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HISTORY OF THE ORIGIN OF FOLK WIND INSTRUMENTS IN AZERBAIJAN AND THE ROLE OF ALAKBAR ASGAROV IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PERFORMING SCHOOL

Abstract

This article outlines a brief history of the development of folk wind instruments in Azerbaijan. The presented article reveals the role and significance of the outstanding, virtuoso performer on wind instruments Azerbaijan and the creator of the “School of playing Azerbaijani folk wind instruments balaban, tutek, ney and zurna” Alakbar Asgarov. He is the creator of instrumental dance melodies and mugham renga, as well as one of the founders of the school of playing Azerbaijani folk instruments such as balaban, zurna, tutek and nay. The purpose of this article is to consider the features of the folk wind instruments of Azerbaijan and the role of Alakbar Asgarov in their development. According to professional musicians and artists, A. Asgarov is the most virtuoso these instruments performer and innovator. He not only worked on improving the design of traditional instruments but also adapted the European clarinet for the performance of Azerbaijani music, in the construction of which he made significant changes. For many generations of musicians, his performing art is a standard and an example.

Keywords: Azerbaijan music, Alakbar Asgarov, folk wind instruments, performer, balaban, ney, zurna, reng.

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ӘЗІРБАЙЖАНДА ХАЛЫҚ ҮРМЕЛІ АСПАПТАРЫНЫҢ ПАЙДА БОЛУ ТАРИХЫ ЖӘНЕ АЛЕКПЕР АСКЕРОВТЫҢ ОРЫНДАУШЫЛЫҚ МЕКТЕПТІ ДАМУДАҒЫ РӨЛІ

Аннотация

Мақалада Әзірбайжанның халық үрмелі аспаптарының дамуының қысқаша тарихы баяндалған. Әзірбайжанның үрмелі аспаптарындағы көрнекті виртуоздық Орындаушының және «Әзірбайжан халық үрмелі аспаптарында ойнайтын мектеп балабан, тутек, ней және зурна» жасаушы Алекпер Аскеровтың рөлі мен маңыздылығы ашылады. Ол – аспаптық би әуендері мен мугамдық реңгтердің авторы, сонымен қатар балабан, зурна, тутек және ней сияқты Әзірбайжан халық аспаптарында ойнау мектебінің негізін қалаушылардың бірі. Зерттеудің міндеті – Әзірбайжанның халық үрмелі аспаптарының ерекшеліктерін және олардың дамуындағы Алекпер Аскеровтің рөлін қарастыру. Кәсіби музыканттар мен өнер қайраткерлерінің пікірінше, А. Аскеров – осы интрументтерде ең шебер орындаушы және жаңашыл. Ол дәстүрлі аспаптардың дизайнын жетілдіріп қана қоймай, Әзірбайжан музыкасын орындауға бейімдеді еуропалық кларнет, оның дизайнына айтарлықтай өзгерістер енгізілді. Музыканттардың көптеген ұрпақтары үшін оның орындаушылық өнері эталон және үлгі болып табылады.

Түйінді сөздер: Әзірбайжан музыкасы, Алекпер Аскеров, халық үрмелі аспаптары, орындаушы, балабан, ней, зурна, реңг.

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ИСТОРИЯ ВОЗНИКНОВЕНИЯ НАРОДНЫХ ДУХОВЫХ ИНСТРУМЕНТОВ В АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНЕ И РОЛЬ АЛЕКПЕРА АСКЕРОВА В РАЗВИТИИ ИСПОЛНИТЕЛЬСКОЙ ШКОЛЫ

Аннотация

В статье изложена краткая история развития народных духовых инструментов Азербайджана. Раскрывается роль и значимость выдающегося виртуозного исполнителя на духовых инструментах

Азербайджана и создателя «Школа игры на азербайджанских народных духовых инструментах балабан, тутек, ней и зурна» Алекпера Аскерова. Он является автором инструментальных танцевальных мелодий и мугамных ренгов, а также одним из основоположников школы игры на таких азербайджанских народных инструментах, как балабан, зурна, тутек и ней. Задача исследования – рассмотреть особенности народных духовых инструментов Азербайджана и роль Алекпера Аскерова в их развитии. По мнению профессиональных музыкантов и деятелей искусств А. Аскеров является самым виртуозным исполнителем на этих инструментах и новатором. Он не только работал над усовершенствованием конструкции традиционных инструментов, но и адаптировал для исполнения азербайджанской музыки европейский кларнет, в конструкцию которого внёс значительные изменения. Для многих поколений музыкантов его исполнительское искусство является эталоном и примером.

