

ON SOME ASPECTS OF THE TERMINOLOGY OF POP MUSIC IN UZBEKISTAN

Mulladjanov Davlat Mavlanovich*Associate Professor, Department of Art and Cultural Studies,
State Institute of Arts and Culture of Uzbekistan
mullajonovdavlat@gmail.com*

Abstract: This article explores the terminology of a relatively young aspect of Uzbek musical culture – pop music – and its associated terms such as «light», «mass», «beat», «rock» and «everyday music».

Keywords: Estrada, musical stage, light music, pop music, mass music, beat, rock, everyday music, classical music, performing arts, genre.

INTRODUCTION

Uzbek estrada music, which began to develop rapidly in the 1950s and 60s, reached the level of a sizable “music industry” by the 1990s and acquired a unique mass character within a historically short period. In particular, pop songs form a significant portion of the music performed during national celebrations such as Independence Day, Navruz, and other public holidays, as well as in music programs on Republican TV, radio stations, and various concert shows.

At the same time, our independent homeland has become a center for international, regional, and national festivals and music competitions. Since 1995, the Republican Song Festival «Uzbekistan – My Homeland» has been held regularly, along with the International Music Festival «Sharq Taronalari» (since 1997) and the Republican Festival of New Professional Songs «Sado» (since 1999).

Moreover, the 1990s witnessed the emergence of many new names in pop music – both singers and musical groups. Artists of the new generation continue the creative legacy of People’s Artist of Uzbekistan Farrukh Zokirov and the ensemble “Yalla,” as well as Mansur Toshmatov, Gulomjon Yakubov, and Nasiba Abdullayeva – names recognized both locally and abroad. In a short time, figures like People’s Artist of Uzbekistan Yulduz Usmanova and Nuriddin Khaydarov, along with Honored Artists such as Kozim Kayumov, Kumush Razzokova, Ravshan Namozov, and others, rose to prominence in the pop scene.

Uzbekistan provides ample opportunities for the development of estrada music. Given its appeal to millions of listeners – especially its influence on the spiritual education of the younger generation – presidential decrees and cabinet resolutions have been adopted to ensure its development in line with contemporary needs [2]. The political and social changes over the past decade have created fertile ground for the qualitative renewal of national music. Today, we witness the emergence of various styles and trends within the rapidly evolving domain of pop music. These developments are particularly evident in the rhythmical structure of songs [3], a core genre of pop music.

This is only natural, as artistic processes that occur at historical turning points are most visibly reflected in the genre’s most popular elements – melody and rhythm [4]. Notably, in recent decades, the melodic sources of pop songs have greatly diversified. While some songs

maintain national traditions, others imitate or directly incorporate foreign melodies and soundscapes.

As a result of the active media promotion of these songs, the «melodic-rhythmic dictionary» of our era (as B. Asafyev described it) has undergone significant transformation. This creates a pressing need for scholarly reflection on the general direction of these new styles, including the development of practical guidelines and deeper theoretical analysis. This is especially important since melodic choices are closely tied to the centuries-old musical thinking of the Uzbek people, rooted mainly in monodic traditions.

It must be noted that for many years, musical estrada as a scholarly subject remained largely unexplored by Uzbek musicologists. Key aspects – such as its historical development, classification, and terminology – were often overlooked. Scholarly interest only began to grow in the final quarter of the 20th century, as reflected in S. Vakhidov's monograph *Uzbek Soviet Song*, L. Yusupov's dissertation *The Basic Stages of the Formation and Development of Uzbek Musical Estrada*, and other works by O. Bekov and S. Amanmuradova [5].

