

III. Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory

1. National Inventory¹

Brief Information

1) General Inventory information (updated since 2010)

1.1) Title(s)

National List of Elements (Objects) of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan

1.2) Number of updated inventories

One inventory, i.e. National List

1.3) Number of designated items updated

Seventy four items or elements were included

1.4) Date of most recent update

18 March 2013 – New and updated List of Objects (Elements) of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan was approved by Republican Center for Folk Art.

2013-2014 – New information was added to certain elements of National ICH List after field studies and expeditions were carried out within the framework of the project “*Facilitating ICH Inventory-Making and Utilising Online Tools for ICH Safeguarding in the Central Asian Region*”; Joint project of ICHCAP and Republican Center for Folk Art); and after implementation of the project of UNESCO Office in Tashkent in collaboration with Republican Center for Folk Art, which was aimed at development and popularization of elements of traditional music of the Republic of Karakalpkastan.

1.5) Establishment of an expert advisory panel

¹ Refers to inventories made and managed by a national or local government.

In 2013, by the order of the Ministry of Culture and Sports of the Republic of Uzbekistan Scientific and Methodological Board on Intangible Cultural Heritage as well as expert groups were created and approved on each of the five domains of intangible cultural heritage.

1.6) Responsible governmental organization (national/local governmental)

Republican Center for Folk Art under the Ministry of Culture and Sports of the Republic of Uzbekistan and its ICH Documenting (Inventory-Making) Department.

Person in charge: Gularo Abdullaeva, Head of the ICH Documenting Department

Contact details: 30, Alisher Navoi Avenue, Tashkent, 100000, Uzbekistan

Tel.: +998 71 2445104

Fax: +998 71 2445178

E-mail: meros2010@inbox.uz and gularoabdullaeva@yahoo.com

For additional information: www.nmm.uz

Detailed Information

Until 2011 the National List of Uzbekistan consisted of seven elements, from which four (“Cultural Space of Boysun”, “Shashmaqom”, “Katta ashula”, “Navruz”) were inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List and the other three, i.e. *Bakhshichilik* (art of folk epic), *Alla* (lullaby) and *Lapar* (song genre) - were included in the non-governmental inventory. The the List however did not indicate elements by domains. And with adoption and implementation of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Safeguarding and Use of Objects of Cultural Heritage” and State Programme, the ICH Documenting Department was created at Republican Center for Folk Art under the Ministry of Culture and Sports (2011) as well as the experts groups and Board on ICH (dealing with selection of elements (based on the certain criteria) to be included to the New ICH list). In developing the new ICH List peculiarities of Uzbekistan were taken into account and that each element selected was in line with the international criteria set for elements of ICH (i.e. as stipulated by the UNESCO Convention of 2003).

Initially, the new National List consisted of more than 200 elements (2011). However, further review, carried out by the experts groups and ICH Board (i.e. archive documents and materials of field studies were studied; historical and cultural value of each element was evaluated), made it possible to select main elements of ICH across five domains. As a result, experts groups and ICH Board

recommended it for approval of the Ministry of Culture and Sports of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The new National List of ICH was approved by the Ministry of Culture and Sports (on 18 March 2013). At present it consists of 74 ICH elements.

The following is the complete listing of the elements of intangible cultural heritage of Uzbekistan:

National List of Elements (Objects) of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan

No.	Index Number of ICH element	Name of the ICH Element
1. Oral traditions and expressions		
1	01.01	Myths
2	01.02	Legends
3	01.03	Stories
4	01.04	Tales and Fables
5	01.05	Dostons (folk epic)
6	01.06	Sayings
7	01.07	Proverbs
8	01.08	Tongue Twisters
2. Performing Arts		
9	02.01	MAQOM ART
10	02.01.01	Shashmaqom
11	02.01.02	Khoresm maqoms
12	02.01.03	Ferghana-Tashkent maqoms
13	02.01.04	Dutar and Surnay maqom cycles
14	02.01.05	Feruz
15	02.01.06	Ushshoq
16	02.02	BAKHSHI ART
17	02.02.01	Performance of Doston
18	02.03	VOCAL GENRES – CLASSICAL SONGS
19	02.03.01	Katta Ashula
20	02.03.02	Suvora
21	02.03.03	Naqsh
22	02.03.04	Classical song and Yalla
23	02.03.05	Tanavor
24	02.04	SINGING ART

