

On Some Issues of Intonation Influence in Uzbek Pop Songs

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Annotation: This article discusses some issues of spiritual education of the younger generation because of genres of musical variety. In this context, different styles and artistic trends emerged in the sphere of Uzbek variety art.

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In the 1990s, the Uzbek musical stage experienced a complex transformation. During this time, alongside experiments to incorporate elements of traditional music into pop performances, one could observe the influence of melodies and rhythms from Middle Eastern, Central Asian, Latin American, North American, and Western European popular music.

It is well known that every nation and people possess a unique temperament. The ability to artistically express the inner spiritual world of a nation and its unique mentality is one of the most important creative tasks for any artist. The value of an artistic work largely depends on how successfully this task is accomplished. Therefore, the issue of shaping a national style based on cultural roots in Uzbek pop music is, without exaggeration, one of the most pressing concerns today.

So, what is the current state of our music scene in this regard? In recent years, Uzbek pop music has seen the emergence of genres and styles such as jazz-rock, techno-pop, punk, hard rock, reggae, bard songs, and others [1.]. While certain noticeable achievements have been made in this process, the growing number of works that fail to meet the high artistic standards and cultural level of the Uzbek people is alarming. One of the biggest challenges in this area is the insufficient resolution of the issue of national style in pop music. Among the many songs written and performed, only a few deserve attention from this perspective. These include individual songs by bands like «Qars» («Chiprodallidalli» «Yor-yor, Yoroney»), «Toshkent» («Bedana»), «Mazur» («Meni Yor Dema»), «Nola» («Nazokat», «Sesan Sevarim»), «Shahzod» («O'ynaysan», «Kelinchak»), «Sideriz» («Unutma»), and «Asr» («Qurbon Bo'laman»). However, in most cases, the so-called «national style» turns out to be superficial and, in essence, artistically primitive, often amounting to a "blind" imitation of foreign pop music.

It is no secret that during this period, the music scene saw an influx of amateur performers lacking sufficient musical literacy. Among them were individuals who quickly gained popularity, "conquering" major stages. While it is commendable that young people are engaging in art, it is essential to remember that a «big stage» which caters to millions of listeners, demands a high degree of responsibility from every talented artist. Today, the pop scene has evolved into one of these major platforms, which means that every singer or group working within it must – possess a certain level of skill and theoretical preparation. Knowledge of our nation's rich musical heritage – folk songs and melodies, as well as classical maqams – is a critical indicator of such readiness.

In our view, one of the reasons many pop performers or groups address the issue of "national style" through imitation and adherence to foreign pop music models is their inability to deeply connect with Uzbek national music. Furthermore, they often lack the necessary knowledge and practical skills in this field.

If we focus on the work of most young performers on the pop stage, it becomes evident that they frequently unconsciously copy and imitate. One might ask, «What's wrong with that?» The problem, in our opinion, lies in the fact that the question of national intonation plays a crucial role in nurturing the younger generation based on national values. In this context, we refer to the words of Professor Abdurauf Fitrat from his book *Uzbek Classical Music and Its History*: «When transcribing our melodies using notation with the support of European musicologists, strive not to follow the methods of transcribing European melodies. Let our melodies retain their unique style, preserving their ethnographic value and Uzbek identity (V.A. Uspensky has significant expertise in this regard)» [2.].

Thus, national melody is an essential socio-spiritual factor. High-quality musical works imbued with national color – be it a song, chant, or another musical genre – allow people to feel united. This is also crucial in shaping the national ideology of independent Uzbekistan.

Today, as pop music occupies a central position on the largest stages and garners the attention of the entire nation, it requires a highly responsible approach. This means that every performer in the pop industry must recognize the importance of mastering the art of high-level performance. Nationalizing the music scene involves deeply understanding and mastering the national musical traditions and the achievements of our centuries-old musical heritage. It also requires the ability to seamlessly integrate the accomplishments of global pop music while subordinating them to a national style. This challenge can only be addressed through the creative courage of great artists.

In many works by well-known pop performers, we also observe the tendency to follow or imitate famous global hits. Therefore, creating a national style in pop music is primarily tied to the practical and scholarly study of the national musical heritage. Secondly, it requires an awareness of global achievements in pop music from the perspective of national style and their skillful adaptation. To better understand this process, the following parallel comparison is worth considering.