METHODS

This article employs descriptive, classificatory, historical-comparative, typological, and complex analytical methods from contemporary art criticism. Musical samples were studied using a systematic approach, with all sources evaluated through the lens of national independence ideology. Foundational studies by both Uzbek (N. Yanov-Yanovskaya, S. Vakhidov, L. Yusupov, O. Bekov, etc.) and CIS musicologists (G. Zabrodin, V. Simonenko, A. Kozlov, V. Konen, etc.) provided the methodological framework [6].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At first glance, the term *estrada* may seem inadequate to describe the full spectrum of the music in question. Globally, terms such as «light music», «pop music», «mass music», «beat», «rock», and «everyday music» are used. Each reflects a different facet of the genre.

For instance, «light music» refers to works that are melodically simple and easily remembered – features associated with entertainment. However, this can also apply to compositions by well-known classical composers, including overtures, suites, and romances that have become popular due to their accessibility.

Similarly, «pop music» often overlaps with traditional folk songs, and «mass music» is considered broader than *estrada*. According to A. Sokhor in his article *To Beat or Not to Beat*, terms like «pop», «beat», and «rock» have evolved, with «beat» originally serving as a methodological concept in Soviet-era pop discourse. He also observes how the music industry's adaptability has allowed various «beat» subgenres to develop while sharing common features.

Sokhor's proposed replacement of the term «light music» with «mass music» includes a functional classification:

- Genres for mass concerts and show performances
- Genres for everyday and ritualistic use
- Popular entertainment genres

While useful at the time, Sokhor's framework is grounded in Soviet ideology, which sometimes limits its applicability to broader cultural contexts.

«Beat» and «rock» highlight rhythm and stylistic intensity. Rock music, originating from rhythm and blues, developed into «rock and roll» and further diversified. However, «rock» cannot serve as a universal term, as it represents a specific musical style.

In *The Third Layer: New Mass Genres in 20th-Century Music*, V. Konen divides music into three strata: folklore, professional composer school, and a «third layer» comprising mass genres like jazz and rock. Konen suggests that this third layer emerged from the democratization of music in medieval Europe and maintains characteristics such as improvisation, entertainment focus, and accessible performance practices.

Nonetheless, applying this «third layer» model to the Uzbek context is debatable, as Uzbekistan's estrada music remains deeply connected to national musical heritage, particularly folklore [12].

In Uzbekistan, the term estrada is broadly used to refer to stage music, encompassing singing, instrumental, and variety performances. Derived from the French word for «stage», the term has evolved. L. Yusupov and O. Bekov interpret it as a professional performance art form that serves urban audiences.

Initially, estrada embraced various forms – from poetry to circus acts – and was characterized by lively, simplified but emotionally effective performance styles. Over time, it began to include traditional musical elements and even classical folk songs, blurring the boundaries between estrada and more traditional art forms.

This inclusive approach risks conflating different genres and traditions, creating potential confusion. While estrada performances share stage-based, entertaining qualities, they should not be seen as equivalent to traditional Uzbek music.

CONCLUSION

In modern Uzbekistan, estrada refers not only to stage-based art forms but also to a distinct musical direction. In its narrow sense, musical estrada encompasses genres unified by fast rhythm, simple melodic structure, and stylistic accessibility. Thus, it represents a specific, independent domain of music, distinct from both folk and academic traditions.

Given its defining characteristics – memorable melodies, emphasized rhythms, and accessibility – it is advisable to use the term musical estrada for music that fits these criteria.

REFERENCES:

1. Беков О. Современная узбекская эстрадная песня в контексте музыкальной культуры Узбекистана. Т.: СИТИ. М(м)Б-42 №9311994. – С. 3.
2. Ўзбекистон Республикаси Президентининг «Ўзбекнаво» гастроль-концерт бирлашмасини ташкил этиш тўғрисида»ги Фармони. 1996 й. 5-апрель. // Ўзбекистон Республикаси Олий Мажлисининг Ахборотномаси. 1996. №4. – 4-5 бб.; Ўзбекистон Республикаси Президентининг «Ўзбекистонда театр ва мусиқа санъатини янада ривожлантиришни қўллаб-қувватлаш ва раҳбатлантириш чоратадбирлари тўғрисида»ги Фармони. 1995 й. 20-октябрь. // Ўзбекистон Республикаси Олий Мажлисининг Ахборотномаси. 1995. №10-11. – 42-43 бб.; Ўзбекистон Республикаси Президентининг «Ўзбекистан – Ватаним маним» қўшиқ байрами ҳақида»ги Фармони. 1996 й. 27-август. // Ўзбекистан Республикаси Олий Мажлисининг Ахборотномаси. 1996. №8. – 43 б.; «Шарқ тароналари» Халқаро

