

**THE HISTORY AND CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENT OF THE KHOREZM
DANCE ART SCHOOL: A STUDY BASED ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE LAZGI
ENSEMBLE**

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Annotation. This article examines the historical formation and modern development of the Khorezm dance art school using the Example of the Lazgi Ensemble. The study analyzes the unique features performances style, and cultural Lazgi dance. The article is based on scientific sources and artistic progress. Practical observations. Lazgi dance Uzbek national art.

Key words. Khorezm dance, Lazgi dance, art national culture, Uzbek art choreography, cultural heritage, traditional dance, artistic development, performance style

Introduction

The Khorezm dance art school is one of the most ancient and unique traditions of Uzbek national choreography. It has developed over many centuries in the Khorezm oasis, a historically rich region located in the lower reaches of the Amu Darya River. This school represents not only a form of artistic expression but also an important reflection of the cultural identity, worldview, and spiritual life of the Khorezm people.

Among the various dance traditions of this region, the most significant and widely recognized is the "Lazgi" dance, which has become a symbol of Uzbek national culture. In modern times, the Lazgi Ensemble plays a central role in preserving, developing, and popularizing this dance tradition both in Uzbekistan and internationally.

This paper analyzes the history and contemporary development of the Khorezm dance art school, focusing on the Lazgi Ensemble as a key example of continuity between traditional and modern performance practices.

Historical Origins of Khorezm Dance Culture

The origins of Khorezm dance culture date back to ancient civilizations that existed in the Amu Darya basin. Archaeological findings and historical sources indicate that dance was an essential part of early social and ritual life in this region. People used dance movements in religious ceremonies, agricultural rituals, and seasonal celebrations.

In ancient times, dance was closely connected with nature worship and spiritual beliefs. It was believed that rhythmic movements could bring harmony between humans and natural forces. As a result, dance became an important means of communication, expression, and cultural identity.

Over centuries, Khorezm developed its own distinctive dance style, characterized by energetic movements, emotional intensity, and symbolic gestures. Despite influences from



neighboring cultures, Khorezm dance preserved its originality and evolved into a unique artistic system.

Formation of the Khorezm Dance Art School

The formation of the Khorezm dance art school as a structured cultural system began during the medieval period. In this time, urban cultural centers such as Khiva played a major role in the development of music, poetry, and dance traditions.

Dance performances became an important part of public life, especially during festivals, weddings, and official ceremonies. Professional performers began to appear, and dance gradually transformed from folk practice into a more organized artistic form.

A key feature of the Khorezm dance school is the master-apprentice tradition. Skills, movements, and stylistic principles were transmitted orally and practically from experienced dancers to younger generations. This ensured the preservation of authenticity across centuries.

The dance style developed specific technical characteristics, including fast footwork, sharp hand movements, expressive shoulder gestures, and emotionally rich facial expressions.

The Emergence and Development of Lazgi

The most important element of the Khorezm dance tradition is Lazgi. It is considered one of the oldest and most expressive dance forms in Central Asia. Lazgi reflects deep emotional energy, joy of life, and spiritual strength.

The dance is characterized by a gradual increase in tempo, beginning with slow and controlled movements and developing into fast, powerful, and dynamic expressions. This structure symbolizes the rising energy of human emotions.

Lazgi movements include coordinated actions of the hands, shoulders, head, and torso, synchronized with traditional musical instruments such as drums and string instruments. The rhythm plays a crucial role in shaping the emotional impact of the performance.

Lazgi is not just a dance but also a philosophical expression of life force, human passion, and cultural memory. It represents the connection between individual feelings and collective identity.

The Lazgi Ensemble and Its Cultural Role

The Lazgi Ensemble is one of the most important cultural institutions responsible for preserving and promoting Khorezm dance traditions. It serves as a professional artistic group that performs traditional dances on stage while maintaining their authentic spirit.

The ensemble was created to collect, preserve, and develop Khorezm dance heritage. It brings together professional dancers, choreographers, and musicians who specialize in traditional performance styles.

One of the main goals of the Lazgi Ensemble is to adapt traditional dance for stage performance without losing its original identity. This includes the development of choreography, costumes, musical arrangements, and scenographic elements.



The ensemble plays a key role in cultural education by training young dancers and introducing them to the technical and artistic principles of Khorezm dance.

Khorezm Dance in the Soviet Period and Institutional Development

During the Soviet period, Khorezm dance underwent significant transformation. The government supported the development of professional arts, including folk dance traditions. As a result, many dance ensembles and cultural institutions were established.

The Lazgi tradition was adapted for theatrical performance, and choreography became more structured and formalized. Stage versions of traditional dances were created for cultural festivals and official events.

Despite modernization, the essential features of Khorezm dance were preserved. Folk elements remained strong, especially in rural areas, where traditional forms continued to exist alongside professional performances.

The Soviet period also contributed to the development of dance education systems, allowing Khorezm dance to be studied academically.

Modern Development of the Lazgi Ensemble

In the modern era, the Lazgi Ensemble continues to play a central role in the development of Khorezm dance art. It actively participates in national and international cultural events, festivals, and competitions.

Modern choreography integrates traditional movements with contemporary artistic techniques. This includes professional lighting, stage design, and musical innovation, while preserving the original emotional and stylistic essence of Lazgi.

