



Thoughts on The Art of Famous Doyra Players

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Abstract: This article provides an in-depth overview of Usta Olim Komilov's contributions to Uzbek performing arts, particularly in the fields of doyra playing and traditional dance. It highlights his early career with the ethnographic ensemble led by Mukhiddin Qori Yoqubov and his collaborations with renowned artists such as Tamaraxonim, Tokhtasin Jalilov, and Abduqodir Ismoilov. The article emphasizes his role in preserving and systematizing centuries-old doyra techniques, culminating in the publication of the Doyra Darsi (Doyra Lesson) method book in 1982.

Keywords: Doyra, Uzbek national dances, Performance traditions, Folk musical instruments, National heritage, Music pedagogy, Dance and music.

Introduction: Komilov's impact extended beyond Uzbekistan, earning him national and international recognition, including participation in the 1935 International Dance Festival in London and the 1937 Uzbek Art and Literature Decade in Moscow. His pioneering work in developing Uzbek ballet and choreographic compositions contributed to the evolution of the nation's cultural heritage.

The article also highlights his legacy as a teacher, mentoring a generation of doyra players who continued his traditions and innovations. His influence remains foundational in modern doyra performance, as his techniques are taught in educational institutions and performed on global stages. Usta Olim Komilov is remembered not only as a master musician but as a guiding figure in Uzbek performing arts.

In the practice of performance, Usta Olim Komilov's reputation for mastery in playing the doyra and his deep knowledge of Uzbek dance significantly contributed to the growth of his students. Throughout his many years as a mentor, he trained numerous doyra players, including Ghofir Azimov, Abduqosim To'ychiev, To'ychi Inog'omov, Ghofir Inog'omov, Rahim Isakhojaev, and

other skilled doyra players. Each of these students became masters of their time and played a vital role in nurturing a new generation of performers. Furthermore, they succeeded in fundamentally transforming doyra performance. Unlike the traditional "Zili Bom" style, the new style they introduced became widely recognized. The current doyra performance style is precisely the one developed by these masters.

One of Usta Olim Komilov's first students, To'ychi Inog'omov, established a young doyra players' studio at the Republican Palace of Pupils in 1949. Usta Olim Komilov taught his students using the doyra manual he created and the playing techniques he mastered. Among the doyra players who joined this circle were Uzbekistan's People's Artist Qahramon Dadaev and Honored Artists of Uzbekistan, such as Ravshan Akbarov, Hasan Azimov, Talat Isomidinov, and the Islamov brothers—Dilmurod, Kholmurod, and Elmurod. These doyra players, together with the dancers of the "Bahor" Folk Dance Ensemble and other performers, introduced Uzbekistan's doyra art to the world.

It is well known that the performance of the doyra and other percussion instruments has developed unique regional styles across Central Asia. Each region has preserved its distinct characteristics and internal traditions. For example, the Khorezm, Bukhara, Samarkand, and Fergana-Tashkent styles of doyra performance illustrate these differences. Among them, the Khorezm school stands out for its uniquely developed playing techniques. The Bukhara school is particularly significant because its doyra style is widely used in maqom performances and local folk music. The Bukhara dialect of folk music performance holds a special place due to its specific rhythm and techniques.

The Samarkand doyra school is also closely linked to maqom traditions and is commonly used as an accompanying instrument in folk music. In contrast, the Fergana-Tashkent style has incorporated the doyra as a primary instrument in many ensembles and women's performances. However, it has not traditionally been recognized as a solo instrument.

The doyra as a solo instrument began to take shape in the early 20th century. The full expressive potential of the doyra is revealed in solo performance and as an accompaniment to dance. In particular, in the 1920s and 1930s, dance became widely popular, and the doyra played an essential role in accompanying it.

The development of solo doyra performance was greatly influenced by the art of dance. This connection is evident in the movements, grace, charm, and expressive gestures characteristic of Uzbek dance,

which are fully reflected in doyra techniques. Additionally, a doyra performer must not only master various rhythmic patterns but also understand and feel the nuances of traditional dance. In complex compositions that include a variety of dance rhythms, the transition from one pattern to another must be natural and logically structured, which requires great skill from the doyra player.

Moreover, doyra players play a crucial role in creating, adapting, and staging new dances accompanied by the doyra.

When discussing great doyra players, Usta Olim Komilov is always remembered. Born in the Fergana Valley, he gained widespread recognition and became known as the mentor of all Uzbek doyra players. His influence extended beyond Fergana and Tashkent, reaching Samarkand and Bukhara, where he was also respected as a master. Usta Olim Komilov dedicated more than half of his life to folk art. He played folk musical instruments such as the chang and doyra with exceptional skill.

