

## LATEST DEVELOPMENT OF THE ART OF BAKHSHI IN UZBEKISTAN



### Creative and Performing Arts

**Keywords:** bakhshi, epos, folklore, folk, poetry, Khorezm, Uzbek, song, kobiz, dutar.

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### Abstract

This article discusses the latest developments in the art of *bakhshi* (*bakhshi is a folk singer, performer of folklore among the Turkic peoples of Central Asia, usually performs at holidays*). It is also said that the parishioners in Khorezm were a form of shamanism, and that shamanism was one of the earliest stages in the formation of the art of bakhshi. In particular, the article emphasizes that in the research of A.N.Samoylovich Khorezmbakhsh is sang book epics, played dutar, bulamon, and noted that the XIX and early XX centuries were the most prosperous period of Khorezmbaxshi art. In Khorezm, the words shaman, ozon, bakhshi were used, and now the term bakhshi is widely used. The deification of the personality of the benefactor is due to the fact that they have a high memory and possess a word, a word. There is an opinion that the singing of epics to the accompaniment of drums by these professionals is associated with the X-XI centuries. This phenomenon may also be much older. The paintings in the “Harper’s Woman’s Room” in the ancient Khorezm fortresses may be the basis for this. The first historical figure in Khorezm (1115-1191) was Oshiq Aydin (Oshugiddin Umar Suhravardi), who is still the patron saint of baxshis. His personality is also deified. According to historical sources, Ashiq Aydin was a master of words and phrases and also a statesman. A pamphlet on music is also finished. Considering that he lived during the reign of Khorezmsahs, it is possible to understand that in those times there was a developed period of the art of baxshi. After the love affair, Aydin is the father of the ozone, shaman, and bakhshi Korkut, who became famous in the Turkic world. It is said that the XIX and early XX centuries were the most prosperous period of Khorezmbaxshi art.

Epic is the most complex genre in folk art. Therefore, only a professional performer can sing it. Consequently, epics are alive with its performer. It is the responsibility of the *bakhshi* (*folk singer, performer of folklore among the Turkic peoples of Central Asia, usually performs at holidays*) to deliver them to the people. There are very few written sources about the singing of the epic, the performance of the *bakhshis*. Scientist Tura Mirzaev notes that although the roots of Uzbek epic poetry go back to ancient times, its qualitative changes led to the establishment of a new Uzbek epic in the XIX-XX centuries. Its creators are Yuldash Bulbul, Jumanbulbul, Ergash, Fazil, Pulkan, and Islam [5, pp.41-43]. The roots of Khorezmian *bakhshi* art are also very ancient. Some studies note that this tradition originated in the 6th-5th centuries BC [4, p.8]. During this period, songs and poems dedicated to the gods and heroes of the Awesto’s Yasht were sung. By the X-XI centuries in the palace of the Khorezm kings there were many musicians, musicians and singers [9, p.4]. “In the administrative and prosperous times of the ancient city of Urgench, the capital of Khorezm, before Chenghis Khan’s war, most of the people who lived in this city considered music as a profession and a profession. Behind this, they may have provided for their families. Even in the city of Old Urgench alone, the number of people who used to sell *dutarsozina* donkeys (harraks) with these trades has reached one thousand” [6, p.7].

While these lines sound like a narrative, there is a great truth behind it. Where art flourishes, literature, including epics, flourishes. Of course, Khorezmian art was depressed after Chingiz's invasion. By the time of Muhammad Rahimkhan I, the tradition of gathering *maqoms* (national song) in the palace continued. Masters such as Niyazjon Khoja, Mahdumjon Qazi, Muhammadjon Sandiqchi grew up in the palace [6, pp.7-8]. From that time on, the tradition of keeping *bakhshi* in the khan's palace continued again. In 1819 a Russian officer N.N.Muravev visited Khiva. They get acquainted with the performance of the *bakhshis* in the khan's palace. Although he did not give specific information about the identity of the *bakhshis*, he did make some comments about their performance. In particular, he writes about *bakhshis*: "Singers try to show the dexterity, fearlessness, zeal and courage of the generations before them with their voices and body movements ... their songs sometimes last all night, they sing loudly and hoarsely [7, pp. 7-8].