The great talent and master of ghazals, Alisher Navoi, alongside the richness of Turkic vocabulary, incorporated Persian, Indian, and Greek words into his work. However, if he had merely followed these words and their styles without striving to reveal their essence within the context of his language, his legacy would not hold the same value for us today. Alisher Navoi's profound contribution lies in his ability to borrow elements of poetic styles from other ancient poets and integrate them so organically into the Turkic language that these foreign components came to serve Uzbek poetry. Such adaptation is achievable only by geniuses of extraordinary talent.

Similar phenomena are observed in music. For instance, our maqoms include modal steps like Iraq, Isfahan, Hijaz, and Rok, among others [3.]. However, one should not assume that these modes originated in Iraq or other regions. While they were popular in other Eastern countries, in our musical heritage, maqoms bearing the names of other nations sound inherently Uzbek. Why is this so? Because our great ustoz masters reworked the musical elements of other cultures through the lens of national style, making them conform to Uzbek musical art.

Such examples are often found in works like «Qurbon Olam» based on the poetry of Fuzuli, «Jazoir», or even «Andijon polka», which were interpreted by Uzbek artists in a national spirit. Music, capable of conveying a wide range of emotional states, shapes a person's aesthetic taste and elevates their spirituality. As a result, the listener finds in such works not only a reflection of their personal experiences but also elements that enrich their soul. This is the product of the creativity of great talents. For this reason, such examples remain valuable and continue to hold a rightful place in musical heritage.

The sense of national intonation is closely tied to the intonation of each people's language. Ignoring this connection, as well as crudely disrupting the subtle bonds between them by promoting light and superficial songs, can ultimately diminish the value of national music in the eyes of society. Young

people distanced from national melodies and raised on alien motives may eventually lose the ability to understand and appreciate traditional Uzbek songs. The consequences of such spiritual alienation are difficult to imagine. Thus, distancing oneself from national melodies, to some extent, means moving away from national values.

To better illustrate this, consider the following example. It is well-known that during the times of the former Soviet Union, very little attention was paid to Uzbek music in schools. This was no coincidence. A person whose heart is filled with national melodies is quicker to recognize the value of their nation and begins to take pride in their national identity. National melodies can be called the "seeds" sown into our souls from childhood through a mother's lullabies and centuries-old ceremonial chants. The colonizers understood this perfectly well [4.].

Therefore, despite frequent assertions that music is a tool for aesthetic education, the curricula and teaching materials of that time were designed to minimize the influence of national music as much as possible [5]. It was claimed that European and Russian classical music was as essential as air and water for raising children in the spirit of internationalism. Meanwhile, samples of Uzbek national music were deemed insignificant and unimportant.

Today, the situation has drastically changed. Musical pop culture has become, so to speak, the primary "carrier" of intonations. In this case, for the sake of our independence and the strengthening of priority areas in national ideology, it is essential to develop musical pop culture in line with this goal.

It should not be forgotten that we, the Uzbek people, are the heirs of the maqoms. A maqom is our spiritual treasure encapsulated in beautiful melodies. Therefore, our nation is rich in melodies and unique rhythms. Consequently, musical pop culture must also be enriched with spiritual intonations and refined rhythms. Just as we associate poetry and literature with Hazrat Alisher Navoi, and architecture with magnificent ancient monuments, Uzbek pop music should be associated with unique, sophisticated Eastern melodies, brimming with beauty and originality.

Another aspect related to the perception of national melodies and rhythms concerns the trend of performing folk songs or classical maqoms in a pop style. However, this approach often reflects a lack of understanding of tradition [6]. In reality, unique folk songs are "pure springs" of artistic creativity. If pop performers and "creators" lack a deep understanding of national heritage and have not received proper mentorship, they risk turning even rare folk songs into tasteless works due to superficial reworking. Therefore, musical heritage must be approached with particular responsibility.

It is worth noting that in global pop culture, there were also times when the works of classical composers like J.S. Bach, W.A. Mozart, and L. Beethoven were performed in a pop style, often simplified and sometimes stripped of their artistic value [6].

In this regard, the approach of Russian composers such as V. Uspensky, R. Gliere, V. Kozlovsky, and G. Mushel deserves attention. These composers made significant contributions to the formation of the Uzbek composer school. When they came to Uzbekistan, they did not rush to immediately create works based on national melodies. Instead, they first familiarized themselves with folk bastakors (composers), singers, and musicians, listened to their performances, and carefully studied Uzbek melodies. Only after this thorough engagement did they cautiously rework samples of musical heritage using artistic methods. Later, they created works in major genres of "unconventional" composer music, such as opera, musical drama, symphony, and others. Their commitment to deeply studying national musical traditions, recognizing their artistic value, and applying this knowledge in practice serves as an example for all creators of music.

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