25	02.04.01	Alla (lullaby)
26	02.04.02	Olan
27	02.04.03	Lapar
28	02.04.04	Terma
29	02.04.05	Mavrigi
30	02.04.06	Qarsak
31	02.04.07	Ceremonial songs
32	02.04.08	Khalfa art
33	02.05	DANCING ART
34	02.05.01	Khoresm dances (lazgi)
35	02.05.02	Bukhara dances
36	02.05.03	Surkhan dances
37	02.05.04	Ferghana Valley dances
38	02.06	SPECTACULAR ARTS
39	02.06.01	Dorbozlik (rope walking art)
40	02.06.02	Askiya (Art of Wit)
41	02.06.03	Qiziqchilik (Art of Comedy)
42	02.06.04	Maskharabozlik (Art of buffoonery)
43	02.06.05	Qogirchoqbozlik (Art of Puppetry)
44	02.06.06	Folk games
3. Social practices, rituals and festive events		
45	03.01	FAMILY RITUALS
46	03.01.01	Beshik toy ceremony (festivity of cradle)
47	03.01.02	Sunnat toy or khatna (circumcision ceremony)
48	03.01.03	Muchal toy (festivity of twelve-year calendar cycle)
49	03.01.04	Nikoh toy (wedding ceremony)
50	03.01.05	“Yuz ochdi” ceremony (Ceremony of “Opening a face”)
51	03.02	SEASONAL RITES
52	03.02.01	Navruz
53	03.02.02	Sumalak Sayili (Sumalak festivity)
54	03.02.03	Boychechak (First snowdrop blossoming ceremony)
55	03.02.04	Ramadan
56	03.02.05	Sust khotin (Ceremony of “Calling for Rain”)
4. Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe		
57	04.01	YIL FASLI (SEASONAL RITES)
58	04.01.01	Yomgir, qor va shamol chaqirish (calling for rain, snow and wind)
59	04.01.02	Choy momo (Ceremony of stopping wind)
60	04.02	CULTURAL SPACES (RESERVES)
61	04.02.01	Boysun

62	04.02.02	Sarmishsoy
63	04.03	TRADITIONAL MEDICINE
5. Traditional craftsmanship		
64	05.01	Gold embroidery
65	05.02	Patchwork
66	05.03	Metal engraving
67	05.04	Carpet-weaving
68	05.05	Skullcap embroidery
79	05.06	Puppet-making
70	05.07	Pottery and Ceramic
71	05.08	Ganch carving
72	05.09	Wood carving
73	05.10	Majolica art
74	05.11	Embroidery

Currently 4 elements of the new and updated National List were inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Humanity. These are: Cultural Space of Boysun (2008), Shashmaqom (2008), Navruz (2009) and Katta Ashula (2009).

2 elements were submitted for inclusion in the Representative List and are currently under consideration of UNESCO. These are: Askiya (to be considered in November 2014) and Dorbozlik (Rope Walking Art; to be considered in 2015).

It should be noted that this new National List represents the core of inventory-making of ICH. Also, during field studies it is updated accordingly. For instance, during recent field studies, scientific expeditions and inventory-making activities some new elements were identified such as *pazandachilik* (knowledge and skills associated with national cuisine) and folk medicine; and additional materials were gathered on other elements.

Also, the National List served as a basis and example for elaboration of local ICH lists in the regions and Republic of Karakalpakstan (for this purpose a methodological guide on ICH inventory-making was prepared in 2013). Indeed, in all regions (12 in total) and Republic of Karakalpakstan at present active work is being carried out on creation of the local list of elements (objects) of ICH. And this work is constantly coordinated with the experts groups and the Board on ICH. For instance, during the last session of the Scientific and Methodological Board on ICH (April 2014) National List (Inventory) of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, which included more than 67 elements on 5 domains of ICH, was considered. The review done by the members of the Board revealed that the

majority of elements represent oral folk art (i.e. under “Oral traditions and expressions” domain), performing arts and customs, rituals and festivities of Karakalpakstan (47 elements in total). Also, almost all works of folk epic and all rituals were identified as separate elements. Though, some of these are no more in use. Based on that it was recommended to review the List (Inventory) once again but with special attention to historic and artistic values each element represents and to social and cultural importance of each element in local communities. Likewise, preliminary List of ICH of Kashkadarya region (local ICH List) was reviewed, which included more than 60 elements across 5 domains. However, the List was presented without any particular information material and without consideration of categories, criteria, value and importance of each element. So, the List was not approved and was sent for revision.

