THE STATE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF BAKHSHI ART IN UZBEKISTAN DURING THE YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

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Abstract: *In this article, the status and achievements of the art of giving in the years of independence are revealed based on the sources. Also, the article talks about the place of charity in the national value system, charity schools.*

Key words: *bakhshi, bakhshi art, national values, bakhshi schools, bakhshi festival, folk art*

Bakhshi art is one of the widespread and major genres of Uzbek folk art. Its emergence and development are closely associated with the spiritual and everyday life of the Uzbek people, their socio-political struggles, moral and aesthetic views, and ideals of justice and truth, freedom and equality, heroism and patriotism. Bakhshi art is a complex form of artistic expression. For an epic performance to be considered a doston, it requires a literary text, poetry, music, and a specific singing style. Therefore, the performer of an epic work—the bakhshi-poet (dostonchi, jirov, yuzboshi, sannovchi, baksi)—is simultaneously an improvisational storyteller, poet, vocalist with a distinctive voice, skilled instrumentalist, and, to a certain extent, an artist possessing acting skills. Through his art, he captivates the audience and provides them with aesthetic pleasure and emotional inspiration. A bakhshi is an artist and folk epic performer who preserves, memorizes, sings, and transmits terma, songs, and epic narratives from one generation to another. His melodious voice and the music emanating from his dombra instinctively move and inspire the human heart. A bakhshi

must be familiar with the lifestyle and culture of the people, the history of the land in which he lives, and must be able to play at least one musical instrument. He must also have mastered the art of singing. Furthermore, he should be able to make effective use of various forms of the living folk language, wordplay and rhetorical devices, as well as folk proverbs and expressions.

The ability to find melodies that captivate listeners and to perform an epic in an engaging and fascinating manner is one of the principal requirements of epic storytelling. This, in turn, requires natural talent, strong perception, as well as continuous practice carried out with diligence and perseverance. Bakhshis passionately perform epics of various themes that glorify devotion to the motherland, love, friendship, brotherhood, heroism, and other noble values. The performing tradition practiced by bakhshis is known as bakhshi art. For example, Po‘lkan the Poet knew more than seventy epic works by heart. Considering that each epic may contain from two or three thousand lines to ten, fifteen, or even twenty thousand lines of verse, as well as approximately the same amount of prose, the intellectual capacity, extraordinary memorization and retention abilities, and creative power of folk bakhshis become evident. People's bakhshis of Uzbekistan, including Bola Bakhshi Abdullaev, Shoberdi Boltaev, Abdunazar Poyonov, Boborayim Mamatmurodov, Qora Bakhshi Umirov, Abduqahhor and Abdumurot Rahimovs, Shomurod Tog‘aev, Ziyodulla Islomov, Norbek Bakhshi Abdullaev, Qalandar Bakhshi Normetov, and Qodir Bakhshi Rahimov, have made a significant contribution to the development of bakhshi art through their unique performances.

Bakhshi art has developed in the regions of Kashkadarya, Surkhandarya, Samarkand, and Khorezm, as well as in the Republic of Karakalpakstan. Today, the Bulungur, Qo‘rg‘on, Shahrisabz, Qamay, Chiroqchi, Dehqonobod, Sherobod, Boysun, Southern Tajikistan, Khorezm, and Karakalpak epic schools are known to exist. They differ from one another in their performance techniques and repertoires. In particular,

the Bulungur school of epic storytelling has long been famous for performing heroic epics. The Qo‘rg‘on school, associated primarily with Ergash Jumanbulbul o‘g‘li and Po‘lkan the Poet, is known mainly for lyrical and romantic narratives. Representatives of the Kashkadarya, Surkhandarya, and Samarkand schools of bakhshi art perform terma and songs in a muffled, or closed, vocal style accompanied by the dombra, while descriptions within the epic narrative are performed in an open vocal style. The Kashkadarya school of bakhshi art is particularly associated with the renowned epic performer Qodir Bakhshi Rahimov. More than seventy epics have been preserved in his repertoire. Today, the traditions of Qodir Bakhshi are continued by his sons Abduqahhor, Abdumumin, and Baxrom. The bakhshi tradition of Surkhandarya is associated with the Sherobod-Boysun school, whose founder was Sherna Bakhshi. His traditions are currently continued by his disciples, including Qora Bakhshi, Chori Bakhshi, Shoberdi Boltaev, Abdunazar Poyonov, Boborayim Mamatmurodov, and others. In the performances of representatives of the Khorezm school of epic storytelling, music plays the leading role. Representatives of the Khorezm bakhshi school perform songs and melodies in an internal vocal style accompanied by an instrumental ensemble consisting of dutor, bulaman, and ghijjak in the past, and today tor, qo‘shnay or bulaman, and doira. They use these performances to interpret and narrate epic works. The Khorezm epic tradition is also distinctive in terms of its repertoire. Collective performance plays a leading role in the interpretation of epic works. This school, which is divided into two directions—“Shirvoniy” (Khiva) and “Ironiy” (Mang‘it)—has ancient roots and possesses its own repertoire, instrumental ensembles (Shirvoniy: tor, qo‘shnay, doira; Ironiy: dutor and three-stringed ghijjak), distinctive styles and dialects, as well as vivid and expressive songs, melodies, and musical forms ranging from 15 to 36 in number. Bola Bakhshi (Kurbonnazar) Abdullaev and his sons—Norbek, Muhammad, and Yetmishboy—are prominent representatives of the Shirvoniy school of bakhshi art. Khudoybergan Utegenov is a