He even composed several original pieces for the doyra, which are still performed with pride by young doyra players in all music and art colleges, as well as the conservatory of Uzbekistan. His solo doyra compositions, featuring carefully selected rhythmic patterns, receive special attention at national competitions.

Usta Olim Komilov's pedagogical contributions were also highly significant. He played a major role in collecting and systematizing the diverse rhythmic patterns of Uzbek music and dance.

He was deeply passionate about the percussive nature of the doyra and continuously practiced its techniques in his free time. Later, he learned new secrets of doyra playing from the famous Margilan-based doyra player Mamasaid Ota. Among fellow musicians, he was known by the nickname "Soz" (meaning "Master of Instruments") because he played not only the doyra but also the chang and other instruments with remarkable proficiency.

In 1926, Usta Olim Komilov was among the first to be accepted into the ethnographic ensemble led by the renowned artist of his time, Mukhiddin Qori Yoqubov. In this ensemble, he collaborated with Yusuf Qiziq, Tamaraxonim, Abduqodir Ismoilov (a flutist), Ahmadjon Umrzokov, and Tokhtasin Jalilov. He dedicated all his knowledge, experience, and mastery to his work, successfully preserving and passing down the art of Uzbek dance. This extraordinary individual managed to memorize hundreds of beautiful and unique dance movements and taught them to his students, including Tamaraxonim, Mukarrama Turgunboeva, Halima

Komilova, Roziya Karimova, and Gavhar Rahimova.

Together, they created dances such as Paxta, Duchava, Pilla, Usmoniya, Shokhida, Gul Oyin, Sadr, Zang, Qari Navo, and Ufori Sokhta. He also played a significant role in the production of the first Uzbek national ballets, such as Gulandon, Oq bilan, and Ballerina, as well as musical dramas like Farhod va Shirin and Gulsara, and operas like Bo'ron and Buyuk Kanal.

One of Usta Olim Komilov's invaluable contributions was preserving the ancient heritage of doyra performance, which had been developed over thousands of years by master musicians. By collecting and systematizing various techniques, he ensured that they were not forgotten. This rich collection was later compiled into an educational resource—the Doyra Darsi (Doyra Lesson) method book, co-authored with Tamaraxonim and published in 1982.

Recognizing his immense contributions to the development of music and performing arts, the Uzbek government awarded him the title of "Labor Hero" in 1932. In 1935, Usta Olim Komilov, along with Tokhtasin Jalilov and Tamaraxonim, participated in the International Dance Festival held in London. His mastery of the doyra mesmerized all festival participants, earning him the festival's Gold Medal.

In 1937, he took part in the Uzbek Art and Literature Decade in Moscow, which was a major event in the development of Uzbekistan's music and theater culture. During this event, he performed alongside Tamaraxonim in stage productions such as Sayl and Kolxoz Yo'li and showcased choreographic compositions like Pilla. As one of the best performers of the festival, Usta Olim Komilov was awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labor. In Uzbekistan, his contributions were further honored with the title of "People's Artist of Uzbekistan."

Usta Olim Komilov left an unparalleled legacy in the art of Uzbek doyra performance. His influence can be seen across all regions of Uzbekistan, where each local style reflects elements of his musical heritage. Every new technique and composition is built upon his legacy, inspiring young musicians to continue innovating. His teachings remain a core part of the curriculum in academic lyceums and colleges, ensuring that his traditions are preserved for future generations.

Usta Olim Komilov was not just a hero of his time—he was the guiding figure and mentor for all doyra players. His profound knowledge of both doyra performance and Uzbek dance significantly contributed to the growth of his students. Throughout his career, he trained many talented doyra players, including Ghofir Azimov, Abduqosim To'ychiev, To'ychi Inog'omov, Ghofir Inog'omov, Rahim Isakhojaev, and others. Each

of these students became a master in their own right and played a key role in shaping the next generation of performers.

Moreover, they successfully transformed doyra performance, moving beyond the traditional Zili Bom style and introducing a new technique that became widely recognized. The current standard style of doyra playing was developed precisely by these masters.

One of Usta Olim Komilov's first students, To'ychi Inog'omov, established a youth doyra studio at the Republican Palace of Pupils in 1949. Usta Olim Komilov passed down his knowledge using the Doyra Lesson textbook and his own playing techniques. Among the students who emerged from this studio were Uzbekistan's People's Artist Qahramon Dadaev, as well as Honored Artists of Uzbekistan such as Ravshan Akbarov, Hasan Azimov, Talat Isomidinov, and the Islamov brothers—Dilmurod, Kholmurod, and Elmurod.

These doyra players, together with the dancers of the Bahor Folk Dance Ensemble and other performers, introduced Uzbekistan's doyra art to the world.

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