According to N.N.Muravev, the *bakhshis* he listened to were ignorant. Because at that time the khanate was ruled by Uzbeks belonging to the Kurgiratdynasty, and they selected *jirov-bakhshis* from the Uzbek category and brought them to the palace. They continued to combine the art of *jirov* and *bakhshi* together in those times, performing epic songs on both the *kobiz* (musical instrument) and the *dutar*. N.Muravyov must have listened to the *zhyrov's* performance, saying that the *bakhshis* sang "loudly and hoarsely." N.N.Muravyov visited the khan's palace and listened to *maqom* players and various singers. For this reason, he wrote in his work that the Khiva people love and appreciate music, that singers pay special attention to the lyrics and select them from the works of the most talented poets [7, p.131]. The *bakhshis*, who sang the epic, made a good impression on him. That's why he gave some information about the performers' musical instruments: "Their musical instrument consists of a two-stringed balalaika and looks like a crescent-shaped box. It is beaten with a nail or a stick. Another instrument is a four-stringed instrument, which makes an extremely unpleasant sound and the arrow from below is pushed to the ground and played like a violin." According to the description of the Russian missionary, the first musical instrument is the *tanbur*, and the second is the *kobiz*. So, at that time in the khan's palace there were not one but several *bakhshis* who sang epics with *kobyz*. The activity of epic poetry in the time of Muhammad Rahimkhan I can be seen in another of N.N.Muravyov's writings. On his way to Khiva, he encountered the "Shohsanam Fortress" in the west of the country and recorded the legend of the place from the locals. The details he wrote correspond to the plot of the epic "OshiqGharibva Shohsanam". It depicts events such as Gharib's seven years of wandering, his mother's blindness, Shohsanam's wedding, and his lover's visit, which are somewhat different from the current plot. Of course, with the passage of time, with the change of social order, the events of the saga may also change. Most importantly, where there is a saga, there is a *bakhshi*. So, at that time, this epic was performed by talented poets.

These memoirs of N.Muravyov prove once again that the epic "Oshiq Gharibva Shohsanam" was popular in Khorezm. Some notes about Khorezm *bakhshis* can be seen in the works of H.Vamberi. However, the orientalist speaks about them superficially, without giving any information about any specific *bakhshi*. For example, he writes: "... in this chrestomathy there are materials that are mainly told by *bakhshis*, familiar to all the northern Turkic peoples, created by

them or translated, loved by them, reflecting their language, thoughts and ideas ... They are the Uzbek people and their khanates. It is common among neighboring Kyrgyz and is sung everywhere accompanied by *dutar* or *kobiz* [10, p.43]. H.Vamberi's comments in this preface to his book of chrestomathy are extremely valuable to the scientific community, but some of the scholar's views have to be corrected. For example, in this preface, the scholar referred to the bakhshis and used the phrase "materials recited by the bakhshis, created or translated by them ...", which shows that he did not have a complete picture of the Uzbek bakhshis. Because, first of all, bakhshis perform folk songs and epics. The works in their repertoire are mostly passed from teacher to student. Even when they take the epic from the repertoire of the poets of the fraternal peoples, they master it not through "translation", as H.Vamberi said, but through creative processing. He also disagrees with the idea that epics spread among Uzbeks are sung in the same way among neighboring Kyrgyz and other peoples. This is because the performance of a *dutar* and the performance of a *kobuz* are very different. So, although H.Vamberi speaks about the performers of Khorezm epics, he could not give a full scientific description of this tradition. However, his collection of manuscripts with Mulla Ishaq from Kungrad, his information about the "Books of Bakhshi", and his translation of many epics to Western readers are of great scientific and practical importance. By the time Herman Vamberi arrived in Khiva, the khanate was in the midst of a crisis, and the development of cultural and educational work had slowed down. During the reign of Muhammad Rahimkhan I, art and literature, which were developing, reached the stage of further development during the reign of Muhammad Aminkhan. The art of maqom flourished. Master Khudoibergan is a shoemaker, from whom Pahlavonniyaz Mirzoboshi Komillar fully masters the Shashmaqomnigma. The prestige of these maqom masters spread so much that even Kokand khan Muhammad Umarchan invited Khudoibergan, a shoemaker from Khiva, to his palace to teach maqom to the musicians of the palace. The next ruler, Madalikhan, on the advice of Khudoibergan, took his students Salihbek and Mominbek to Kokand, and these artists settled there [11, p.43]. Therefore, it is natural that the rise of cultural life in the time of Muhammad Aminkhan had a positive effect on the art of *bakhshi*. However, after the tragic death of Muhammad Aminkhan, the cultural and enlightenment life in the khanate began to decline.

Abdullah Khan and Kutlimurod Khan, who succeeded to the throne of the next Khiva khanate, both tragically died after sitting on the throne for 6 months. During the reign of Sayyid Muhammad Khan, who ascended the throne in 1855, cultural life began to take shape again. The khan himself had a passion for music and was able to masterfully play words such as *dutar* and *gijjak*. That's why he started to gather artists and bakhshis in the palace again. However, it was difficult for literature and art to continue to flourish. During this period, storytelling on the basis of reading developed to a certain extent. At the same time the oasis was visited by Herman Vamberi. He was well received by Sayyid Muhammad Khan and allowed to walk freely in the territory of the khanate. H. Vamberi walks in the territory of the khanate with the above-mentioned Mullah Ishaq and begins to collect epics. They go to Kungrad via the Amudarya. When they approached Kungrad, they talked to intellectuals and wrote a prose narration of the epic "Oshiq Gharibva Shohsanam". The following poetic passages from Mullah Ishaq prove that they met with *bakhshis* and narrators and collected great materials.

