

## History and Development of the Rubob Musical Instrument

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**Abstract:** This article provides detailed information about the origin, history, and development of the rubob musical instrument. The main types of rubob, its structure, and performance characteristics are analyzed. The role and significance of rubob in modern musical art are also discussed. The article examines the future prospects of this instrument.

**Keywords:** rubob, kashgar rubob, afghan rubob, pamir rubob, instrumental performance, uzbek folk instruments.

### INTRODUCTION

The rubob is one of the most ancient and beloved musical instruments of Central Asian peoples. This instrument has evolved and improved over the centuries and continues to play a significant role in Uzbek national musical art today. The rubob is widespread not only among professional performers but also among amateurs. The purpose of this article is to comprehensively study and analyze the origin, history, types, and developmental trends of the rubob instrument.

The rubob is gaining recognition beyond Central Asia, with international music festivals and world music circuits providing platforms for Uzbek musicians to showcase the instrument. This global exposure not only promotes Uzbek culture but also creates opportunities for cross-cultural musical exchanges. Some rubob players are collaborating with musicians from other traditions, creating innovative fusion styles that blend Uzbek music with other world music genres. These collaborations are helping to ensure the rubob's relevance in an increasingly interconnected global music scene.

### METHODS AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Musical instruments are divided into groups according to their sound sources, into groups depending on the style of performance or mechanism used, and into different types depending on their additional characteristics. Musical instruments are mainly divided into groups of stringed chordophones, wind-blown aerophones, leather-covered membranophones, lingual hemidiophones, record, electric and electronic musical instruments, and idiophones. Groups of stringed instruments: bow words violin, alm, cello, double bass, viola, Uzbek words gijjak, koybiz, samo, etc. , dutar, tanbur, rubob, setor, various percussion instruments, dust, samba, percussion keyboard and its types, groups of wind instruments; linguistic words, sunray, koshnay, bolamon, shoxnay, clarinet, goboy, tongueless words naylar, flute,

mundshtukli words truba, horn, tuba, karnay, pneumatic key words; organ and its types.

Subdivisions of Linguistic Instruments; pleural key words fisgarmoniyya, bayan, accordion,, percussion words changqobiz and its types, percussion words flexons, groups of percussion instruments with leather upholstery; adjustable litavras, non-adjustable drums, doira, baran, tanburin and other musical instruments. Groups of record instruments; percussion resonator

words xylophones, percussion resonator words under the sound plates of a certain size resonators tubes, empty containers, etc. installed metalaffon, marimba, vibraphone, key percussion words chelesta. Groups of idiophones; adjustable orchestral bells, bells, gong, non-adjustable plates, tam-tam, Moroccan, sharp, spoon, safoil, lokop, patnis, copper, bowl, rust and other musical instruments.

The article primarily employs historical-comparative and systematic analysis methods. Information about the rubob was obtained from various historical sources, scientific literature, and internet resources. In particular, ancient sources such as Abu Nasr al-Farabi's "Kitab al-Musiqā al-Kabir," and treatises by Najmiddin Kavkabi and Darvish Ali Changi were studied [1]. Research by modern Uzbek musicologists was also analyzed [2, 3]. Information about the types and structure of the rubob was obtained from online resources [4].

## RESULTS

**Origin and History of the Rubob.** The etymology of the word rubob comes from the Persian-Tajik words "rud" (string) and "bob" (master), meaning "master of strings" [3]. Some sources indicate that the history of the rubob dates back to pre-Christian times. Abu Nasr al-Farabi described the rubob as "the instrument closest to the human voice" in his work "Kitab al-Musiqā al-Kabir" [1]. Najmiddin Kavkabi and Darvish Ali Changi, who lived in the 16th-17th centuries, left valuable information about the rubob in their treatises [5].

