In particular, the treatises of medieval musicologists and the evidence provided by Abdurauf Fitrat indicate that the rubab was formed in the cultural environment of Balkh and Khorezm, and later became widespread in Central Asia and adjacent regions. The constructive structure of the instrument, the system of frets, the number of strings and the resonance characteristics indicate that it has excellent and unique acoustic capabilities.

Also, since the first half of the 20th century, the process of improving the rubab and other traditional folk instruments has served to expand their performance capabilities and adapt them to professional stage and ensemble performance. This indicates that the rubab has not lost its importance in modern musical culture, but is developing in new forms and content.

In conclusion, the rubab instrument, as a priceless example of our national musical heritage, is an important value that requires in-depth historical, cultural, and artistic research and its transmission to future generations.

LITERATURE:

1. Каримов, О. И. "ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКИЕ ОСНОВЫ ТВОРЧЕСКОГО МУЗЫКАЛЬНОГО СТИЛЯ." *Multidisciplinary Journal of Science and Technology* 5.6 (2025): 469-472.
2. Каримов, Олимхужа Исломович. "Значение специфических особенностей и воспитательных возможностей узбекских народных инструментов." *Academy* 3 (54) (2020): 78-80.
3. Фитрат А. Ўзбек классик мусикаси ва унинг тарихи Т., 1993. 29 бет.
4. Каримов, Олимхужа Исломович. "Садриддин Айни-знаток и любитель народной музыки." *Вопросы науки и образования* 13 (138) (2021): 21-24.
5. Каримов, Олимхужа Исломович. "Профессиональные музыкальные взгляды будущего учителя музыки." *Вестник науки и образования* 22-2 (100) (2020): 17-20.
6. Ибодов, Уктам. "МУЗЫКАЛЬНАЯ КУЛЬТУРА УЗБЕКСКОГО НАРОДА ПЕРИОДА СТАНОВЛЕНИЯ (XI-XV вв.)." *Multidisciplinary Journal of Science and Technology* 5.2 (2025): 48-50.
7. Ибодов, Уктам Расулович. "КУЛЬТУРНОЕ НАСЛЕДИЕ НАРОДОВ СРЕДНЕЙ АЗИИ В ПЕРИОД ВЕЛИКОЙ ЦИВИЛИЗАЦИИ." *International conference on multidisciplinary science. Vol. 2. No. 5. 2024.*