

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND MODERN IMPROVEMENT OF THE GIJJAK INSTRUMENT

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Abstract: The role of the gijjak as an ancient stringed instrument in the musical heritage of the peoples of Central Asia, its structure, performance styles and connection with national musical traditions are highlighted. It also examines the structural improvement of the instrument in the 20th-21st centuries, its adaptation to orchestral practice, the expansion of its range, and its implementation into the professional education system. As a result of the study, the significance of the gijjak in the development of national musical art and its place in modern performance culture is substantiated.

Keywords: gijjak, stringed and bowed instruments, performing arts, musical heritage, instrumental studies, maqom art, orchestration, instrumental design

Introduction

The gijjak belongs to the family of stringed and bowed instruments, and its melodious, soft, and at the same time impressive sound is of great importance in folk music, maqom art, singing, and instrumental performance. The acoustic capabilities of this instrument are distinguished by its proximity to the human voice, its ease of subtle expression of the melody's content, and its demand for high artistic sensitivity from the performer. Through the sounds of the gijjak, the joy, pain, dreams, suffering, and spiritual experiences of the people find their artistic expression. It serves as an important means of expressing the internal drama of maqom melodies, the subtle nuances of melodic movement, stylistic ornaments, and the spirit of national performance.

It is known from historical sources that stringed and bowed instruments have existed in Central Asia since ancient times. Their formation is closely linked to the development of the people's lifestyle, rituals, palace culture, Sufi traditions, and examples of oral creativity. The gijjak, as a product of this long historical process, was passed down from generation to generation and improved in different periods. Initially used as part of oral folk performance, this instrument subsequently took a wide place in professional musical practice, particularly in maqom ensembles, folk instrument orchestras, and academic performance practice. This process shows that the gijjak instrument is not only a historical monument, but also a means of living art in constant development.

Studying the historical development of the gijjak instrument requires a profound analysis of its structure, performance technique, sound production techniques, scale system, and repertoire capabilities. This is because every musical instrument is formed based on the musical needs, aesthetic views, and performance traditions of its time. While folk simplicity, natural melody, and national style prevailed in ancient examples of the gijjak, at the modern stage, its structural capabilities have expanded, performance techniques have become more complex, and new performance styles have emerged based on the requirements of the stage and orchestra. This creates the need for a scientific study of the connection between the historical roots of the gijjak and its modern artistic and practical functions.

Today, preserving, developing, and passing on national musical instruments to the younger generation is one of the urgent tasks of music education. In the process of globalization, the intensification of various cultural trends and the increasing influence of modern technologies and mass culture require a new approach to national musical heritage.

It should be emphasized that the modern development of the gijak instrument is linked to its adaptation to orchestral practice, the expansion of the vocal range. Today, the gijak is not only an instrument for performing folk melodies but also a perfect instrument widely used in large-scale stage works, ensemble performance, folk instrument orchestras, and modern compositional works.

Discussion

When analyzing the issue of the historical development and modern improvement of the gijak instrument, it is first necessary to evaluate it not as a simple musical instrument. This is because every national instrument is formed in close connection with the historical life, spiritual experiences, cultural ties, and creative experience of a people. The gijak, as a product of such long-standing historical processes, has deep roots in the Uzbek musical heritage, enriched in form and content over time, and today has become one of the most important means of professional performance art.

As we trace the historical development of the gijak, its role in the musical culture of the peoples of Central Asia becomes particularly evident. This instrument has been used since ancient times as part of folklore, ritual songs, bakhshi traditions, maqom performance, and palace music. In particular, the gentle and emotional timbre of the gijak, close to the human voice, makes it an extremely convenient instrument for performing lyrical melodies, maqoms, and works with deep emotional content. This aspect shows that the gijak is not only a technical means of performance, but also an artistic symbol that expresses national feelings.

The instrument's body, strings, bow, the ability to play without a fret, the tuning system, and the sound range played an important role in performance practice. In particular, as a stringless instrument, the gijak requires a strong ear, a subtle intonational sense, and a deep sense of national melodic characteristics from the performer. This shows that the performance of the gijak is a complex, but artistically extremely rich art form.

The inseparable connection of the gijak with the art of maqom further increases its historical significance. In maqom performance, every melody, every ornament, and every sound passage acquires a specific artistic meaning. The gijak is one of the instruments capable of expressing these subtleties. With its help, the inner drama, spiritual depth, melodiousness, and philosophical content of maqom melodies are impressively conveyed to the listener. Through these methods of performance, a melody becomes not only a collection of audible sounds but also an artistic phenomenon that directly affects the human soul.