Ключевые слова: музыка Азербайджана, Алекпер Аскеров, народные духовые инструменты, исполнитель, балабан, ней, зурна, ренг.

The base of musical culture of each nation is rooted in history. Since the ancient times, music of Azerbaijan has been improving and constantly expanding its capabilities. The development of national music was based on ancient mughams, dance songs, mugham renga, ashig and folk chants.

Music instruments play an important role in the development of culture worldwide. The design and technical changes in the performance capabilities of the instruments have been widely used throughout the history.

The art of performing folk music is one of the core parts of the musical culture of Azerbaijan. The existence of performing activities in the ancient times of Azerbaijan is evidenced by historical monuments, miniatures and cave paintings of Gobustan.

The musical culture of Azerbaijan includes various types of folk instruments. They are distinguished in several groups:

1. Wind instruments – balaban, zurna, tutek (kaval), ney, tulum.
2. Bowed string instruments – kamancheh.
3. Fretless string instruments – qopuz, saz, sitar, santur, qanun, tar, oud.
4. Drum instruments – nagara, gosha nagara, def.
5. Keyboard-wind instrument – accordion.

The purpose of this article is to examine the development of folk wind instruments of our country. Wind instruments are considered to be among the oldest existing. The research of the great musicologist of the 14-15th centuries Abdulkhadir Maragali observes the history of creation of folk instruments in Azerbaijan. Ney, tutek, zurna and balaban are marked among the most ancient.

In ancient times primitive people extracted sounds from reeds, sea shells, animal bones and horns, and shells of large walnuts. They used these primitive tools on the hunt, battles, and ritual ceremonies. By blowing the air into primitive devices it was possible to extract sounds of a certain height.

With the development of the performing culture of the ancient population of Azerbaijan, new technical capabilities and tools were created to extract the sound palette.

The very first wind instrument is an ancient flute with labial holes. In Azerbaijan, the prototype of ancient flutes are such instruments as tutek and ney (nay). The shape and material of the wind instruments make great importance on the character and coloring of the sound. The material plays a special role, since the metal sounds completely different than wood.

Wind instruments are divided in two groups:

- Wooden – made of walnut, mulberry, apricot tree.
- Brass instruments.

Azerbaijani folk wind instruments are of the wooden group.

Modern folk wind instruments differ from the ancient ones in their construction and sound extraction.

We shall examine some types of wind instruments that are nowadays widely used in folk ensembles and orchestras.



Figure 1. Tutek is an Azerbaijani folk wind instrument of the flute type. This is an improved type of a shepherd's pipe, a simple wooden form.

Ancient prototypes of tutek flutes were made from reeds, animal bones and clay. In further periods of the development of this tool, new models of metal and wood appeared.

There are seven holes on the front side of the base of the tool, and one on the back. The range of the instrument covers from the B of the small octave to the C of the third octave. A skillful performer can increase the sound range by several sounds.

Figure 2. Ney (nay) is one of the oldest Azerbaijani instruments.

Ney was usually made of cane, but professional musicians use its wooden varieties called white and black.

The white ney (ney-sefid) has eight holes on the front and one on the back.

The black ney (black ney), also known as *mizmar*, is more modern. Its length is half the length of a white ney. A cane flute is inserted into the trunk with seven holes. The tool was equipped with a round plate for lip support.

Varieties of this instrument are widely used in the countries of the Near and Far East. The range of the ney is from C of the first to G of the second octaves.

Figure 3. Zurna is an Azerbaijani folk wind instrument.