The work on elaboration of national as well as local lists of ICH is coordinated by the ICH Documenting Department of the Republican Center for Folk Art in close collaboration with the groups of experts and the ICH Board.

2) Designated heritage (updated since 2010)

2.1) Categories

All of the elements, which are included in the National List, are living objects (elements), i.e. they are in existence, are preserved and spread in particular area, district and/or region. They represent all five domains of intangible cultural heritage, as indicated in the UNESCO Convention of 2003.

2.2) Criteria

Criteria for selection and inclusion of each element (object) in the National List of Uzbekistan are the following: unwritten (oral tradition) character, traditional character, ancient roots of its cultural traditions, originality and unique character of live tradition (viability and sustainability of element), relic feature, archaic feature, spectacularity, ethnocultural identity, improvisatory character, popularity, original manners and styles of singing, playing, distinctiveness and existence of schools of mastery, integrity of knowledge and skills, adaptation to the conditions of modernity, succession (continuity), risk of disappearance, historical, cultural and artistic value.

3) Information about each element as it appears in the National List of Elements (Objects) of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan

Each element of the National List is provided with information materials concerning its history, peculiar features and bearers. In other words a certain

database is created on each element (which includes textual, audio and visual data).

For instance, ICH element “Doston” is provided with the following information: **“Doston (literally, “a short novel”, “story”, “adventures”)** is the genre of folk epic. It is the genre of folk epic, lengthy and grand element of ICH of Uzbekistan.

Areas represented: epic narration, oral folk art and traditional music (in the National List its index number is 01.06).

Domains: “Oral Traditions and Expressions”, “Performing Arts”.

Criteria: unwritten (oral tradition) character, ancient roots of its traditions, archaic feature, spectacularity, originality and unique character of live tradition, representation of ethnocultural identity, original manner of performance, local feature of the style of singing, existence of schools of mastery based on “*ustoz-shogird*” (“master-apprentice”) methodology, viability, historical, cultural and artistic value.

Doston is original verbal, musical and poetical history of the nation. It reflects real historical events of ancient times and incorporates poetic as well as prosaic elements accompanied by music. It is reproduced through idealized narration, in which words, stories, poems, music used and singing with acting skills are combined altogether to create distinct genre with its own specifics, themes and manners of performance.

This unique and inimitable art genre emerged in the Middle Ages, among nomadic Turkic tribes, as a result of mastery of centuries-long artistic traditions (mythology, legends, folk stories and tales, songs of historical and legendary nature). And nomadic way of life certainly found its reflection in the content as well as character of heroes. For instance, it is possible to mention about the character of Alpomish, who was *botir* (hero) and who performed an exploit in the name of his motherland and nation. Indeed, Alpomish is popular character among Kazakhs, Karakalpaks, Uigurs, Altaians, Turkmens, Tatars, Bashkirs and others. Or it is possible to mention about the character of a horse, which was favored friend of a nomad. In fact these two characters are most popular in the folk epic.

Doston is spread in the whole Central Asia. And there are several traditional performance schools, in which distinct musical and poetical language as well as

style of folk epic got formed. Though, in all of them recitative-guttural manner of singing is prevalent .

Performers of *dostons* are folk narrators called “bakhshi”, “baksy”, “dostonchi”, “jyrau”, “shoir” and “akyn”. They are creators and keepers of epic stories. Dostons are divided into the following: heroic ones (“Alpomish”, “Rustam”, “Yodgor”, “Gorogli”, etc.), historical ones (“Samarqandnoma”, “Sokhibqiron”, etc.), romantic ones (“Tohir and Zukhra”, “Farkhod and Shirin”, “Oshiq Garib and Shokhsanam”, etc.), book-based ones (Firdavsiy, Jami, Alisher Navoi, Durbek, etc.), etc.

Characteristic features of *doston* are: monumentality (combination of story, poetry, music, singing and acting skill (gesticulation, mimicry, plastique)), scale and coverage (periodicity, diversity of themes, complexity of structure, perfection and richness of music and performance rules), improvisatory nature and originality of performance (solo and ensemble), locality (originality of performance as reflected by different manners and styles of singing), certain commonality of motifs, characters and story-lines.

