



“LAZGI”-AN IMMORTAL DANCE ART

Rajabova Zuhra Sadullayevna
Urgench branch of Tashkent University of
Information Technologies named after Muhammad
al-Khwarizmi

ABSTRACT

Any nations' customs, traditions and rites are developed depending on their natural-geographical conditions and mentality. Various religious beliefs also have an influence on the formation of nation's customs and traditions. Some local traditions can be of national significance. The Khorezmian's local dance art in Uzbekistan – “Lazgi” is considered one of the oldest traditions, which has a national significance. As this type of dance is included to the list of intangible cultural heritage of UNESCO, there is a great interest to research it in depth. The age of Lazgi dance is still uncertain, but it is believed to be born before middle ages. The history, cultural impact and present state of performance of Lazgi dance is described in this paper based on historical sources.

1. INTRODUCTION

Every nation has its own dance traditions, ways of performing and plastic graphic means. Peoples' dance, which is one of the ancient types of the art, is formed and developed under the influences of historical, social and geographical conditions of peoples' life. Thus, influence of peoples' traditions, psychology, age and environment leaves a trail on it. Many kinds of peoples' dance art are connected with music, as well as, they are component part of peoples' rites and holidays. In the development of Uzbek national dance art, the peoples' dances play a leading role. Just dances, those are peculiar to the Khorezm traditions, illustrate the ages from the history of one nation to the present days. And this serves to enrich sense and meaning of the dance. In Khorezm oasis the dance art has been formed in ancient times and developed for many ages.

The dance “Lazgi” of Khorezm is included to the representative list of the intangible heritage as an element of cultural heritage of Uzbekistan. The resolution about this was accepted in the meeting of the interstate committee of Preserving of Intangible heritage of UNESCO on December 12, 2019 in Bogota, Colombia [1]. The members of this committee were much surprised at the particular charm, ardent and unique moves in the dance. And it made a deep impression on them, and encouraged to dance. The adoption of the agreement based on consensus, without voting, on the acceptance of the “Lazgi” to the representative list of the Human Intangible heritage by the interstate committee of Preserving of Intangible heritage of UNESCO, is the evidence of our idea.

2. THE INVESTIGATION OF THE SUBJECT

Some information of the dance art of “Lazgi” was brought in the Zoroastrians' holy book “Avesto”, and in the works of Herodotus, Beruniy, Vámbéry and in the researches of scientists as S.Tolstov, E.Bertels, L.Avdeeva, R.Karimova, G.Rahimova and A.Matniyazov. Gavhar Matyoqubova, a peoples' artist of Uzbekistan, conducted deep scientific

researches on this dance art and performed it in its norm. She published a monograph “Ofatijon Lazgi” in 1993, in the press named after Gafur Gulom.

In 2019 G.Matyoqubova with Sh. Eshjanova published a monograph “Lazgi” and this work can be considered as the code of this sphere.

In the research the mythological, artistic, historical and scientific-philosophical aspects of “Lazgi” were studied along with the history of the people. It was substantiated that this dance is consisted of a complex dance system, which requires consecutive and separate performance, and one of the strong banding, which binds the past with future. As well as, detailed information was given about the forgotten Khorezmian dances as “Zimlak”, “Qizil gul” and “Ashshadarozi” [2].

The works of G.Matyoqubova is of great importance, not only for, that she has been performing “Lazgi” for all her life and teaching the youth, but also for many years of observations, experiences, and analyses of a practitioner, theorist, pedagogue-researcher and ballet master-scientist. On preparing the dances as “Chanoq o'yini”, “Qayroq o'yini”, “Avesto malikasi - Anakhita” and “Olov o'yini” G.Matyoqubova is relied on historical sources.

Nowadays, she continues scientific researches with the scientists of the Urgench state university and Khorezm Mamun academy.

3. THE HISTORY OF “LAZGI”

Among the Uzbek dance art schools the Khorezm dance school has its own place. The history of “Lazgi” dates back to three thousand years. The origination of the dance is connected with the creation of the world and human. The holy book “Avesto” was created in Khorezm. The fire worship rites were performed in the lands of Khorezm. “Lazgi” was performed in the lustration rites of fire worshippers. Why does the melody of “Lazgi” make people to dance unintentionally? Because, reflections of fire, ebullience and ferventness are involved in “Lazgi”.



