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ARTISTIC FEATURES OF AZERBAIJANI SAZBANDS

Abstract: *Ashug art combines several craft characteristics with its ancient history. Since the saz gopuz, an ancient musical instrument, has been carried to this day by the master-pupil relationship of the instrument makers. Saz, a stringed musical instrument played with a mizrab, is not only the common culture of Turks, but also related to the oldest layers of national culture. Artists known as shaman, gam, oyun, bakhshi, yanshaq, varsak, and ozan are considered the ancestors of ashug, and the art of ozan has evolved over the centuries and turned into the art of ashug. Later, the gopuz in Ozan's hand also evolved like an Ozan and took the form of a saz instrument. Although it changes as an instrument, the fact that it is a stringed instrument remains the same, and it serves to keep the tradition alive by going hand-in-hand in the hearts of ashugs. The ashug art is realized by making a musical instrument. Those who love the art of ashug, those who feel love in spirit, make the saz instrument, and when the saz is made, they hand it over to the master. Craftsmen who can make saz instruments are called sazband in Azerbaijan. Here the root of the word is saz, and the suffix is "band". The suffix band is also used separately in Azerbaijan, it means to be a dam, to be closed. This also means that sazband means one who blocks and closes the music. Sazbands play the saz like ashugs, they can tune the saz, Ashug writes poems in poetic pictures, and sings karavallis about ashugs. Because they constantly work with ashugs, they can teach young ashugs how to tune and play, and they also benefit from master ashugs themselves. The artistic features of musicians are quite wide. Master Sazbands make saz from mulberry and walnut wood. They even made a carved saz from walnut wood. Musicians learn the secrets of the art by going to the Master. More often, they learn the art of saz mastership. That is, it is passed from father to son, and from son to grandson. Music is a product of human thinking. Although we did not find female masters anywhere during the research of Ashug art, the work of masters' spouses in this art is undeniable. The article provides extensive information about this.*

Key words: *Azerbaijan, Saz, saz mastery, ashug, master, tree, mulberry, walnut.*

Introduction. The song of the Azerbaijani Turks varies among Turkic-speaking peoples according to their musical technique, acoustics and voice possibilities. The saz instrument is made of wood. The tree cult has a special belief motif in Turkish folklore. The tree, which is always necessary in the life of the human race, dominated the spiritual world of our great-grandfathers and was sanctified in their mythological thought. From ancient times to modern times, attachment to the tree has occupied a special place in the belief system of the people. One of the sacred trees in the Turkish belief system is the mulberry tree. In rural houses, mulberry trees are found at the entrance to the yard, which prevents negative spirits from entering the house, and there is abundance, prosperity and happiness in that house. Perhaps it is for this reason that the

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saz instrument is considered sacred because it is made of wood, and the saz master has become the oath of the ashugs.

To make the saz, the process of identifying the mulberry tree and cutting the tree takes place first. We have received a lot of information about this. Some details of those data do not confirm



each other. According to master artist Sazband Farman and his son Sazband Niyamaddin, to make Saz, you must first choose a branched mulberry tree. So, the mulberry tree should be 80-100 years old. A mulberry tree must be a mature tree.

Since the young tree is both hard and heavy, they do not make saz from it. As the tree ages, it becomes lighter and more fragile. Sedge is made of mulberry wood in non-irrigated lands. There are such mulberry trees in Tovuz, as well as in our lands freed from occupation in the Garabag region. After the tree is cut, the drying process is carried out. When drying wood, it should be dried by creating a certain heat (150-200 degrees heat) in full shade so that no cracks appear. Woodworms must be destroyed in the wood so that the wood is both lighter and louder when played.



The choice of mulberry wood is important in the weight of the instrument and the resonance of its sound. They also make saz from walnut wood.

Information about the tradition of sazband production was obtained from master Mahammadali, a resident of Gazakh region, master Mustafa, a resident of Ashaghi Eskipara village, master Abram, a sazband with black writing, and master Khudu, a sazband from Tovuz. The sazs called

“Bada” were prepared by master Misag, master Haykaz, master Süleyman, master Akbar from Gaghagan in Borchali, master Gazanfar from Gadabayli, who lived in Shamkhor.

