



Article

Cultural Sector Reforms in the New Uzbekistan

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Abstract: This article examines the reforms implemented in the cultural sphere during the period of the New Uzbekistan and analyzes their significance in the development of national musical and estrada art. Special attention is devoted to state policy in the field of culture, the activities of the institution “Uzbekconcert,” and the contribution of prominent cultural figures and performers to the formation of modern Uzbek musical culture. The study also highlights the role of Botir Zokirov and the institutional reforms aimed at preserving and promoting national cultural heritage within the framework of the Third Renaissance policy. The article demonstrates that contemporary reforms in Uzbekistan have created favorable conditions for the modernization of artistic education, the support of young talents, and the strengthening of the international prestige of Uzbek musical culture.

Keywords: Uzbek estrada, Uzbek musical art, national estrada, Botir Zokirov, New Uzbekistan, music reforms, Third Renaissance.

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1. Introduction

During the years of independence, the reforms being implemented in the republic have placed human beings and their interests at the center. The ultimate goal of all changes has been to improve the welfare of the population. Starting from 2017, the state has entered a new stage in its development across all sectors. A new era of large-scale reconstruction and reforms has begun in all areas. In particular, the activities of all leaders have been reviewed and subjected to critical analysis. The main focus of attention has been directed toward solving long-overdue pressing issues and addressing problems that must be resolved in the interests of the people. In the renewing Uzbekistan, the primary attention has been given to the development of the social sector [1].

In the renewing Uzbekistan, the government began its activities by prioritizing direct dialogue with the people and paying close attention to human interests. Particular emphasis was placed on resolving numerous problems that had accumulated over many years. This included adopting a critical analytical approach to the activities of leaders, especially in combating corruption, strengthening the personal accountability of every official, living with the pains and concerns of the people, and establishing a systematic mechanism for handling appeals from ordinary citizens. As a result, attention to the human factor has significantly increased. Furthermore, the most effective mechanism for working with the population at the local level was introduced: the People’s Reception Offices and Virtual Reception Offices of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The declaration of 2017 as the “Year of Dialogue with the People and Human Interests” in our country marked another important milestone in the consistent implementation of the noble principle that “Human interests are above everything” [2].

Within the framework of these reforms, the cultural sphere acquired strategic significance. During the years of independence, particular attention has been paid to the consistent development of the cultural sector. This has involved the effective organization of the activities of cultural and artistic institutions based on a

comprehensive and in-depth study of positive global experiences, traditions, achievements, and results. Efforts have also focused on expanding the network of these institutions, as well as strengthening their material and technical base and enhancing the professional capacity of personnel [3].

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, emphasized this point during his meeting with the heads of cultural and artistic institutions in 2017: “We must never forget one fundamental truth: if culture and art do not develop in our country, society will not progress. The level of development of our people is judged, first and foremost, by our national culture. In this sense, culture is the very image and face of our people and our society. Since we have embarked on creating a new image of Uzbekistan, we must begin this process, above all, with the development of our national culture” [4].

The purpose of this article is to analyze the reforms carried out in the cultural sphere of New Uzbekistan, particularly in the field of national estrada and musical art, as well as to examine the contribution of prominent artists and state institutions to the development of modern Uzbek culture within the framework of the Third Renaissance.

2. Materials and Methods

The study is based on the principles of historicism, objectivity, comparative analysis, and systematic approach. In the course of the research, official state decrees and resolutions, archival materials, speeches of state leaders, scientific literature, and periodical publications devoted to the development of culture and arts in Uzbekistan were analyzed.

The methodological basis of the article includes the analysis of reforms implemented in the cultural sphere after 2017, as well as the study of institutional transformations in the field of musical and estrada art. Particular attention was paid to the activities of the Uzbekistan State Conservatory, the Botir Zokirov National Institute of Estrada Art, and the state institution O‘zbekkonsert.

The research also employed biographical and cultural-historical methods in examining the creative heritage of Botir Zokirov and other representatives of Uzbek national estrada art. Through these approaches, the article evaluates the continuity between the classical traditions of Uzbek musical culture and modern reforms implemented during the period of New Uzbekistan.

3. Results

It is well known that, alongside all other sectors, great attention has been paid to the development of culture and the arts in our country, and extensive work is being carried out in this regard. In particular, pursuant to a Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan adopted in 2002, a new, modernly equipped building was constructed for the Tashkent State Conservatory and put into operation. Subsequently, in order to enhance the prestige and status of this higher education institution, it was granted the status of the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan. In addition, a music academic lyceum for gifted youth was established under the conservatory [5].

Additionally, in order to train qualified specialists and scientific-pedagogical personnel in the field of national estrada art within the republic, as well as to create broad opportunities for their engagement in scientific and creative activities, the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated December 2, 2020 on the wide celebration of the 85th anniversary of People's Artist of Uzbekistan Botir Zokirov provided for the establishment of the Botir Zokirov National Institute of Estrada Art under the Uzbekistan State Conservatory [6].

At the institute, a memorial complex and museum dedicated to the memory of Botir Zokirov were also established, along with “master-apprentice” performance schools representing figures of Uzbek national estrada art, modern creative studios, and an information-resource center. The museum houses exhibits that vividly reflect the life and work of Botir Zokirov and the Zokirov creative dynasty, as well as the development of national estrada art and its broad promotion on a global scale. It also includes a collection of fine art works belonging to Botir Zokirov’s creative heritage and

compilations of literary works.