Inconvenient climate of Khorezm, as well as ancient freedom-loving country's historical fortune is the peculiarity of the people's nature. This nation didn't obeyed to Ahamanids – the Persian invaders in the 6th century BC, to Alexander Macedonian in the 3rd century BC and to the Arab in the 8th century in AD. And the historical peculiarities of Khorezmians led to enrich the dance with undisguised sentimentality and bravery.

Today, when we watch some dances of maqom ufars (a musical rhythm) by well-known dancers, we can see the story about brave women riders in their motions. Then we remember the legends about the ancient Khorezmian women Massagetae riders. In the list of the traditional Uzbek dances, the military dances can be seen only in Khorezmians'. It is known that, in the beginning of our century there were groups of dancers under the army. They induced soldiers before the fight. This dance was called "Lazgi". Ebullience and fervent lust express exactly the independent and proud nation's character.

Along with this, To'ra Qilichev brought the following information about Khorezmian men's dance in his book "Khorazm khalq teatri" (Khorezm peoples' theater): the antique Khorezmians also founded military dances and the ancient dance "Lazgi", which proves about the organization of victory celebrations, is still performed and military characteristics is remained in it [3]. In this dance the dancer raises hands up, and slowly follows the rhythm of the music with his fingers. As if he keeps his eyes is on his enemy, he stops moving. After several rhythms body motions joins the motions of fingers. As a soldier, who intended to attack the enemy suddenly, runs with short leads, plays with his fingers and claps his hands faster and with this he expresses "the state of the fight of a soldier". The dancer expresses with hand, foot, body and other movement of expressions, the achievement of victory was through strong fights and hard work.

One of the peculiarities of the dance "Lazgi" is that, it can be performed under the harmony of whetstones. Simultaneous motions of all part of the body and movement on bent legs are characteristic for the dances of Khorezmian school. In Khorezm men's dances sometimes are performed in pairs with women. The men's dance of this school usually expresses activities of ram and rooster fights. The clothing of the dancers also is peculiar to Khorezmian people. The most noticeable among the clothes is the Khorezmian big round warm fur hats (Chugurma). This peculiar hat for the oasis takes a leading place in the dance "Chugurma" in Khorezm. In this dance the process of making chugurma is revealed with meaningful movements and conditions. It is known that Khorezmian chugurma is worn both in sultry summer and in severe winter.

The dance "Khorezmian Lazgi" has a lot of kinds as "Maskharaboz Lazgi", "Qayroq Lazgi", "Dutor Lazgi", "Surnay Lazgi", "Saroy Lazgisi", "Changak Lazgi", "Khiva Lazgisi", "Garmon Lazgisi" [4].

4. PERFORM AND PERFORMERS

Everybody in Khorezm dances to "Lazgi". People's "Lazgi" is the dance of joy. The dance begins with a slow melody and the dancers express it with the main dance figure. The dancers present the processes of the dance as if it is in a slow motion, each movement is shown exaggeratedly and separately, and both the audience and the dancers feel themselves as if they were waiting for

something miracle as in the sport competition. Suddenly, the rhythm is changed into the joyful temp, and the dancer joins the endless emotions of the harmony, and here the real miracle happens – this is the expression of people's inimitable admiration. The movements are simultaneously, come one by one as if they are the colors of the rainbow, blood runs through each muscles of the dancer. "Lazgi" is the expression of endless energy of men indeed. It appears before one's eyes, lives and outbreaks. It can't stop or disappear, because it is has no end. The finish of the dance is also in this way happens abruptly, and the dancer stops moving in unfinished pose.

In the Khorezm dance, the upper part of the body is inclined back, the shoulder-blades are closer to each other, the knees are slightly bent, and the toes are more open to the sides.

The women usually point their fingertips downwards, bend their elbows slightly; the men stretch their arms and hold the elbows straight, fingers up, palms to the sides. The women dance with 'zang' (little handbells) on their hands. They put on some adornments: 'taqya-tuzi' on their heads, 'manglay-tuzi' on their foreheads, pendants on their chests, earrings on their ears and bracelets on their hands, and these all fits the ways of dancing and serves to create a common dance manner. The men dance with red jacket on them and put on 'chugurma' on their heads. While dancing, snapping fingers, goose like standing, shaking body and hands and shoulders, jumping and playing whetstones are peculiar to both men's and women's dance.

