



## THE ROLE OF KHOREZM HALFA ART IN UZBEK FOLK PERFORMANCE

Mrs. Umida Kurbanova

Senior Lecturer at the Chair of “Folk arts and traditional performance”, Uzbekistan State Institute of Arts and Culture (Tashkent, Uzbekistan).

### Summary

Folklore reflects the history, life, and traditions of the people. With just one folk song, we understand the feelings of our grandparents at that time, understand their troubles. The art of Uzbek singing covers many genres. This article provides valuable information about the art of Xalfa, one of the musical genres of the Khorezm oasis, and its peculiarities.

**Keywords:** Xalfa, folklore, population, execution, singing.

### Introduction

Our nation has a rich history covering almost all spheres of social life. Today the international community knows is very much aware and appreciates well the contribution made by our great ancestors to the world scientific progress and cultural development. Uzbek folk arts are like a hot spring. Throughout the centuries the precious thoughts sourced from its pristine spring have provided our nation with a large spiritual and moral support. In this regard, the Republican scientific-methodological Center for folk arts under the Ministry of Culture and Sports of Uzbekistan is performing an extremely important work in order to further develop and improve traditional folk arts, wider adaptation of neglected national values, expand world outlook of the youth through making younger generation more familiar with ancestor's spiritual heritage. Every region and valley has its own specific ways of singing, custom, national costumes, national dances, handcraftsmanship, history and lifestyle. It is well-known how Uzbeks people love music, song, ashula (long song), lapar (dialogue-song), qo'shiq (household song with a small diapason melody) and dancing. Folk arts glorify people's lifestyle, morals and manners, traditions, some aspects of religious belief, dreams, love to the motherland, fulfilling promise, liberty and courage during the struggle for freedom. Traditional folk songs, music and popular shows have always a large value in satisfying spiritual needs of the people. Since long Khorezm region is famous for its songs and vocal. Khorezm songs consist of a variety of genres. There are all kind of songs related to rituals, traditions and customs that are practiced from the birth till the last days of man. Through the songs





people express its views easier, clearer, more attractive and resonant, original, sincere, shorter and laconically, elegant and impressive. So the halfaart is considered as one of such genres. Halfaperformers's multifarious melodies and songs are regarded as the brightest pages of ancient Uzbek music culture. Khorezmhalfa art occupies an incomparable place in Uzbek folk performance. The word "halfa" had different connotations depending on different historical periods. For instance, according to Zoroastrianism, person who conducted the religious ceremony and traditions are called in ancient Pahlavi language as "qarpa", in Sanskrit and Khorezm languages as "qalpa". In fact, its semantic meaning was a "singer". The word "qalpa" with a semantic meaning of "singer" was widespread in forms of "halpa" and "halfa" in dialect of Turkic people living in Khorezm valley.

Prior to the coming of Islam in Central Asia, the halfaart was intertwined with the promotion of different religious ceremonies and traditions. Before the Islamic period, halfaperformers, known as "Bibihalfa", were in charge with reading religious books as they were the most active participants in everyday family rituals. In reality, there is a specific linkage between the semantic meaning and the activity of abovementioned halfa performers. It is simply because once women who read the "Avesta" book and promoted its ideals in women's circles were also called as "qalpa" or "halfa". However, these educated women were not only confined to promoting religious books. They had also read the writings of our great and famous poets Alisher Navoiy and Mukhammad Fuzuliy as well as popular epics and with their musical compositions they had entertained women during hen parties. The halfa art is a kind of magic and attractive art. The halfa art was born as a result of a long creative period, passing from mouth to mouth, transmitted from generation to generation, from master to student. In course of time the new performers, singers, bakhshi performers and halfa performers with their brilliant talents have appeared. These gifted persons had also performed musical composition that had been transmitted from generation to generation, from master to student while making their own contribution to this process and demonstrating their own skills.

According to some sources, the word "halfa" means "manager", "master", "educated" and it was mainly used in regard to women's party presenters. The halfa performer's creative work can be divided into three groups. 1). Creative and poet halfa performers; 2). Single halfa performers, known as book performers; 3). Melody halfa performers. Creative and poet halfa performers include such famous women as Khonimsuvchi Said Akhmadqizi, Bibijon Qosimqizi, Onabibi Sobirova, Onabibi Otajonova, Nazira Sobirova, Rohatoy Khojaniyozova, Rano Alloberganovawho knew folk epicsby heart, created beautiful poetry and performed their own musical compositions.





