

## THE ROLE OF UZBEK MAQOM MUSIC IN THE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

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### Abstract:

This scholarly article provides a comprehensive analysis of the role of Uzbek maqom music in the international education system. It highlights the unique artistic and philosophical characteristics of maqom, its recognition by UNESCO as intangible cultural heritage of humanity, and the growing interest from foreign researchers. The article examines the experiences of teaching maqom in foreign universities and conservatories, the contributions of Uzbek specialists, and the significance of online educational resources. Furthermore, it thoroughly discusses the methodological, linguistic, and financial challenges in teaching maqom internationally and offers well-founded recommendations for future expansion of international collaboration, creation of modern educational materials, and implementation of innovative teaching methods.

**Keywords:** status, international education, musical heritage, cultural integration, checkers, pedagogy, UNESCO

### Introduction

The art of maqom is a priceless jewel of Uzbek national musical culture, which has been closely linked for centuries with our people's aesthetic taste, spiritual and moral world, and historical consciousness. Through the melodies and songs of maqom, the ancient customs, traditional way of life, and artistic thinking of the people have found their expression. In particular, the Shashmaqom system, with its complex structure, profound philosophical content, and rich musical potential, is recognized as a significant cultural heritage not only in Uzbekistan but also throughout Central Asia.

As globalization intensifies, the development of information technologies and intercultural dialogue has made the study and promotion of national art forms on an

international scale a pressing issue. Today, the interest in Central Asian music—especially Uzbek maqom art—is growing in the higher music education institutions of many developed countries. In this context, the integration of maqom music into the international education system, the development of its scientific and methodological foundations, and its presentation to foreign students are among the most urgent scientific and practical tasks.

This article analyzes the role of Uzbek maqom music in the international education system, examines contemporary trends in teaching it at foreign higher education institutions, identifies existing challenges, and explores ways to overcome them. Additionally, the significance of maqom music in international cultural dialogue and education, as well as its place in the global music space, is highlighted through scientific analysis.

### **Main Part**

The art of maqom occupies a special place in the musical heritage of the Uzbek people. Its formation and development are linked to a long historical process, with the earliest written sources dating back to the 9th–10th centuries. During this period, musical and educational life flourished in cultural centers such as Bukhara, Samarkand, and Khorezm, and maqom art reached new heights. Thinkers like Alisher Navoi and Abdurahmon Jami emphasized the spiritual and moral significance of maqom music in their works.

The Shashmaqom system stands out for its complex structure, organized melodies, modes (shuba and peshrev), and is notable not only for providing aesthetic pleasure but also serving as a means of spiritual education. Furthermore, maqoms represent a highly developed form of Eastern musical culture through their theoretical foundations—maqom systems, rhythmic patterns, tonalities, and modes.

Uzbek maqom is not only a product of oral tradition but also a scientifically grounded musical system. This is evident in the works of prominent music theorists such as Abdulkadir Maraghi, Darvish Ali Changi, and Hoji Abdulaziz Abdurasulov. Today, maqom is studied not just as a performance genre but also as an essential component of the educational process. Maqom was praised in the works of literary figures such as Navoi, Babur, Mashrab, and Muqimiy<sup>1</sup>. Each section of Shashmaqom—instrumental, vocal, and recitative—works in harmony to positively influence the listener's spirit<sup>2</sup>. In every aspect of maqom music, we see the embodiment of Uzbek history, language, culture, and identity.

The recognition of Shashmaqom by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity confirms its international cultural value. In today's globalized world, maqom plays a crucial role in shaping national identity through the education system<sup>3</sup>. Music is an important subject in international curricula such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) and Cambridge Assessment systems<sup>4</sup>. These programs emphasize intercultural communication, aesthetic thinking, creativity, and the understanding of national values through music<sup>5</sup><sup>6</sup>.

In recent years, scientific and creative interest in Eastern music—particularly the rich musical heritage of Uzbekistan and Central Asia—has grown around the world. The unique characteristics, philosophical depth, and complex musical structure of maqom leave a deep impression on foreign researchers and performers.