At the same time, regional performing schools play an important role in the development of the gijak. Musical traditions formed in Khorezm, Bukhara, Fergana-Tashkent, and Surkhandarya-Kashkadarya regions have given a unique diversity to the styles of gijak performance. Each region has its own interpretation of melodies, melodic movement, use of ornaments, rhythmic structure and performance style. For example, while the Khorezm performing school exhibits energy, rhythmic precision, and clarity of artistic expression, the Bukhara maqom traditions exhibit poise, philosophy, and inner spiritual depth. Consequently,

the gijjak instrument reflects not only the national musical culture but also the unique artistic image of each region.

By the modern period, the development of the gijjak has reached a new level. In the 20th century, the process of adapting folk instruments for stage and orchestral performance had a strong impact on the structural improvement of the gijjak. As a result of the creation of folk instrument orchestras, various types of the gijjak were created in different registers, its range was expanded, and the sound power and timbre capabilities were adapted based on the requirements of the orchestra. This process, on the one hand, increased the status of the national instrument in the field of professional art, and on the other hand, led to the complication of the performance technique.

The modern improvement of the gijjak is not limited only to its external design or technical capabilities. One of the most important aspects is the expansion of the performance repertoire. While the gijjak was previously primarily used in folk melodies, maqoms, and traditional song performance, today it is also actively used in compositional creativity, ensemble works, orchestral pieces, variety compositions, and modern experimental music. This indicates that the instrument's artistic possibilities are broad and that it can harmonize with modern musical thinking.

In modern music education, the issue of teaching violin performance is also of particular importance. In today's professional training process, a gijjak player is required not only to play traditional melodies by heart but also to possess musical literacy, ensemble culture, stage presence, technical mastery, creative interpretation, and stylistic thinking. This creates the need to harmonize traditional teacher-apprentice schools with modern pedagogical methods in the educational process. In particular, it is an important pedagogical task for young performers to feel the national melody, understand maqom styles, correctly use instrumental capabilities, and form an individual performance style.

During the discussion, it is necessary to pay attention to another important aspect: the modernization of the gijjak does not mean a departure from national traditions. On the contrary, real improvement is associated with the discovery of new performance possibilities while preserving the traditional foundation. If the instrument is preserved only as a museum exhibit, it ceases to be a means of living art. Therefore, the current development of the gijjak is determined by its adaptation to modern stage, orchestral, and educational processes while preserving its traditional melodic system, national performance ornaments, and historical characteristics.

However, there are some problems in this process. In particular, in some cases, excessive emphasis is placed on technical mastery in the performance of the gijjak, and issues of national stylistic nuances, philosophy of melody and artistic interpretation may fall into the background. Furthermore, the use of electronic sound amplifiers, arrangements, and pop styles in modern performance may negatively affect the natural timbre and national melodic characteristics of the instrument. Therefore, in the process of improving the gijjak, it is important to maintain a balance between artistic norms, nationality, historicity, and modernity.

The significance of the gijjak instrument in today's cultural life is also linked to its entry into the international arena. Uzbek national instruments, including the gijjak, are becoming an important means of representing our national art at various international festivals, concert programs, scientific-practical conferences, and cultural exchanges. This process imposes new

requirements on the performance of the gijak: in addition to a deep knowledge of the national repertoire, the performer must be familiar with world musical culture, stage culture, creative communication, and modern performance technologies.

Additionally, scientific research plays a significant role in the modern improvement of the gijak instrument. The interpretation of the instrument in historical sources, its depictions in archaeological and miniature art, its use in oral folk art, its function in maqom ensembles, regional performance schools, pedagogical methodology, and structural development require a separate scientific analysis. Such research serves as an important theoretical basis for a deeper understanding of the gijak, improving its teaching methodology, and passing on performance traditions to future generations.

A joint analysis of the historical development and modern development of the gijak shows that this instrument is essentially an art form open to constant renewal. Its ancient roots go back to the musical memory of the people, and its modern appearance is determined by today's performance, education and stage practice. Thus, the strength of the gijak lies precisely in its ability to combine historicity with modernity. On the one hand, it preserves the musical sound of the past, and on the other hand, it is enriched with new interpretations and artistic possibilities through the performers of a new generation.

Materials and methods

In the preparation of this article, scientific-theoretical, historical-cultural, and practical sources serving to illuminate the historical development, performance traditions, and modern improvement processes of the gijak instrument were taken as the primary material. As the main material of the research, scientific views on Uzbek folk instruments, maqom art, traditional performing schools, folk instrument orchestra and music education system were analyzed. This is because the gijak instrument is an artistic phenomenon formed not in isolation, but in close connection with the common musical heritage, performance experience, and cultural development of the people.

An important place in the structure of the research materials is occupied, first of all, by sources that reveal the historical roots of the gijak instrument. Historical data on the musical culture of Central Asia, scientific explanations of ancient instruments, miniature art, and descriptive information found in written sources allow for an understanding of the gijak's long path of development. These materials highlight the early forms of the gijak, its role in the family of stringed and bowed instruments, its function in folk life and rituals, and its aspects related to palace music and maqom performance.