The ensemble has contributed significantly to the global recognition of Uzbek dance culture. Lazgi performances have been presented in many countries, helping to promote cultural exchange and international understanding.

In 2019, Lazgi was included in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, which greatly increased global awareness of Khorezm dance traditions.

Educational and Cultural Significance

The Lazgi Ensemble also plays an important educational role. It serves as a training center for young dancers who wish to specialize in Khorezm dance traditions.

Through workshops, performances, and mentorship programs, experienced dancers pass their knowledge to the next generation. This ensures the continuity of traditional skills and artistic values.

Khorezm dance, especially Lazgi, is an important tool for cultural identity formation. It helps young people connect with their heritage and understand the historical roots of their culture.

Conclusion



The Khorezm dance art school represents one of the most valuable cultural heritages of Uzbekistan. Its long historical development reflects the spiritual, artistic, and social life of the Khorezm people.

The Lazgi dance, as its most important element, continues to symbolize energy, emotion, and cultural identity. The Lazgi Ensemble plays a crucial role in preserving, developing, and promoting this tradition in the modern world.

Today, Khorezm dance stands as a bridge between past and present, combining ancient traditions with contemporary artistic expression. It remains a living cultural phenomenon that continues to evolve while maintaining its authenticity and national significance.

The Role of Music and Rhythm in Lazgi Performance

An essential component of the Khorezm dance art school, particularly in the activities of the Lazgi Ensemble, is the close relationship between dance and music. In Lazgi performances, music is not just an accompaniment but a driving force that shapes the structure and emotional intensity of the dance.

Traditional musical instruments such as doira (frame drum), surnay, and string instruments are commonly used to create the rhythmic foundation of Lazgi. The rhythm begins with a moderate pace and gradually intensifies, guiding the dancer's movements and emotional expression.

Each movement in Lazgi is closely connected to specific rhythmic patterns. The dancer must have a strong sense of musicality in order to synchronize body movements with the tempo and accents of the music. This harmony between music and motion creates a powerful artistic effect.

The Lazgi Ensemble has made significant contributions to the development of musical arrangements. By combining traditional melodies with modern orchestration techniques, the ensemble has created performances that appeal to both traditional and contemporary audiences.

In addition, live musical accompaniment plays a crucial role in enhancing the authenticity of the performance. It allows for improvisation and interaction between musicians and dancers, making each performance unique and dynamic.

The Role of the Lazgi Ensemble in Cultural Preservation and Innovation

In the context of modern cultural development, the Lazgi Ensemble serves as both a preserver of tradition and a source of innovation. Its activities go beyond stage performances and include research, documentation, and the reconstruction of traditional dance elements.

One of the key functions of the ensemble is the preservation of authentic dance techniques that might otherwise be lost over time. By studying historical sources, consulting with experienced performers, and analyzing archival materials, the ensemble ensures that traditional knowledge is maintained.

At the same time, the ensemble actively engages in creative experimentation. New choreographic compositions are developed based on traditional movements, allowing the dance to evolve without losing its cultural essence. This balance between preservation and innovation is essential for the survival of any traditional art form.



The Lazgi Ensemble also contributes to the promotion of national identity. Through its performances, it presents Khorezm dance as a symbol of cultural pride and artistic excellence. This is particularly important in the context of globalization, where maintaining cultural uniqueness becomes a challenge.

Moreover, the ensemble plays a role in educating audiences by providing insight into the history and meaning of Lazgi. Performances are often accompanied by explanations, workshops, and cultural programs that deepen public understanding.

As a result, the Lazgi Ensemble stands as a model institution that successfully integrates tradition with modern artistic practices, ensuring the continued relevance of Khorezm dance in the contemporary world.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Khorezm dance art school represents one of the most significant and enduring elements of Uzbekistan's cultural heritage. Its historical development reflects not only the artistic evolution of dance but also the social, spiritual, and cultural life of the Khorezm people over many centuries. From its ancient ritual origins to its modern stage interpretations, Khorezm dance has preserved its authenticity while adapting to changing historical conditions.

The Lazgi dance, as the central and most expressive component of this school, embodies the dynamic energy, emotional richness, and philosophical depth of Khorezm culture. Its unique combination of rhythmic precision, expressive gestures, and gradual intensification of movement allows it to convey complex human emotions and cultural meanings. Lazgi is not merely a performance, but a powerful artistic language that reflects the identity and worldview of the people.

The role of the Lazgi Ensemble in the contemporary development of this tradition is particularly important. As a professional artistic institution, it not only preserves traditional dance elements but also contributes to their modernization and global promotion. Through stage performances, educational activities, and international collaborations, the ensemble ensures that Khorezm dance remains relevant in the modern cultural context.

Moreover, the recognition of Lazgi by UNESCO as an element of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity has elevated its status on the global stage. This recognition emphasizes the universal value of Khorezm dance and highlights the importance of safeguarding such traditions in the face of globalization and cultural transformation.

In today's rapidly changing world, the preservation of national cultural identity has become increasingly important. The Khorezm dance art school, supported by institutions like the Lazgi Ensemble, plays a vital role in maintaining this identity while also fostering innovation and intercultural dialogue.

Ultimately, the Khorezm dance tradition stands as a living bridge between the past and the present. It continues to inspire new generations of artists and audiences, ensuring that its rich heritage will be preserved, appreciated, and developed for many years to come.

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