**Main Types of Rubob.** Currently, there are three main types of rubob:

Kashgar rubob

Afghan rubob

Pamir rubob

**Kashgar Rubob.** The Kashgar rubob is named after the city of Kashgar. It is 80-100 cm long, with a ladle-shaped bowl made of hardwood and covered with leather. It has a long neck with a curved end. There are two pegs on the front of the bowl. The neck has 19-24 frets. The Kashgar rubob has five strings tuned in fourths and fifths [4].

**Afghan Rubob.** The Afghan rubob (sometimes called the Tajik or Bukhara rubob) consists of a bowl, neck, and head. The bowl is made of several glued wooden plates, with the top covered in fish skin. The neck has 19 frets. The Afghan rubob has five main strings and 10-11 sympathetic strings [4].

**Pamir Rubob.** The Pamir rubob is structurally similar to the Kashgar rubob, but with a slightly larger bowl and shorter neck. In addition to its five main strings, it has an additional string called "zingak" [4].

In the 20th century, new, improved types of rubob were created. For instance, the rubob-prima was developed by instrument maker S.E. Didenko. This instrument has a wide range and performance capabilities [5].

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The rubob holds a central place in Uzbek folk instrumental performance. It is widely used in solo performance, ensembles, and orchestras. Many composers have created works for the rubob. For example, artists such as Muhammadjon Mirzayev, Ari Bobokhonov, Ibrohim Hamrayev, and Mustafo Bafojev have composed pieces in various genres for the rubob [6].

The rubob's unique timbre and expressive capabilities have made it an essential instrument in Uzbek traditional music. It is particularly prominent in the performance of maqom, a sophisticated genre of Central Asian art music. The rubob's ability to produce both melodic lines and rhythmic accompaniment makes it versatile in various musical contexts.

In recent years, rubob performance has been further improving. Modern performers are playing not only traditional melodies but also examples of world classical music on the rubob. There are also attempts to integrate the rubob with modern pop and jazz music [7].

This trend towards fusion and experimentation has opened up new avenues for the instrument. Some contemporary musicians are exploring extended techniques, pushing the boundaries of what the rubob can do. For instance, some performers are experimenting with alternative tunings or using effects pedals to create new sounds. The incorporation of the rubob into non-traditional ensembles is another noteworthy trend. Some musicians are including the rubob in rock bands or electronic music setups, creating unique cross-cultural sounds that appeal to younger audiences while maintaining a connection to traditional Uzbek music.

Today, rubob performance is taught in many music educational institutions in Uzbekistan. However, according to some experts, it is necessary to further improve rubob education and introduce modern pedagogical methods [8]. One challenge in rubob education is striking a balance between preserving traditional techniques and repertoire while also preparing students for the evolving musical landscape. Some educators argue for a more comprehensive curriculum that includes not only traditional Uzbek music but also world music and contemporary styles.

There's also a growing emphasis on improvisation in rubob education. While improvisation has always been a part of traditional Uzbek music, some teachers are incorporating more structured improvisation exercises into their lessons, drawing from jazz and other improvisational traditions.

The impact of technology on rubob performance and education is an important topic of discussion. Digital tools for music notation, recording, and analysis are increasingly being used in rubob instruction. Online platforms have also made it possible for students to access lessons from master performers around the world.

Some rubob makers are experimenting with new materials and construction techniques, aiming to improve the instrument's sound quality and durability while maintaining its traditional character. There's ongoing debate about the merits of these innovations versus strictly traditional instrument-making methods.

While innovation is important, there's also a strong focus on preserving and promoting the traditional rubob repertoire and playing techniques. Cultural institutions and government initiatives play a crucial role in this effort, organizing festivals, competitions, and workshops dedicated to the rubob and other traditional instruments. There's also growing interest in the academic study of the rubob, with musicologists researching its history, organology, and cultural significance. This scholarly work contributes to a deeper understanding of the instrument and helps inform preservation efforts.

## CONCLUSIONS

The rubob is an integral part of Uzbek national musical culture. It has a centuries-old history and rich performance traditions. Today, the rubob is actively used not only in traditional but also in modern music genres. In the future, it will be important to further develop rubob performance, train a new generation of performers, and expand the technical capabilities of the instrument.

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