representative of the Ironiy school. In Khorezm, epics and terma-songs from epic traditions were also performed by women, who were known as khalfa-dostonchi. The epic "Tahip and Zuhra," for example, became particularly popular among female performers. These epics were performed with the accompaniment of a hand-held instrument (Russian diatonic accordion) and doira.

The Karakalpak school of bakhshi art consists of two main directions: baksi (the internal vocal style accompanied by dutor and ghijjak) and jirov (the muffled vocal style accompanied by the qobiz). Representatives of these traditions include Qayratdin Utemurotov, O'ralboy O'tambetov, Tengelboy Kalliyev, Ziyoda Sharipova, Gulbahor Rametova, Gulnur Hamitova, and Zamira Ibrohimova in the baksi tradition; and Jumaboy Jirov, Bakbergen Sыgыmbetov, Jonibek Piyazov, Baxtiyor Yesemuratov, and others in the jirov tradition. The role of epics and, in general, bakhshi art in educating the younger generation in the spirit of loyalty to national values is invaluable. These works call people toward goodness and encourage them to be patriotic, just, courageous, and brave. Beginning in the 1970s, regular competitions of bakhshi-poets have been held in Uzbekistan. Since 1999, international competitions of bakhshi-poets and oqins have been organized, while competitions for young bakhshis have been held in Kitob, Kashkadarya. Bakhshi art has also been incorporated into the educational process of the national education system.

In 2018, by the decision of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, International Bakhshi Art Festivals were held at a high level in the cities of Nukus and Termez. These festivals became one of the major cultural events in the life of Uzbekistan. The inclusion of Bakhshi Art in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity was an important event for the international community. At the same time, this decision means that Uzbekistan and UNESCO should continue to work together to preserve and further develop bakhshi art. From now on, the concept of "Bakhshi Art" will be promoted throughout the world through UNESCO. This cultural

tradition will not disappear; on the contrary, it will continue to develop. It should be emphasized that international organizations need to provide scientific and methodological assistance in transmitting this cultural heritage to future generations and in promoting the development of bakhshi art, presenting it among the masterpieces of world culture. Naturally, this process will be implemented gradually and step by step. The continuous attention and support of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev play an important role in ensuring its consistent implementation. The fact that the head of state personally sent congratulations on UNESCO's decision concerning Bakhshi Art is an unprecedented example of state support for this cultural heritage. Thus, the number of elements of Uzbekistan's intangible cultural heritage included in UNESCO's lists has reached ten. Alongside the "Cultural Space of Boysun District," the classical music of "Shashmaqom," "Katta Ashula," the "Art of Askiya," "Navruz," "Palov Culture and Tradition," the Margilan Crafts Development Center (adras and atlas), the Khorezm dance "Lazgi," and the "Art of Miniature," "Bakhshi Art" has also been included. There are still many elements of Uzbekistan's cultural heritage that deserve inclusion in the World Heritage List. For example, the national elements of the "Uzbek Ceramics School," as well as multinational nominations prepared in cooperation with other countries, such as "Traditional Styles of Craftsmanship," "Playing the Rubab," "Traditional Embroidery Styles in Central Asia," and "The Tradition of Telling the Stories of Khoja Nasriddin," are to be submitted for consideration by UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. In conclusion, during the years of independence, Bakhshi art in Uzbekistan, like other national values, has restored its centuries-old traditions. Measures have been implemented to develop this art form, and international Bakhshi Art Festivals have been organized.

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