In Uzbekistan the following manners and styles of performance of *dostons* are spread: recitative-guttural manner of singing of *bakhshi-shoir* in accompaniment of *dombra* (Samarkand, Kashkadarya and Surkhandarya) and recitative-declamatory and guttural manner of singing of *jyrau* in accompaniment of *qobuz* (Karakalpakstan); songful-melodical type with wide range of voice and in accompaniment of instrumental ensemble (In Khoresm (*bakhshi-dostonchi*) – *dutar*, *bolaman*, *gidjak*; or *tar*, *qoshnay* and *doira*; if performed by a woman (the art of *khalfa*) - *qol soz* (accordion) and *doira*; In Karakalpakstan (the art of *basky*) – *dutar* and traditional three-string instrument, *gidjak*).

Narrators or *bakhshi* are professional performers of *dostons*, who underwent traditional school of learning based on “*ustoz-shogird*” (“master-apprentice”) methodology. They have a very good memory and endurance (*doston* is performed for many hours or even days), and are skillful in narration and improvisation, poetry and declamation, music, singing and acting.

The art of *bakhshi-shoir* and *baksy-jyrau* brightly reflects the peculiarities of traditional culture of Uzbekistan, where on the basis of local performance features different local styles and schools with their own musical and creative tradition, artistic and aesthetic ideas, practical goals and tasks emerged.

One example is the Samarkand school (centers located in Bulungur, Korgan, Jamboy, Nurota (at present Nurota is part of Navoi region), the characteristic feature of which is declamatory-recitative and guttural manner of singing in accompaniment of *dombra*. In each *doston* from 5 to 10 tunes of repeating structure were used; with a short melos of repeating structure. The repertoires of this school include heroic and historical *dostons*. In particular, in the beginning of the XX century, the epic “Alpomish” was recorded for the first time from *bakhshi* Fozil Yoldosh oqli (1872-1955), who mastered traditions from his father, Yoldosh Mulla Murod oqli. Notably, Fozil Yoldosh oqli, thanks to his wonderful voice and singing manner, was known among the people under the name of “Yoldosh bulbul” (“bulbul” – nightingale). Brothers of Fozil Yoldosh oqli, Qoldosh and Suyar, were famous narrators (*bakhshi*) as well. They trained the whole generation of young *bakhshi* people, who not only preserved epic traditions, but also developed them. Khodi Zarifov, who is the author of series of books on the epics of Uzbekistan (the most famous of which is “Uzbek heroic epic” under authorship of V. Jirmunskiy, Kh. Zarifov, published in Moscow in 1947), recorded more than 20 *dostons* from Fozil Yoldosh. Prominent representatives of the Samarkand school were: Ergash Jumanbulbul oqli, Islom shoir, Abdulla shoir, Pulkan shoir, Ergash shoir, Egamberdi bakhshi, Tilla Kampar, Jumanbulbul bakhshi, Takhim bulbul and others. They had many students (apprentices), from among who it is possible to mention people’s *bakhshi* of Uzbekistan, Ziyodullo Islamov (the son of famous *bakhshi*, Islom shoir).

Characteristic feature of Kashkadarya school of *dostonchilik* (centers located in Chiroqchi, Qamashi, Shakhrisabz, Kitab, Dekhqonobod) is recitative-guttural manner of performance in accompaniment of *dombra*. Each *doston* contained from 5 to 15 tunes with a short melos of repeating structure and uniform rhythm. The repertoire includes heroic, historical and romantic epics, such as “Alpomish”, “Orziqul”, “Sokhibqiron”, “Kuntugmish”, “Gorogli” (cycle of *dostons*), etc. The prominent representatives of this school are Abdulla Nurali oqli, Islom Nazar oqli, Qodir bakhshi Rakhimov and others. From among their followers and students (apprentices) it is possible to mention Shomurod bakhshi Togaev (Chiroqchi) and Abduqahhor bakhshi Rakhimov (Dekhqonobod) (both of them have honorable title of “People’s *bakhshi* of Uzbekistan”), and others.