*Nasib tortib bizlar bu ela keldik,  
 Elu xalqning izzat-hurmatin ko'rdik,  
 Qissa, doston yig'nab uyga jo'nadik,  
 Bizlarni siyladi Mo'ytan elinda.  
 Safarda yo'ldoshim bul Rashid hoji,  
 Aning Qo'ng'irotda bitdi muhtoji,  
 Paytonga yuk bo'ldi kitoblar ,vaji,  
 Qissa, doston sovg'a qilganlar xo'sh endi [8, p.58].*

If we look at the words "short stories" in these quartets, we can see that there are a lot of short stories written at that time. The samples of folklore included in H.Vamberi's "Chagatay language textbook" are especially valuable. For the first time, Khorezm epics such as "Yusuf Ahmad", "Oysanam-Shohsanam", "Hurliqo-Hamro", "Oshiq Aydin", "Khirmondali" were included in his "Chrestomathy" section. The "Book of Bakhshi" included in this work can give us some information about the epic performers of that period. H.Vamberi writes: "It is a collection of poems, a small booklet to be carried by the disciples. The content of the poems in this collection varies depending on the audience, the taste of the people, the level. When necessary, the bakhshis make changes to it. The copy in my hand consists of the most popular, intelligible poems. I listened to them a lot among Uzbeks and Turkmen. However, although these poems are stylistically simple, most people do not know them. They are therefore unfamiliar to the peoples of West Asia in terms of being sung or recited. Judging by the tone of the performance, they are probably derived from Iranian art. However, they have nothing to do with the songs currently sung in Iran" [2, pp.33-34]. This description of H. Vamberi's "Book of Bakhshi" is noteworthy in all respects. This is because the Khorezmbakhshis later had special manuscripts of epics and songs. By the time of Muhammad Rahimkhan-Feruz, an order was given to perform the texts of the epic without changing it. One day, Feruzkhan Suyav ordered the bakhshi to sing the epic "Gorogly" and he sat down to look at the book version of the epic. Suyav Bakhshi passed the "exam" without making a single mistake [1, p.132].

H.Vamberi's information about the execution in the form of "declamation" in the "Book of Bakhshi" and the hypothesis that this method passed to Khorezm through Iran are also interesting. Here H.Vamberi meant the poems recited by the performers in a recitative tone. The Hungarian scholar must have listened to the "declamation" performance through narrators. Because in earlier times, poetic works were performed in full in the tone of a song with recitation. One of the main reasons for this is that "the vocal music of the primitive period consisted of rhythm and recitative." The melody appeared much later [3, p.180]. It is known that in the art of *bakhshi*, tradition has been preserved. For this reason, reading did not lose its power until the early twentieth century. The recitation is still going on in the performance of the khalfas. In short, Vamberi's book "Bakhshi" is a special tradition unique to Khorezmbakhshi, khalfa and storytellers. H.Vamberi included a number of poems in the Book of Bakhshi in the Chrestomathy. It contains a 5-verse poem from the epic "Sanobar". These quatrains are only slightly modest compared to the alternative to the manuscript version of the epic that has come down to us. Because the texts of the

epic that came through the written copies have a stable preservation feature. It can only be observed that the secretary or calligraphers who copied them made some changes to the text. The book “Bakhshi” contains fragments from “Oysanam-Shohsanam”, “OshiqAydin”, “Huriliqo-Hamro”, “TemimSahoba”, “Korogli”, “Hirmondali”, “Zarkum Shah”, “Yusuf Ahmad” and a number of other epics.

Although there is no information about the identity of the bakhshis in the “Book of Bakhshi”, the fact that different versions of the epics are mentioned gives a clear idea of the repertoire of the performers of that period. A year after Herman Vamberi left Khiva, Sayyid Muhammad Khan died and his son Muhammad Rahimkhan Feruz ascended the throne of the Khiva Khanate. During the Feruz period, the development of literature and art in the Khiva khanate reached a new level. It is known that the musical part of Khorezm epics consists of separate independent melodies. According to the babysitter, they composed 72 tunes. Some of them were created by Eshvoy Bakhshi: Eshvoy I, Eshvoy II, Turkmen Eshvoy, Urgench, Kurdish Eshvoy, Fergana Eshvoy and others. There is a plain called “Eshvoy desert” in Shovot district. It is said that the bakhshi sang while crossing the desert. If the young bakhshis spend the night in that desert, will the voice of the master bakhshi be heard in his dream? It was believed that this event was a blessing from Eshvai Bakhshi. There is information that Eshvoy Bakhshi memorized 16 epics from the “Gorogly” series. He also knew many of the epics from the Oshiq series. One of the important tasks of our folklore is to study the work and life of Eshvoy Bakhshi, to convey it to our people.