According to the information given by Prof. Mursal Hakimov, on the last Wednesday evening of the year (March 20-21), the mouth should be cut by a praying person around 12 o'clock after the moon rises (M. Hakimov: 2004, p. 499).

However, we have accurate facts about the cutting of mulberry trees before March.

Amina Eldarova writes that saz is made of mulberry, elm, or ironwood (A. Eldarova: 1996, p. 65).

We do not consider this information to be completely true. Because elm and ironwood are not used to make saz. Sazband Farman Mahmudov says that only mulberry wood and walnut are used to make saz. This tree is cut in winter. The tree is cut before the water touches it, before the soil and wood wake up. There is no milk in the trunk of a tree cut by February. After February, the “milk” of the tree is revealed. There is a “fat layer” in the body of the tree. The tree should be cut before the fat layer is exposed.

In general, the opinions of researchers about the technique of tuning saz are contradictory. In this regard, the researches of researchers such as Mursal Hakimov, Amina Eldarova, A. Badalbeyli, Ilgar Imamverdiyev and others are of interest.

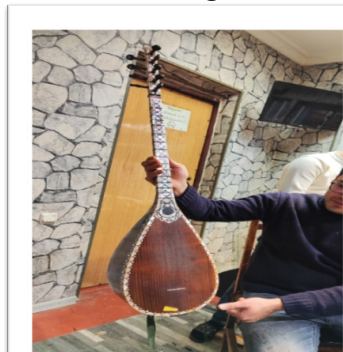


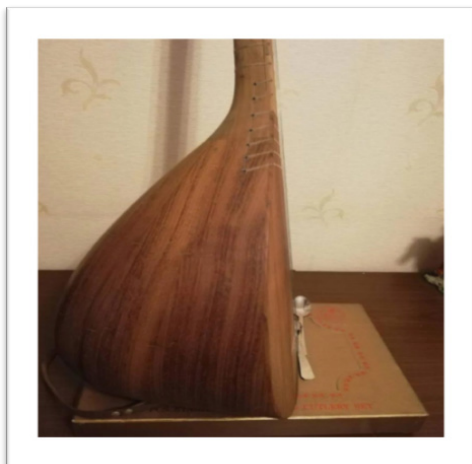
The saz, regardless of whether it is big or small, consists of qabirga, beche ichari yamshaq, agach chuylari, chol yamshaq, khataband qolichi oyma, sine, daraq, sine kharak, bash kharak, ashugs, i.e. burmanj, perde, sim bagı, sim, mizrab, qayış and koynek.

Sazband Niyamaddin Farmanoglu says that saz is divided into four main parts, not three. Qol, beche, chanaq and sine.

Ribs vary in size. A medium-sized saz consists of 10 ribs. It consists of 10 ribs with small slices, provided that the two main ribs are large ribs.

11-string instruments are 12-rib instruments. Ribs are placed according to the size of the instrument, and as the size of the rib





increases, the number of strings increases. Due to the number of ribs, it is possible to get ovality. If the slice is not 12, but 10, it is understood that the bowl of the saz is not correct when looking at the hand (master Niyamaddin Mahmudov).

There is a “khataband” on the arm of the saz. The khataband is cut and carved in the handle of the saz and covered with a wooden cover. This is done so that the arm of the saz is not de-



formed. The khataband on the arm of the saz makes the sound of the saz more regular.



S a z b a n d

Bayram says that in order to make the sound of the saz louder, a gap is created in the arm of the saz, which is called khataband saz. They throw 2-3 rollers into the khataband so that it is known that the saz is a khataband. The dimensions of the instrument are 3-33, 9-3.3. 9 sim, 9 ashug, 3, and 3 is the width of the arm.

The chest part is also called “crack and straighten” among the people. The “chirp” of the instrument should be exactly the same from the head “stretcher” to the face stretcher and the arm stretcher. The most difficult job of a musician is carving with a grater.