The theoretical basis of the article consists of scientific approaches in instrumental studies, ethnomusicology, music pedagogy, and performing arts. From the perspective of instrumental studies, the structure of the gijak, the sound-forming mechanism, the string system, the characteristics of bow performance, the range, and the timbre possibilities were studied. The ethnomusicological approach made it possible to analyze the gijak in connection with the cultural memory of the people, the national melodic system, and regional performing schools. From the perspective of music pedagogy, issues regarding instrumental teaching methodology, the "master-apprentice" tradition, musical literacy, practical performance lessons, and the use of modern educational technologies were considered.

Practical materials on the performance of the gijjak were also analyzed as an important source in the study. At the same time, folk melodies, maqoms, ensemble works, orchestral repertoire, and instrumental works by modern composers were taken into account. In particular, the performance ornaments used in the performance of the gijjak, such as nola, qochirim, sayqal, titratma, sirǧalish, were considered as the main practical material that reveals the national expressive possibilities of the instrument. These ornaments are one of the important artistic features that distinguishes the performance of the gijjak from other stringed instruments.

The principles of historicism and modernity were utilized as the primary methodological criteria in the article. The principle of historicity allowed for a consistent coverage of the origins, stages of formation, and performance traditions of the gijjak instrument. The principle of modernity served to determine the role of the instrument in today's music education, stage performance, orchestral practice, and international cultural relations. On this basis, the organic connection between ancient traditions and the needs of modern performance was analyzed.

The study employed methods of analysis, comparison, generalization, a historical-cultural approach, a systematic approach, and pedagogical observation. Through the analytical method, the structure of the gijjak, its performance capabilities, stages of historical development, and modern improvement processes were studied in separate aspects. Using the comparative method, traditional and modern forms of the gijjak, the style of folk performance and the requirements of academic performance, as well as solo and orchestral functions, were compared. The generalization method allowed for the generalization of existing scientific views and practical experience.

The historical and cultural approach served to study the gijjak not only as a musical instrument, but also as a cultural phenomenon related to the spiritual life, aesthetic views and artistic thinking of the people. This is because the rhythm, performance style, and repertoire of the gijjak are closely linked to the life experience, rituals, dastans, and maqom traditions of the people. The systematic approach made it possible to consider the historical development, structural structure, performance technique, educational process and modern stage practice of the gijjak as a whole.

Through the method of pedagogical observation, methodological issues arising in the process of teaching gijjak performance were analyzed. In particular, at the initial stage, the importance of forming students' skills in proper sitting, holding an instrument, archery, sound quality, intonation accuracy, and hearing is determined. In subsequent stages, there is a need to develop complex technical techniques, maqom performance, ensemble culture, stage interpretation, and creative independence. These aspects demonstrate the importance of the principles of stages, consistency, and an individual approach in the methodology of teaching the gijjak.

Analysis of the materials shows that the teacher-apprentice tradition was of particular importance in the development of the gijjak instrument. In traditional music education, performance experience is formed primarily through oral-practical means, i.e., through the direct instruction of the teacher, the student's listening repetition, observation of the performance style, and practical practice. In the modern education system, this tradition is enriched with musical notation, curricula, methodological manuals, audio and video materials, and digital technologies.

Consequently, the combination of traditional and modern educational tools in teaching the performance of the gijjak yields effective results.

Among the research materials, the practice of the folk instrument orchestra also occupies an important place. Because it was orchestral performance that had a strong influence on the modern improvement of the gijjak. Based on the needs of the orchestra, the volume, range, timbre stability, technical capabilities, and adaptation characteristics of the gijjak to the ensemble have been revised. As a result of this process, the gijjak developed not only as a solo instrument but also as a professional instrument that actively participates in polyphonic musical structures.

The article evaluates the issue of modern improvement from the perspective of the development of the gijjak while preserving its natural national characteristics. This is because any modernization process should not damage the original timbre, expressive means, and performance traditions of the national instrument. Therefore, when analyzing the materials, special attention was paid to the balance between the traditional sound nature of the gijjak, national ornaments, melodic structures characteristic of the maqom, and modern technical capabilities.

The article also analyzes the role of the gijjak instrument in modern cultural processes as a material. Today, the gijjak is widely used in various concert programs, international festivals, ensemble performances, academic stage performances, and the activities of educational institutions. This confirms that it is not only a historical instrument, but also a means of art that actively lives in modern creative processes.

Overall, the material part of this article is aimed at a comprehensive analysis of the historical, theoretical, practical, and pedagogical aspects of the gijjak instrument. The materials used in the study made it possible to highlight the ancient roots of the instrument, its role in national performance, its structural development, its connection with maqom art, its significance in vocational education, and modern directions of improvement. On this basis, the gijjak instrument was interpreted as an important artistic means of connecting historical heritage and modern performance in Uzbek musical culture.

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