Characteristic feature of Surkhandarya school of *dostonchilik* or more spread one – Sherobod-Boysun school (centers located in Sherobod, Boysun, Denau, Qumqorgon, Shorchi, Qiziriq), is recitative-guttural manner of singing in accompaniment of *dombra* and with use of 5-15 tunes, melos of different

character, and uniform rhythm. The repertoire includes heroic, historical and romantic *dostons*, such as “Alpomish” and cycle “Gorogli”. From among prominent representatives of this school it is possible to mention Shernazar Beknazar ogli (Sherna bakhshi), who trained the whole generation of talented narrators (Mardoqul Avliyoqul ogli, Umir Safar ogli, Normurod bakhshi, Akhmad bakhshi and others). Present-day representatives of this school include Shoberdi Boltaev (Boysun), Abdunazar Poyonov (Boysun-Qumqorgon), Boboraim Mamatmurodov (Denau) (they received “People’s bakhshi of Uzbekistan” title) and others.

The Khoresm school is subdivided into two directions, i.e. Shirvoni (or Khiva) and Ironi (or Mangyt). What makes these directions distinct is their repertoire, the composition of performers, manner of performance and musical and poetic language. In general, for Khoresm school typical is songful-melodical manner of performance in accompaniment of instrumental ensemble. Each *doston* uses 15-72 tunes, which do not repeat. These tunes are of different character with own musical patterns. Each tune has its own name. The repertoire is diverse and rich. It consists of heroic, historical, romantic and other types of *dostons*. The most popular one is the cycle of *dostons* of “Gorogli”, which has from 40 to 100 versions of *doston*. Besides men (*bakhshi-dostonchi*) some *dostons*, in particular, romantic ones, are performed by women (*khalfa-dostonchi*). From among the representatives of this school there are people’s *bakhshi* of Uzbekistan, such as Bola bakhshi (Qurbonnazar) Abdullaev, Khudoybergan Otegenov and others. Notably, it is Khoresm epic traditions that exerted an influence on formation of Turkmen *bakhshi* art (Dashaoz school) and Karakalpak *baksy* art (Amudarya or Mangit school).

The Karakalpak school differs from the rest because of existence of two epic directions. These are: *baksy* with its sonful-melodic type of singing (ensemble performance) and *yyrau* with its recitative-guttural manner of singing (solo performance in accompaniment of *qobuz*). The most popular *doston* among *baksy* is “Alpomish” epic, whereas the most popular one among *yyrau* is “Edige” epic. Famous representatives of the Karakalpak school are Tengel Kamolov, Jumaboy yyrau (they received honorable title of “People’s bakhshi of Uzbekistan”), Bakbergen Syrymbetov and others.

When we speak about living epic traditions of Uzbekistan we mean performance of ancient stories or creation of the new; safeguarding and transmission, within the framework of oral tradition, of unique and difficult performance style, which requires not only musical, poetic and acting talent, but also remarkable memory and endurance. Bright example for this is the

creative activity of Qodir bakhshi Rakhimov from Dekhqonobod (Kashkadarya region), who was able to perform 72 *dostons* or creative activity of Bola bakhshi Abdullaev (Khoesm), who was capable of narrating 20 *dostons*.”

In terms of its characteristics and peculiarities *dostons* are also included in other domains and objects (elements) of the National List of ICH of Uzbekistan. As such, they are part of “Bakhshi Art” (02.02.) and “Performance of Doston” (02.02.01) elements (objects) under “Performing Arts” domain.

02.02. BAKHSHI ART

Folk epic is one of the elements of cultural heritage of Uzbek people. And epic traditions, in fact, emerged in the ancient past among the people of Uzbekistan (Uzbeks and Karakalpaks). They exist and evolve at present. The phenomenon of the epic, existing in the end of the XX century, in itself represents great value for the history of culture. In the meantime, epic is alive because it exists in musical and poetical way. And this is connected to the art of *bakhshi-shoirs*, i.e. folk narrators, creators and keepers of epic traditions, popularizers of *dostons*, who represent a story-teller, a poet, a musician and actor in one personality.

02.02.01. Performance of Doston

Bakhshi is a narrator of folk epic (*doston*), who combines in himself the art of word (story-telling), music, singing and acting skills. He is the person, who, through his art, transmits and presents *dostons*, the greatest works of the people. He is master and improvisator of words and stories, skillful musician (skillfully plays on certain musical instrument) and singer (possesses the skills of traditional singing), who can accompany his performance with mimicry and plastique. *Bakhshi* should be familiar with the way of life of the own nation, its culture and history. He should have a rich vocabulary, masterly use all forms of folk language (wordplays and various forms of words). Main requirements for the performers of *dostons* are: to provoke listener’s interest with own tunes; to narrate the story (i.e. epic) in an interesting and attracting manner. These, in turn, require that *bakhshi-shoir* constantly improves his skills (which emerge from his natural talent and perception of the world, creative fantasy and subjective imagination).