The decrees of Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, concerning the celebration of the jubilee dates of Abdulla Oripov – Hero of Uzbekistan and People’s Poet, Botir Zokirov – People’s Artist of Uzbekistan, and O’tkir Hoshimov – People’s Writer of Uzbekistan, constitute another vivid example of the practical attention devoted to honoring our national art and literature, as well as paying tribute to the memory of distinguished Uzbek creators [7].

Today, the development of national spirituality and the cultural formation of a spiritually mature individual have become one of the priority directions of state policy. Indeed, “Spirituality is the strength and power of an individual, a people, a society, and a state. Where it is absent, there can never be well-being and prosperity” [8].

Positive efforts are being undertaken to elevate the performance of national musical estrada art to a professional level, including the creation and development of a national school of estrada vocal performance. The opening, for the first time in 1996, of the “Estrada Performance” department at the Tashkent State Conservatory, as well as the establishment from the 2002–2003 academic year of a new “Estrada Art” faculty at the Uzbekistan State Conservatory and an academic lyceum for gifted children under the conservatory, became further evidence of the significant attention being paid to the development of this field [9].

In addition, in accordance with the decree signed by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev on February 15, 2018, the associations O’zbeknavo and O’zbekraqs were dissolved, and on their basis the state institution O’zbekkonsert was established, which created broad opportunities for specialists in the sector. Today, national estrada art is following a path of steady development [10][11].

In the republic, the works created by renowned composers such as Mutavakkil Burhonov, Ikrom Akbarov, Manas Leviyev, Sulayman Yudakov, Doni Zokirov, Sharif Ramazanov, and Enmark Solixov, together with the long-term fruitful creative efforts of performers such as People’s Artist Tamaraxonim and People’s Artist of Uzbekistan Botir Zokirov, who performed these works with great mastery, led to the emergence of a national form of estrada art [12].

It is well known that, in their time, the creative efforts of Botir Zokirov, Ikrom Akbarov, and Enmark Solixov, followed later by the Yalla group and artists such as Yevgeniy Shirayev, Muhabbat Shamayeva, Ra’no Sharipova, Yunus Turayev, and Yevgeniy Jivayev, and subsequently Farrux Zokirov and Doni Ilyosov, laid a solid foundation for modern Uzbek estrada singing, through which it acquired professional and artistic qualities [13].

Their successors – talented singers who have risen to the level of stars of Uzbek estrada, such as Yulduz Usmonova, G’ulomjon Yoqubov, Nasiba Abdullayeva, Kumush Razzoqova, Kozim Qayumov, Azim Mullaxonov, and Ravshan Nomozov, as well as the groups Qars and Toshkent – together with composers and arrangers such as Alisher Ikromov, Dilorom Omonullayeva, Alisher Rasulov, Vladimir Baramikov, and Sarvar Qoziyev, are conducting creative research and activity aimed at the development of national estrada music within the framework of the government’s state program [14].

In the era of New Uzbekistan, the field of music has become one of the important directions of state policy. Particular attention has been paid to preserving national heritage, supporting young talents, and strengthening international cooperation. Prestigious events such as the Sharq Taronalari International Music Festival, the International Maqom Art Forum, and the Bakhshi Art Festival are promoting Uzbek music on the global stage [15].

4. Discussion

The reforms implemented in the cultural sphere of New Uzbekistan demonstrate that culture and art are no longer viewed solely as elements of spiritual life, but also as important instruments of social modernization and national development. The transformation of cultural institutions, the modernization of musical education, and the establishment of specialized institutions for national estrada art reveal the state’s strategic approach toward strengthening cultural identity.

Particular importance has been attached to the preservation of historical continuity in Uzbek musical culture. The state policy aimed at honoring prominent representatives of national art, especially Botir Zokirov, reflects the broader process of preserving cultural memory and transmitting artistic traditions to future generations. In this regard, the establishment of the Botir Zokirov National Institute of Estrada Art became an important institutional step toward forming a professional national school of modern musical performance.

Furthermore, the creation of O'zbekkonsert contributed significantly to the centralization and systematic development of the cultural sphere. The institution created favorable opportunities for supporting performers, organizing concerts and festivals, and integrating Uzbek musical culture into the international cultural environment.

The reforms carried out within the framework of the Third Renaissance concept also demonstrate that national culture is becoming one of the fundamental pillars of Uzbekistan's modern state-building process. Through the harmonization of traditional heritage with contemporary artistic approaches, Uzbek estrada art continues to evolve while preserving its national identity.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be stated that in New Uzbekistan, Uzbek estrada and musical art are advancing to even higher levels thanks to ongoing state reforms. They enrich the rich historical traditions founded by Botir Zokirov with the experience of the "golden generation" of independence, thereby ensuring their continuous development.

The reforms implemented in the cultural sphere have strengthened institutional support for national art, expanded opportunities for creative youth, modernized artistic education, and enhanced the international prestige of Uzbek musical culture. Through the harmonization of national heritage with modern requirements, the support of young creators, and the promotion of Uzbekistan's musical culture on the international stage, this field not only enhances spiritual and cultural wealth, but also contributes to strengthening the foundations of the Third Renaissance

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