During the archaeological excavations in the territory of Mingachevir, 4 examples of zurna were discovered. They were made from deer horns. It is believed that the production of zurna dates back three thousand years ago.

The instrument is a wooden tube with a socket. Zurna has a double reed mouthpiece at the base. This instrument is classified as an oboe. The conical shape of the tube of zurna sharpens the sound, so it is more often used for outdoor performances.

Zurna is one of the favorite folk instruments for celebrations and weddings. This instrument has several varieties and is made from some types of wood, such as apricot, mulberry and walnut. The range of zurna is from the G of the first octave to the C the third octave. Zurna has seven holes on the front side, and one finger hole on the back.

Figure 4. Balaban is a double-reed wooden instrument. The mouthpiece is made from club-rush of certain sizes.

In the finished body of balaban, eight holes are drilled on the front and one on the back side. Balaban, like zurna, is one of the oboe wind folk instruments.

The musical structure of the instrument and the pitch is adjusted using a clamp fixed to the mouthpiece. The instrument has a low timbre and makes a special sound. The range of balaban is from the G of the small octave to the E flat of the second octave.

Balaban is included in orchestras and ensembles of folk instruments. Balaban music is performed both solo and as part



of a duet. Varieties of balaban are case-sensitive and range-sensitive.

In Azerbaijan one can find an alto balaban, tenor balaban, bass balaban, piccolo balaban, ashug balaban, ensemble balaban, orchestra balaban and others.

In regards of improvement of the instruments, new names appear in the history of the performing culture of Azerbaijan. The name of the virtuoso artist and innovator Alakbar Asgarov occupies a special place in it.

A. Asgarov was born on 03.05.1933 in the city of Baku. From the very first steps in music, he declared himself as a distinctive performer. His talent constantly attracted great attention from both musicians and listeners. Having the deepest knowledge and rare intuition, A.Asgarov also was a possessor of a bright artistry and outstanding performing skills.

The close connection to the layers of folk art and the respect for traditions combined with innovation determined the main direction of development of A.Asgarov as a musician. He was brought up on national traditions with deep gratitude for folk art. The last decade of his life was connected with the Sumgayit College of Music and its folk ensemble "Dugah". This ensemble was unique in its kind and had an inimitable sound. The ensemble's repertoire consisted of folk songs, folk dance tunes and renga, as well as pieces of A.Asgarov's authorship.

The ensemble included such folk instruments as: tar, ud, saz, ganun, kemancha, zurna, balaban, ney, tutek, nagara and gosh nagara.

During the leadership of A.Asgarov, the ensemble was striving for the highest level of performing arts. His specific virtuoso put magical effect on the audience. He managed to develop his own unique performing style in a whole range of instruments: clarinet, balaban, ney, tutek and zurna were among them. A distinctive feature of his performance was the colorful sound palette, energy and masculinity of tone. For more than thirty years A.Asgarov had dedicated himself to teaching. In 1966, he was invited to the Sumgayit Music College as a master of balaban.

Possessing a high level of knowledge and all the secrets of teaching methods, A.Asgarov instilled in his students a sense of beauty and awareness of the significance of their chosen profession. As a tutor A.Asgarov accurately felt the individual performing abilities of each student and in every possible way encouraged their development. In the same year he began work on a book entitled "The School of Performance of Folk Wind Instruments" for beginners. Along with teaching, A.Asgarov was invited by the People's Artist of the USSR Rashid Behbutov in 1973 to become the soloist in the Azerbaijan State Theater of Song and Dance. As part of this ensemble, he toured a lot and performed in Yemen, Scotland, Switzerland, England, Ireland, Egypt, Wales and many other countries.

Audience from different parts of the Earth was captured by the high skills of this magnificent performer. No wonder in Yemen he was nicknamed the "miracle clarinet player."

According to professional musicians and artists, A.Asgarov is the most virtuoso performer on such wind instruments as clarinet, balaban, ney, zurna and tutek. For many generations of musicians, his performance marks a standard and example to follow.

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