The repertoire of Uzbek narrators includes heroic, historical and romantic *dostons*, which incorporated ancient cultural traditions, memory of the nation, its spiritual world and historical destiny, its civic, moral and aesthetic ideals. In *dostons* it is possible to find the ideas of patriotism and humanism, commitment and love, friendship and brotherhood. At the same time *doston* is not about verbal

performance only. It is also the work of art which is prosaic, poetic and musical. Indeed, *bakhshi* does not read *doston* but sings it. The singing is accompanied by *dombra* or instrumental ensemble. The whole artistic composition, all figurative means and expressions of *doston* are aimed at better perception by listeners. And combination of music and poem and story creates a wonderful work of art, in which words play the most important role along with a melody. In *dostons*, a word, verse and text nevertheless bear the main semantic and artistic load. And they sound more natural, emotional and expressive in accompaniment of music.

Folk epic is the art of word and music, without which there are no mimicry, gesticulation, etc. Correspondingly, in each *doston* 5-36 or even more tunes (melodies) are used (they are called *nola*, *nagma* or *bakhshi kuy* (tunes (melodies) of *bakhshi*)), which differ with their musical laws. In some cases *bakhshi* use tunes (melodies), which are popular among people and which are typical for certain local zone (examples include: “Yor-yor”, “Alla” (“Lullaby”), “Marsiya” (funeral-related one), etc.). Tunes (melodies) of *dostons* can be of recitative and songful character, can be of short or wide range, and be more developed. Main musical and poetic genre in *doston* is *terma*, which is accompanied by play on *dombra*, *dutar* or *qobuz* (by the performer himself). Each *terma* has its own name depending on the story line.

Based on content and theme Uzbek *dostons* are divided into: heroic ones (“Alpomish”, “Gorogli”, “Rustamkhon”, “Yodgor”, etc.), historic ones (“Sokhibqiron”, “Samarqandnoma”, “Shayboniykhon”, etc.), romantic ones (“Tokhir and Zukhra”, “Farkhod and Shirin”, “Oshiq Garib and Shokhsanam”, “Khamro and Khurliqo”, etc.). In the Middle Ages another form of *dostons* emerged, i.e. book-based *dostons*, in which popular folk epic stories were written in poetic form. Examples for these are *dostons*-poems written by Alisher Navoi (“Farkhod and Shirin”, “Layli and Majnun”), Durbek (“Yusuf and Zebi”), Khamid Olimjon (“Bakhrom and Gulamdon”) and others. In addition to the above-mentioned, everyday life-related, military, autobiographic and contemporary *dostons* became part of repertoire of *bakhshi* people.

Notably, some *dostons* represent a cycle of *dostons*. One example is “Gorogli” *doston* cycle, which consists of 40 to 100 *dostons*. These kinds of *dostons* mirror social realities, characters of heroes and their feats, struggle for liberation of own people and land. *Dostons* also contain formation about many gallant adventures of heroes, stories about fantastic phenomena, events of life and feelings of heroes. Main task of *dostons* is to idealize folk heroes, or on other words, certain canonization of their best spiritual qualities and life principles, as a model to emulate. All these features are specifically observable in the prominent Uzbek

doston “Alpomish”, the 1000th anniversary of which was celebrated in Uzbekistan in 1999 with active involvement of UNESCO.

Poetic forms (these are usually seven-eight syllable verse or hendecasyllabic), which make up main textual basis of *doston*, as a rule, deal with monologues or dialogues of heroes, battle panoramas, description of nature, feelings and mood of heroes, etc. And they sound more emotional in musical performance, which contains melodies of various character. Based on this two types or forms of singing became widespread in *doston* performance:

- The first one is singing with *bogiq ovoz* (closed voice), i.e. recitative-guttural singing in the accompaniment of dombra (stringed instrument), which is typical for Samarkand, Kashkadarya and Surkhandarta regions as well as *jyrau* of the Republic of Karakalpakstan. Each doston uses 5-15 tunes (melodies) called “nagma”, which can repeat. Melodies are usually short and repetitive. Tunes are lyric and dramatic, bright and cheerful depending on the plot of the story. Bakhshi narrates with normal, natural voice, though during singing uses guttural voice, which is developed and shaped thanks to the learning and training process.
- The second one is singing with *ichki ovoz* (inner voice), i.e. more songful, intonation-melodious type of singing, which is accompanied by ensemble. It is typical for epic narrators or *bakhshi* of Khoresm and *baksy* of Karakalpakstan.