The strings of the dulcimer are made of ordinary metal. In the past, curtains were made from cattle intestines, but now artificial fish kapron is used. During the warmer months, cattle’s intestine softens and eventually bends. Curtains from cattle intestines were often deformed.

Amina Eldarova writes that the ash of the saz is made of pear wood (A. Eldarova: 1996, p. 65-66). The author’s information that the best material for a reed scoop is apple or walnut is also incorrect. In fact, ashugs - burmanjs of saz are sometimes made of wood. However, the ash made of wood swells in hot weather.

Saz has a “becha” that connects the chest and the arm. The becha is made of



walnut wood. The size of the instrument is 43 gauge. The medium saz is 45 gauge, and for solo saz playing, a larger size (47 gauge) is intended. Because the chest part of the syllabary is convex, it is called “fish belly”.

Saz consists of 9 parts. It is also known as calak, rib and leaf.

Newly made (6-7 months) saz is yellow in color. It gradually darkens and this process takes two years. But saz is also darkened by cooking.

Musical instruments are the same size, but they sound different. The fate of the instrument depends on the master who made it. Even a person who cannot see the inside of the instrument knows the state of the instrument and its sound capabilities from its sound when he touches it.



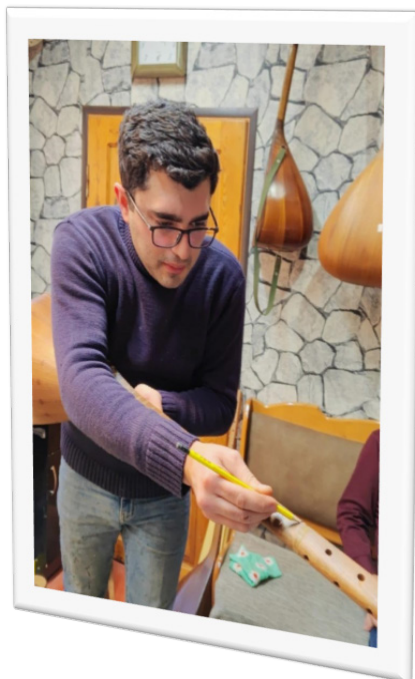
How thick the ribs of the saz are carved means that the sound of the saz will come out correctly. The craftsman who burns the clay must feel and hear the clay. He can already determine its shape by the habit of his hand. The master feels that saz wants to speak figuratively. But when everything is in order, sometimes there are “chokings” in the music. In that case, the sazband opens a hole in the chest of the saz so that the sound comes out.

The curtain attached to the arm of the instrument should be very accurate and fit the size. It must be properly placed on the strings.

In this case, the master who makes music must be able to tune music, play music and sing. He writes his name and the date of manufacture somewhere on the saz near the sleeve or inside the saz.

Sazband work also continues with master-pupil ways. The most famous master sazband among Azerbaijani sazbands was Mahammadali Maharramov. Maharramov, son of Mahammadali Abbasgulu, was born in 1893 in Gorchulu village of Sharur district of Nakhchivan in a poor family. Master sazbands like sazband Kerem Musayev and his son Yunis Musayev are distinguished sazbands among ashugs for the music they make.

The master-pupil relationship in the art of Ashug plays an important role in sazband as well as in all fields. However, during our research, we learned that in sazband, it is possible to become sazband in a dream by means of buta alma. Master Khudu lost his father at the age of three.



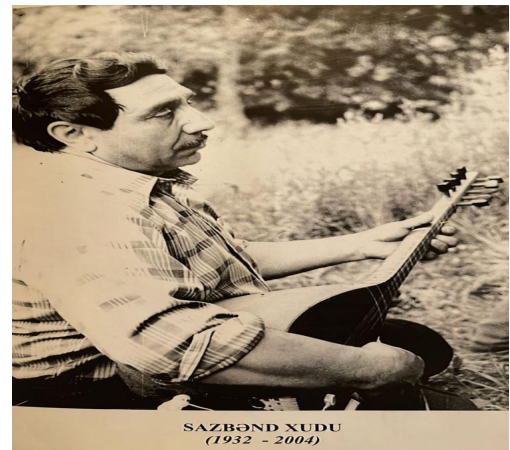


He had a great passion and interest in music since his childhood. Despite this, he did not go to a pupil to learn the art of falling in love with any master. At the age of 20, one day in his dream, an elderly enlightened man taught him how to make a saz, the art of sazbanding.