Specialized courses in Eastern music have been introduced in prestigious music academies across Europe, Asia, and the Americas, where maqom music is studied as a separate subject. For example, conservatories and art institutes in countries such as Germany, France, Japan, the United States, and South Korea offer courses on listening to, analyzing, and even performing maqom music.

Several factors have contributed to this growing interest:

- The antiquity and artistic depth of maqom. Many foreign musicologists analyze maqom in the context of Eastern philosophy.
- Its recognition by UNESCO in 2003 as Intangible Cultural Heritage has elevated maqom's international status.
- Uzbekistan's active foreign policy and cultural diplomacy, which promote maqom music on international stages through festivals, conferences, and collaborative academic projects.
- Some foreign researchers have chosen maqom music as the main subject of their dissertations, indicating its growing academic relevance globally.

However, it is important to note that the position of maqom in the international education system is not yet fully established. Ongoing research continues, and it is essential that Uzbekistan pursues a more active policy in systematically integrating maqom music into foreign education institutions.

As Uzbek students participate in these systems, gaining knowledge based on their national musical heritage—maqom—facilitates their integration into international education. In the IB Music SL/HL courses, students engage in performance, analysis, and composition based on their cultural heritage. Maqom music serves as a rich source of material in this context. In the Cambridge program, Eastern music analysis is included at the GCSE and A-Level stages<sup>7</sup>. Due to its intricate rhythm, modal structure, and poetic features, Uzbek maqom stands apart from the music of other cultures<sup>8</sup>.

At present, there is no unified methodology for teaching maqom music in international schools. The shortage of trained teachers, lack of modern educational resources, and insufficient technical tools present significant challenges<sup>9</sup><sup>10</sup>. However, cooperation with institutions such as the Union of Composers of Uzbekistan, the Institute of Arts and Culture, and the Maqom Center offers promising avenues for the international integration of maqom music<sup>11</sup>.

Today, several foreign universities have incorporated various national music genres, including Uzbek maqom, into their curricula. These initiatives not only strengthen cultural exchange but also support the academic study of musical diversity.

In particular, major academic institutions such as Indiana University, Harvard University, UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles), and the Sorbonne in France have developed special modules on maqom art. These courses cover maqom within the disciplines of ethnomusicology, cultural studies, and applied music. They are often delivered in the following formats:

- **Listening sessions** – analyzing maqom performances and studying differences among schools;
- **Performance workshops** – learning to perform maqom pieces on instruments like the tanbur, dutar, and ney;
- **Seminars and public lectures** – examining the historical development, theoretical foundations, and philosophical essence of maqom.

These courses are generally taught by invited specialists from Uzbekistan or foreign researchers specializing in maqom performance. This enhances international academic collaboration.

Notably, programs such as UNESCO, DAAD (Germany), Fulbright (USA), and Erasmus+ have expanded opportunities for teaching maqom abroad, organizing masterclasses, and conducting dissertation research. Through such initiatives, maqom is not only being studied internationally but also evolving as a subject of global academic inquiry.

However, current efforts are still limited in scale. Given Uzbekistan's rich experience and human capital, more effective integration of maqom into foreign education systems will require the development of specialized curricula, multimedia textbooks, and international methodological guides.

## Challenges and Recommendations

The full integration of Uzbek maqom into the international education system faces several challenges and barriers, the resolution of which is critical for its global development.

**1. Lack of methodological approaches:** Traditionally, maqom has been transmitted through the ustoz–shogird (master-apprentice) oral tradition. In contrast, Western music education relies on notation, written rules, and standardized curricula. The complex modal structure, microtonal characteristics, and performance techniques of maqom do not fully align with Western notation systems, making it difficult to develop universal teaching materials. This hinders the standardization of the educational process.