Single halfa performers, known as book performers, are those who knew books by heart or performed songs and compositions without using any kind of instruments. They knew the books by heart or read the manuscript with a pleasant voice. They are also beautifully singing “Yor-Yor” (wedding song), “Kelin salom” (Bride greeting ceremony) and other wedding songs. From this point of view, the halfa performers served as women who spread religious ideas. The halfa performers like Roziya Matniyozqizi, Poshsha Saidmamatqizi, Parda halfa, Oyisha halfa, Niyozjon Musaeva, Guljonposhsha Yusupova, Anorjon Razzoqova, Salima halfa and others enjoyed a great reputation among population. They took part not only in wedding ceremonies, but also funeral ones. During such ceremonies they performed passages from the epics of “Ibrohim Adham”, “Bobo Ravshan” and others.

Melody halfa performers are also serving in wedding ceremonies and festive events. Generally, they perform the works of other authors. Representatives of this group sang the folk epics, their previous passages, wedding songs, lapar (dialogue-song) and yalla songs. The ensemble was formed by three persons: halfa performer plays the accordion and sings, doira (frame drum, percussion instrument) player accompanies and dancer dances along with singing lapar and yalla songs. Among them are the following halfa performers: Sorahon Ollaberganova, Robiya Otajonova, Sultonposhsha Rahimova, Ogiljon Masharipova, Poshshajon Matkarimova, Zumrad Madrahimova and others. Today representatives of this area make up the majority.

At the end of XIX century and the beginning of XX century the art community of Khorezm has discovered the arrival of “accordion”. Local population in Khorezm calls the accordion as “soz” (instrument). After this instrument came to Khorezm music school, halfa performers have well mastered this instrument and started to use it their artistic performance. For instance, Bibijon Qosim Devon qizi, Honim halfa, Onajon Sobirova (lame Anash), Onabibi Otajonova (Ojiza), Yoqut halfa, Nazira halfa Sobirova, Ogiljon halfa, Sora halfa, Rohat halfa Hojaniyozova and others halfa performers played accordion instrument for their own yalla and lapar songs. So the implementation of accordion has allowed developing the Khorezm halfa performance. The researcher I. Jalolov gave the following assessment of halfa performer’s activity: “halfa performers are the delight of events, the queens of hen parties and women gatherings. They participate in wedding celebrations and funeral days, festive events, parties and holidays as they bring joys and happiness. Their songs, tender dances, lovely music, yalla and lapar are inspiring”.

Halfa performers were not only confined to their own songs and melodies. Their repertoire included such epics as “Oshiq Garib and Shohsanam”, “Oshiq Oydin”, “Oshiq Alband”, “Aslhon”, “Hirliqo and Hamro”, “Tohir and Zuhra”, “Gurogli”,





“Gulqand”, “Sayod and Hamro”, “Hirmondali”, “Gulruhpari”, “Bozirgon” and others. At the same time, they performed the poems of Mahtumquli, Ogahiy, Navoiy, Fuzuliy and specific art works of other authors devoted to particular rituals. It should be noted that halfa performers touched on other more critical poems and topics. Since the late XIX century to the present days there were the following halfa performers who enjoyed a great reputation among population: Honim halfa (1858-1926), Shukurjon halfa (1859-1932), Bibijon halfa Qosimova (1876-1920), Onajon Sobirova (1885-1956), Onabibi Otajonova (Ojiza, 1889-1951), Sharifa halfa Otasheva (1900-1972), Guljon alfa Yusupova (1906-1990), Pardagul halfa (1907-1988), Sorahon Ollaberganova (1911-1973), Oyisha halfa Erkayeva (1914-1985), Nazira halfa Sobirova (1922-2011), Nazira Boyjonova (1931-2011), Rohatoy Hojaniyozova (1955-2010) and others. The valuable contributions made by these fine artists helped to develop Khorezm halfa art and safeguard this art to our present days. Most of these women were book halfas as they engaged enlightenment among the population.

The original appearance of halfa performance was determined by the interpretation of specific love epics. In addition, it includes lapar, yalla, song and combined genres. The combination of song, melody, music and poem creates a musical text with a relatively small diapason and they become an excellent art work by halfa performers. For example, these works include “Targuncha”, “Khiva dutori”, “Goring tuynitomosini”, “Tuninay”, “Hurshidi jahon galdi”, “Arka qizlar”, “Par devol”, “Ulguncha sizni deyman”, “Qaydadir bilmam dildorim”. These art works have been improved over the centuries, passed from mouth to mouth and safeguarded to present days. Today “halfa school”, founded by previous masters and generations, still continues to function in Khorezm. Currently this art direction has the following halfa performers: Rano halfa Allaberganova, Zumrad halfa Boltaeva, Poshshajon Ibragimova, Shirin halfa Jumaniyozova, Feruza Fayzullaeva, Nodira Bogibekova, Hurshida Eshniyozova, Manzura Orazboeva and others. These women make halfa art more popular at international level through developing it in Uzbekistan and participating in various cultural events hold abroad. As we know, Uzbek folk performance plays a significant role in educating young generation in the spirit of national values, custom and traditions.

### **Selected Literature**

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