Azerbaijani saz stands out among the saz and similar instruments common among Turkic-speaking peoples due to its undeniable advantages in terms of playing technique and sound transmission

(acoustics). Sazs are divided into three parts according to their size, number of frets and strings: - kureh saz, medium saz and tavar. Type of saz: It has 4-6 strings, it is the smallest saz according to its size. Armpit saz: it has 6-7 strings, it is a medium saz according to its size. Main saz: 8-9 strings, it is the largest saz according to its size. Tavar saz and field saz.

There are three types of saz, zagara saz, medium saz, and tavar saz. The sound of the saz was sweeter, a teenage voice. A young man who has just started the art of falling in love sings on the traditional music, because his voice weakens as the ashug grows older.





According to sazband Bayram, son of sazband Yunis, one should be very careful with the “carved saz” made of walnut wood. Sazband Bayram says that his grandfather had a sazband carved from a walnut tree. One day, when the children are joking with each other at home, the shoe touches the carved instrument hanging on the wall and the instrument rusts like a crystal bowl.



The size of the voice varies between men and women. Ladies’ ashugs are smaller in size. Compact saz, that is, small saz, were cymbal-sounding saz. He wants a cymbal from the singer. The larger the size corresponds to the bam sound, and the smaller the size - to the cymbal sound.

Some sazbands play beautiful ashug airs, can sing beautifully, and write poetry in ashug poetry images. In fact, because they were in frequent contact with master ashugs, they benefited from them and could later become “word connoisseurs”.

Sazband Ayaz Zulfugarov, who lived in Gazakh district in 1931-1982, learned the art of saz mastery from Sazband Mohammadali. He was a pupil of master ashug Bahram Nasibov and learned the secrets of ashug art. In addition, Ashug wrote poems in poetry pictures.

Sazband Yahya Chobanov, Sazband Panah Gurbanov, Sazband Ghazanfar and Bafeli Adigozelov wrote poems in ashug poem pictures. Mustafa Valiyev, who lived in the years 1923-1987, played the sazband perfectly, sang and wrote poetry.

The Turkish woman’s role in sazband is not small. Women who play a role in our epics, ashug art, and ashug poetry carry their mission in sazband. In the history of Ahug art, there has never

been a female sazband. However, despite this, spouses of sazbands have worked as hard as masters in making sazbands. The role of the woman was in the selection of the song material.

A chainsaw is used to cut the tree. Spouses of sazbands helped them to use the chainsaw.



Sazbands both repair and restore music. Master Farman says that seven-rib sazs of 1927-1930 were coming for restoration. Those songs were usually the ones with a poor image. Master Khudu changed those sazs by putting extra ribs between the ribs. For this, he cut the tree with a hand saw, bent the board, shaped it and made it again.

The grandson of sazband master Khudu, sazband Niyameddin, makes saz using Usta Khudu's instruments even in modern times. He says he uses a chainsaw, a hand scraper and a handsaw.

They dry the clay in the electronic stretcher by keeping it near a hot stove. They use oven heat to dry in the winter months. In the summer months, modern technology "dryers" are used.

Sazbands do not know all the tunes that ashigs know, but they are able to tune and play in tune as well as ashigs. Anyone who is engaged in woodworking can make slag. But they cannot be professional like masters. Now the saz instrument is made in two versions according to modern times. Classical saz and camerton saz.

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Informators:

1. Musayeva Ismet Huseyin gizi (born in 1938, delivered the interview on March 2, 2024)
2. Farman Khudu oglu Mahmudov (delivered the interview on February 27, 2024)
3. Bayram Yunis oglu Musayev (delivered the interview on March 2, 2024)
4. Niyamaddin Farman oglu Mahmudov (delivered the interview on February 27, 2024)