**2. Issues with notation standardization:** The oral nature of maqom allows for personal interpretations by each performer, which can be lost in the process of transcription. Therefore,

it is necessary to develop a system of universal notation and explanation that preserves maqom's unique features while making it more accessible for international teaching.

**3. Language barriers:** The lyrics of maqom compositions are mostly in classical Persian-Tajik and old Uzbek, making their philosophical and lyrical meanings difficult to convey to foreign students without the help of professional translators and in-depth scholarly commentary. This complicates the teaching process and impedes the full transmission of maqom's textual depth.

**4. Financial and organizational limitations:** Launching international education programs, sending maqom masters abroad, funding exchange programs, and providing scholarships for foreign students require significant financial resources. Additionally, there is a lack of a coordinated international strategy and centralized management for maqom education, which further impedes progress.

To enhance the role of Uzbek maqom in the international education system, the following strategic directions and concrete recommendations are proposed:

□ **Expanding international collaboration:** Strengthen academic exchange programs between Uzbekistan's leading institutions (such as the State Conservatory and the Institute of Arts and Culture) and foreign universities and conservatories. Joint research projects, seminars, and faculty/student exchanges should be prioritized to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and expertise in maqom.

□ **Developing educational resources:** Create universal teaching materials in English, Russian, and other major languages covering maqom theory, history, and performance. These resources should include both notated materials and explanations of oral traditions, supported by audio and video supplements. Multimedia tools will make maqom more accessible for learners.

□ **Implementing innovative teaching methods:** Utilize modern technologies such as interactive software, virtual reality (VR), and 3D simulations to teach maqom instruments and performance techniques. Deliver maqom courses through online platforms and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) to reach a global audience.

□ **Establishing performance and research centers:** Set up specialized units or cultural centers on Uzbek maqom in foreign countries—especially within departments of Oriental

studies and musicology. These centers can support educational programs, academic research, and cultural events, promoting the integration of maqom into global cultural life.

□ **Increasing government support:** The Government of Uzbekistan should develop and fund specific programs to promote maqom internationally and integrate it into global education. This includes providing grants for international projects, supporting travel for performers and researchers, and using maqom as a tool of cultural diplomacy.

Additional proposals include:

- Creating curriculum modules and teaching materials on maqom for use in international music education programs.
- Organizing professional development courses for teachers working within IB and Cambridge systems.
- Producing audio-visual resources focused on maqom performance and analysis.

## Conclusion

Uzbek maqom art, with its deep historical roots, rich philosophical content, and intricate musical structure, represents an invaluable part of humanity's cultural heritage. Its significance in the international education system is steadily increasing. However, this process involves a range of methodological, organizational, and financial challenges.

The systematic implementation of the recommendations and strategic directions outlined above will help to further promote Uzbek maqom on a global scale. It will enhance the effectiveness of its teaching and dissemination across educational institutions worldwide. As a universal cultural value, maqom offers an irreplaceable contribution to global cultural diversity. Ensuring its transmission to future generations and expanding its reach internationally is a vital task for specialists and institutions alike.

The global study and performance of maqom art fosters deeper intercultural dialogue and contributes to musical harmony among nations. It is essential to prepare professional translations of maqom texts—both prose and poetic—to fully reflect their philosophical, lyrical, and historical meanings in major world languages, especially English. These translations should be included in educational materials and be accessible to performers.

Other necessary steps include:

- Creating online maqom courses and integrating the master-apprentice tradition into foreign education systems.

- Emphasizing cultural context during teaching by explaining the social, historical, and philosophical background of maqom's development. This will help international students gain a deeper understanding of its essence.
- Enhancing financial and organizational support from the government for international promotion and integration of maqom into educational systems.
- Offering grants for international projects, funding travel for maqom performers and researchers, and creating scholarship programs for foreign students.
- Translating key works on maqom theory into English, French, Russian, and other languages to bring them into international academic circulation.
- Promoting maqom in collaboration with UNESCO through joint projects under its programs for safeguarding and disseminating intangible cultural heritage.

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