We know that the development of language and thinking has paved the way for the formation and further development of human spirituality. The emergence of primitive religions was the first point of spirituality and enlightenment, and prayer began with singing and ceremonies. They were performed by knowledgeable, talented priests. Various mythologies were formed on the basis of religious imagination, and myths and legends began to emerge. The Avesta, as we know it, was formed and sometimes performed by expert priests. They conveyed good ideas to the public in a persuasive way. Priests are the first appearances of shamans. Priests and shamans have long been thought of as divine beings. They are often endowed with the dream of intelligence, talent. The parishioners scattered in Khorezm are also a form of shamans. Shamanism is one of the first stages in the formation of the art of bakhshi. Initially, the professions of medicine and magic were also synthesized in the bakhshis, who were masters of words and phrases. Even the son of Ergash Jumanbulbul acted as a “twin”. In the time of Alisher Navoi, the term bakhshi was also used in the sense of secretary, mirzo. The use of this term in different regions of the Republic as “poet”, “jirov”, “akin”, “sannovchi”, “axun”, “soqi”, “sozchi” is also explained by its syncretic meaning. There are various opinions on the origin of the term Bakhshi, and W.W.Barthold states that it is derived from the Sanskrit word “bhikshu”. A.N.Samoilovich also supports this idea and confirms the existence of the meaning of “teacher” on the basis of this word. In Khorezm, the words shaman, *ozon*, *baxshi* have been used, and now the term *bakhshi* is widely used. The deification of the personality of the benefactor is due to the fact that they have a high memory and possess a word, a word.

There is an opinion that the singing of epics to the accompaniment of drums by these professionals is associated with the X-XI centuries. In our opinion, this phenomenon may be much older. The paintings in the "Room of the harpist" in the ancient Khorezm fortresses may be the basis for this. The first bakhshi in Khorezm was the historical figure (1115-1191) Oshiq Aydin (Oshugiddin Umar Suhravardi), who is still the patron saint of bakhshis. His personality is also deified. According to historical sources, Oshiq Aydin was a master of words and phrases and also a statesman. A pamphlet on music is also finished. Considering that he lived during the reign of Khorezmshahs, it is possible to understand that in those times there was a period of development of the art of baxshi. Ashiq Aydin is the father of the ozone, shaman and bakhshi Korkut, who became famous in the Turkic world after Pir. In the "History of Dost Sultan" written in Central Asia, Korkut is mentioned as the ancestor of the priests. Abulgazi Bahodirkhan calls him a wise minister, and in Rashididdin's works he is described as a bakhshi, ozone. In "Kitabidadam Korkut" he appears as a wise elder. There are various myths and legends about this person. In them, Korkut is seen as a shaman, ozone, a statesman, a minister, a sage. His image of a benefactor always looks bright. But there is no reason to look for its historical prototype. During the creation of the "Book of Korkutota", as a result of the invasion of Chingiz, the art of bakhshi in Khorezm was in decline. According to some sources, the book was created in Central Asia and later moved to the Caucasus. In Khorezm, the art of baxshi entered the stage of development again in the XIX century. The khan continued the tradition of keeping maqoms, mashhaks and bakhshis in the palace. N. Muravev, who came to Khiva in 1919, wrote that he listened to the bakhshis in the khan's palace. According to his writings, it seems that there were *jiwirs* in the khan's residence. Because, according to the Russian officer, the bakhshi played the ram. In his correspondence, he noted particularly important information about the epic "Oshiq Gharibva Shohsanam". During the time of Muhammad Aminkhan, art entered a stage of further development. During the reign of Sayyid Muhammad Khan, who ascended the throne in 1855, interest in art increased, and the khan himself was a skilled sculptor. Herman Vamberi, who came to Khiva at that time, gave valuable information about the epics of this period in his book "Chigatoy language textbook". Mulla Ishaq from Kungrad wrote to him that he had collected a short story "Bir Payton". The Mullah himself was also a poet-narrator-narrator. During the reign of Muhammad Rahimkhan-Feruz, the art of baxshi flourished. In his palace there were peculiar bakhshis. One of them is Rizobakhshi (bejilov). During his reign Suyavbaxshi, Ernafasbaxshi, Avaz bola, Nurullatandir, Jumanazarbaxshi worked. The famous Kurbannazar Abdullaev-Bola Bakhshi is also a product of that period. In the researches of AN Samoilovich, who came to Khiva in 1908, he tells that Khorezmbakhshis sang book epics, played *dutar* and *bulamon* (*musical instrument*). Therefore, the XIX and early XX centuries are the most prosperous period of Khorezmbaxshi art.

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