Khorezmian dancer Karim Ollaberganov is also one of the talented dancers, who performed "Lazgi". According to the sources, his skillful plays with whetstone led to creation of rhythmic compositions, and audience and musicians followed him. Ringing of stones sometimes whisper, sometimes crashes loudly like rockfall, gets nervous, persuades, threatens, after that calms down and trickles like water in a channel under a big nut tree in a hot day... none of the rhythmic phrase, none of the chord don't disappear. Hands, every movement of shoulders, rhythmic shake of the upper part of a body and all the motions together creates the single scene of image. Sounds of whetstones and plasticity make up the single scene, which expresses spiritual state – enthusiasm.

As the people say, during the dance Karim Ollaberganov has an ability to keep his body still while his hands, all the muscles of his upper body, and his legs were actively moving. Suddenly, the dancer stops and after clicking the whetstones twice he bends his knees slowly and sits. The knees make up an angle of about 70 degrees, leaving a bit space between the heels, the lower the dancer sits on the legs, the higher the heels rise. The hands also rise upwards on both sides, one stops in front of the chest, the other rises upwards, and the resonant rhythms continue. The shoulders sometimes tremble softly, slowly, with full of strength. The body shakes in two sides. In this sitting, that is, in the position of a deep "plie," the he rings the whetstones for several times, and then slowly begins to rise and the body and hands do not stop dancing. Karim Ollaberganov was such a talented dancer.

Khorezm dance is rich in motions. While young dancers and clowns performed the dances "Chagalloq", "Norim-norim", "Aliqambar", "Orazibon", "Mo'ri", "Khobbimboy", "Shirinnovvot" better, the women dancers are advantaged in dancing "Ashshadaroz" and "Maqom ufori". In performing the dance series "Lazgi" man and woman dance



masters has an equal skills. The most famous khalfa (local woman singer) Onajon Sabirova (1885—1952) played an important role in preserving the composition of the khalfa performance, playing the accordion and singing, especially in bringing women's dance to the stage. S.Ollaberganova, R.Hakimova and R.Otajonova are members of the ensemble of Onajon khalfa.

Qambar bola, Kanarak bola Saidov, Qodirbergan Otajonov, Karim Ollaberganov, Rimajon Matkarimova, Matlatif Saidov, Latif Zarifov, Khudoybergan to'q-to'q, Gavhar Matyokubova and others have made a significant contribution to the preservation and development of Khorezmian dance style, traditions in new social conditions. Khorezmian dance style continues in the activities of the Khorezm regional theater, folk ensembles, the ensemble "Lazgi" under the association "Uzbekraqs" [5].

As "Lazgi" is a divine melody, previous teachers did not compose a poem to it. Komiljon Otaniyozov was the first who wrote a poem and created a song "Lazgi". After that "Lazgi" spread to all over the world outside Uzbekistan.

The note of the song "Lazgi" performed by the People's Artist of Uzbekistan K.Otaniyozov (with the poem by K.Khorezmiy), Honoured Artist of Uzbekistan R.Qurbonov (with the poem by Mashrab), People's Artists of Uzbekistan O.Khudoyshukurov (with the poem by Mashrab), O.Hayitova (with the poem by O.Erkin), M.Matyoqubov, M.Yoqubov and the ensemble "Lazgi" is attached, and they are considered to be a valuable source for those who is interested in the art of Khorezm, especially in the history of the dance "Lazgi".

5. IMPORTANCE OF "LAZGI"

In 2012, on the basis of a special project, the Academic and Folk Art Group "Lazgi Dance Center" was established by the Government of Uzbekistan. The program of the regional ensemble "Khorezm raqs" includes 9 types of "Lazgi". Now here, along with professionals, hundreds of amateur dancers are learning the secrets of dance.

The inclusion of the dance into the list of intangible cultural heritage of the UNESCO in 2019 will further increase the interest of the peoples of the world in this dance. Holding the annual festival "Magic of dance" in Khiva also causes to increase the number of visits of tourists. Most important, "Lazgi", as an ancient tradition of the Uzbek people, plays an important role in educating the younger generation in the spirit of patriotism.

6. CONCLUSION

For the further development of the art of dance "Lazgi", while preserving the beauty of the whole style, it is necessary to enrich them with new content, to revive and open up wide opportunities for men's dance, to create and spread modern types of dances which reflect working process and express the mood of the people, and that are played with whetstones and little handbells, as well as with spoons, sticks, bowls and other items. The most important, we need to further enrich the culture of Uzbek choreography on the basis of the true folk dances that we have described and many of which have not been identified yet [6].

7. REFERENCES

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