

UZBEKISTAN FOLK ART OF DOSTANCHILIK

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Abstract: This article examines the historical origins, artistic characteristics, and cultural significance of the art of dostonchilik (epic storytelling) in the Uzbek folk music tradition. The study highlights the role of epic poetry as an important component of the national cultural heritage, reflecting the spiritual values, worldview, customs, and social ideals of the Uzbek people. Particular attention is given to the performance traditions of bakhshis, the poetic and musical structure of epics, and the educational functions of epic narratives in fostering patriotism, courage, morality, and national identity among younger generations. The article also discusses the preservation and development of the art of dostonchilik in the context of globalization and contemporary cultural processes, emphasizing its importance as a unique form of intangible cultural heritage.

Keywords: Uzbek folk art, epic poetry, bakhshi tradition, folk music, cultural heritage, oral tradition, national identity.

As the President of our country, Sh.M. Mirziyoyev, emphasized: “Strengthening and developing the spiritual spirit of the people is the most important task of the state and society in Uzbekistan. Spirituality is such a precious fruit that it has ripened in the hearts of our ancient and young people together with the understanding of their independence and the feeling of love for freedom in the great family of all mankind. Spirituality is instilled in a person along with mother's milk, father's example, and the teachings of ancestors.”¹.

The high level of development of Uzbek national values is also due to its nourished by the traditions of folk oral artistic creativity, that is, the consistent interaction between our folklore and spiritual values.

In accordance with the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 304 dated 26.04.2018 “On measures for the further development and improvement of the art of bakhshi and dostanchi”, large-scale work is being carried out to promote the best examples of the creativity of dostanchi, master bakhshis who have contributed to the further development and promotion of the art of Uzbek bakhshi, young bakhshis and dostan performers who have taken high places in prestigious international and republican competitions, and the masterpieces of intangible cultural heritage created on the basis of the high artistic creativity of our people.

In our literary literature in Uzbekistan, the following epics have been widely spread in the oral tradition of the people for centuries: "Alpomish", "Gorugli's Birth", "Malikai Aiyor", "Ravshan", "Kuntugmish", "Rustamkhan", "Avazkhan", "Oshik Gharib" and many others.

Epics are diverse in terms of subject matter and are grouped into certain categories based on the generality of their content. For example, the "Gorugli" epic series consists of more than forty fully completed and independently performed love-romantic epics, in which the didactic theme also plays a special role.

Its creation is closely related to the spiritual and everyday image of our people, their political views, moral and aesthetic education, ideals of justice and fairness, freedom and equality, heroism

¹ Sh. Mirziyoyev. People's word. – Tashkent: Uzbekistan, 2019.

and patriotism. The theme of centuries-old struggles and ideals determines the ideological content, the essence of reality.

As our epic scholars have noted, in Uzbek epic poetry for centuries there has been professional training, teacher-disciple relationships, and schools of epic poetry that are its derivatives in the historical-folkloric process. However, it is noted in scientific literature that the initial prohibition on teacher-disciple relationships was that the poets did not mention their teachers, and this is a typological phenomenon for the epic poetry of many peoples.

Specific characteristics, classification and typology of folklorisms, which are a unique form of artistic-aesthetic connection between folk oral poetic creativity and performance, have been given certain scientific views by scientists such as B. Sarimsakov², I. Yormatov³. "During the singing of the epic, the Bakhshis followed certain rituals, customs, rules, and took into account the social composition of the audience," says T. Mirzaev.

It is noteworthy that in almost all local districts of Uzbekistan, except for the Khorezm oasis, dostans are performed in a special muffled voice with recitative declamatory melodies accompanied by a dombira. In Khorezm, they are performed in a melodious voice accompanied by a dutar or traditional ensemble. This is especially evident in the performances of the great bakhshis of Kashkadarya and Surkhandarya, who continue to recite dostans today, and young talents loyal to their school.

Surkhandarya-Kashkadarya oasis dostans are very ancient, and at the same time have local customs and traditions that have been well preserved to this day. It is characterized by unique literary-prose, poetic, as well as musical-creative features. Among the most widespread historical, heroic, and romantic epics in the Surkhandarya and Kashkadarya oases, one can mention "Alpomish", "Avazkhan", "Rustamkhan", "Gur ugli" and others. Each epic consists of dozens of lines and melodies expressing different situations and moods. Based on a specific real situation, the performer selects and appropriately uses the musical samples available in his repertoire.

In the process of step-by-step, meaningful narration of the epic events, verbal and purely instrumental melodies play a large role. Also, song-like patterns of various contents that are regularly repeated during its performance are called "lines". Lines are performed by the epic singer to the accompaniment of the drum instrument in a thick, muffled voice, which is therefore called "internal"⁴.

As noted by folklore scholars, in the era of Uzbek epic poetry, it was mainly advisable to adhere to the following direct and permanent conditions when training performers of epics.

- Shaman-bakhshis, who considered their talent to be from their guardian spirits, were obliged to leave their profession to someone. Usually, just like shamanism, bakhshiism was passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, many prominent folk bakhshis, for example, Ergash Jumanbulbul ugli, proudly told scholars that his seven ancestors were bakhshis. Bakhshis were looking for talented young people to become their apprentices. However, the fact that folk bakhshis traditionally do not mention their teachers may be a custom arising from ancient views on the art of speech.

² Sarimsakov B. On the typology of folklorisms // Uzbek language and literature. - Tashkent, 1980. - No. 4. - B. 37-46.

³ Yormatov I. Typology of folklorism in contemporary Uzbek literature: Autoref. diss. ... candy. philol.nauk. - Tashkent, 1985.

⁴ Yunusov R. Uzbek folk music. Part 2. T., 2000, p. 53.

- Education was carried out orally and free of charge. However, the student did all the work in the teacher's family until he received the blessing to sing independently. It can be said that the teacher's words were law for the student.

- Initially, the drumming, the typical passages of the epics, and the epics were memorized.

- The teacher took his student with him wherever he went to recite the epic. This can be considered a unique, practical form of education.

- At the next stage, a separate epic was fully studied. According to scientists, since the epics "Yakka Ahmad" for the Kurgan school of epic poetry and "Ollonazar Olchinbek" for the epic traditions of South Uzbekistan were considered programmatic, it can be said that in the past, such works were mandatory for each school.

- When the student reached a certain level, the teacher allowed him to sing excerpts from the epics and epics in circles. At the next stage, the teacher and student recited one epic in turn.

- When the student fully mastered part of the epics from the teacher's repertoire, the teacher held a special ceremonial evening and blessed him in front of people.

An important aspect for our topic is that the content of the Uzbek folk epic art also found its artistic expression in teacher-student relations. The Uzbek folk epic art is a priceless art form as a worthy contribution of our people to the world's cultural and spiritual treasury, and Uzbek folk epics, which have high artistic value, serve as an important source in cultivating national pride and self-awareness, as well as feelings of patriotism.

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