музыка фестивалини ўтказиш тўғрисида Ўзбекистон Республикаси Вазирлар Маҳкамасининг Қарори. // Тошкент, 1997. 11-март; Ўзбекистон Республикаси Вазирлар Маҳкамасининг «Эстрада кўшиқчилигини ривожлантириш тўғрисида»ги Қарори. // 2001 й. 26-июнь. Халқ сўзи. 2001. 28-июнь.

3. In this article, the term «tone» is used in the sense of «intonation», which is one of the fundamental concepts in musicology – M.D.
4. See in this regard: Кароматов Ф. Основные черты музыкального строения узбекских народных песен // Вопросы музыкальной культуры Узбекистана. Т.: Издательство художественной литературы УзССР. – 1961. С. 62-63; Бордюг Н. Черты интонационного процесса в современной узбекской музыке // Музыкальный современник. Вып. I. – М.: Советский композитор. 1973. – С. 167-171.
5. See in this regard: Вахидов С. Узбекская советская песня. – Т.: ГИЛИ им. Г.Гуляма. 1976; Юсупов Л. Основные этапы становления и развития узбекской музыкальной эстрады. Автореф. дисс. канд. искусствоведения. М.: 1990. – С. 23; Современная узбекская эстрадная песня в контексте музыкальной культуры Узбекистана, Т.: СИТИ. М(м)Б-42 №9311994; Аманмурадова С. Традиции песенного-эстрадного искусства Египта и Ўзбекистана (на примере творчества Умм Кульсум и Батыра Закирова). Автореф. дисс. канд. искусствоведения. Т.: СИТИ. М(а)А-61.
6. Сохор А. Вопросы социологии и эстетики музыки. — Л.: Советский композитор. 1980. – С. 241-247.
7. Сохор А. Вопросы социологии и эстетики музыки. – Л.: Советский композитор. 1980. – С. 247, 267-270.
8. Забродин Г., Александров Б. Рок – искусство или болезнь? – М.: Советская Россия. 1990. – С. 27.
9. Конен В. Третий пласт. Новые массовые жанры в музыке XX века. – М.: Музыка. 1994. – С. 4-5.
10. Конен В. Третий пласт. Новые массовые жанры в музыке XX века. – М.: Музыка. 1994. – С. 16.
11. Конен В. Третий пласт. Новые массовые жанры в музыке XX века. – М.: Музыка. 1994. – С. 33-35.
12. Беков О. Современная узбекская эстрадная песня в контексте музыкальной культуры Узбекистана, Т.: СИТИ. М(м)Б-42 №9311994. – С. 10-12.
13. Юсупов Л. Основные этапы становления и развития узбекской музыкальной эстрады. Автореф. дисс. канд. искусствоведения. – М.: 1990.
14. Беков О. Современная узбекская эстрадная песня в контексте музыкальной культуры Узбекистана, Т.: СИТИ. М(м)Б-42 №9311994. – С. 10.
15. Беков О. Современная узбекская эстрадная песня в контексте музыкальной культуры Узбекистана, Т.: СИТИ. М(м)Б-42 №9311994. – С. 11-12.
16. Современная узбекская эстрадная песня в контексте музыкальной культуры Узбекистана, Т.: СИТИ. М(м)Б-42 №9311994. – С. 46.
17. In this place, the accented rhythm base (dance method) derived from the English word "beat" is meant. See in this regard: Сохор А. Вопросы социологии и эстетики музыки. – Л.: Советский композитор. 1980. – С. 265.