Dostons, which exist in Uzbekistan, are rich in terms of themes and content. They reflect social, political, economic, legal and domestic issues; philosophic and aesthetic views of the nation; old and new, good and evil, funny and lofty, unusual, fantastic and common things. In creation of *dostons* visible role is played by narrators and singers, i.e. *bakhshi*, *dostonchi*, *shoir*, *baksy*, *jyrau*, who emerge from the people. The word “bakhshi” had different meanings: “*tabib*” (“healer”) “shaman”, “sorcerer”, who, with their magic song and play on *doira* (percussion instrument), conjured out of a sick person evil spirits (for instance, the ritual of treatment called “Kuch” or “Kuchirik” (literally means “to expel”); “narrator and singer of *doston*”.

Narrators of *doston*s people of Uzbekistan call differently. In Khoresm they are called “*dostonchi*” or *bakhshi*”, in Kashkadarya and Surkhandarya – “*bakhshi*”, “*shoir*” or “*yusboshi*”, in the Ferghana Valley – “*bakhshi*”, “*sannovchi*”, “*soqi*” or “*sozanda*”, in Karakalpakstan – “*baksy*” and “*jyrau*”. Though, most commonly used terms are “*shoir*” (poet-narrator) and “*bakhshi*” (singer-narrator). Narrators are always welcome guests in family ceremonies and festivities, folk *sayils* (promenades) and festivals taking place in village and city. However, it

should be noted that interest in this genre has been diminishing in cities starting from the end of the XIX and beginning of the XX century. And it is no wonder as to why the majority of *dostons* are written down and recorded exactly in villages and pasture lands, among rural population, farmers and shepherds.

Being monumental in terms of its theme and plot, epic stories or *dostons* require significant abilities and solid skills in narration (story-telling) and improvisation, talent in music. In Uzbekistan distinct types of performance schools of narrators got formed. These are based on the “*ustoz-shogird*” (master-apprentice) traditional methodology of learning, differ in themes covered and forms of *dostons* narrated and sung, in manners of performance and composition of performers. Existence of four local zones in the music art of the people of Uzbekistan found its reflection in formation of peculiar schools of narrators of epics (*dostons*): Samarkand, Kashkadarya, Surkhandarya, Khoresm and Karakalpak schools. Musical and performance manner of each local zone differ. As such, for Samarkand school (centers are in Nurota, Samarkand, Bulungur, Jamboy) is typical recitative manner of performance from beginning to end (*bogiq ovoz*) with use of short tunes (melodies) in accompaniment of *dombra* (stringed instrument). Each *doston* has 5-10 tunes and they can repeat. Also, even during narration *bakhshi* accompanies it with the play on *dombra*. It should be noted that Nurota is nowadays part of Navoi region, though epic traditions of Samarkand school are preserved here. Moreover, Nurota school is famous with its traditions and prominent bearers. Samarkand-Nurota school got formed in the past based on Bulungur and Kurgan schools, the bright representatives of which were Fozil Yoldosh o'g'li, Ergash Jumanbulbul o'g'li and Pulkan shoir (and their repertoires included heroic, romantic, love-related *dostons* such as “*Alpomish*”, “*Gorogli*”, “*Kuntugmish*”, “*Ravshan*”, “*Avazkhon*”, “*Yusuf and Akhmad*”, “*Yodgor*”, “*Nurali*”, “*Rustam*”, etc.).

Kashkadarya school (centers in Shakhrisabz, Kitab, Qamashi, Chiroqchi, Guzar, Dekhqonobod) is famous with its traditions and bearers as well. Its characteristic feature is recitative-declamatory singing with a special guttural manner (*bogiq ovoz*) with use of short tunes (*nagma*) in accompaniment of *dombra*. Each *doston* contains from 5 to 15 tunes. The repertoire includes heroic, historical and romantic *dostons*, such as “*Alpomish*”, “*Gorogli*”, “*Sokhibqiron*”, “*Orziqul*”, etc. The prominent representatives of this school are Abdulla Nurali o'g'li and Islom Nazar o'g'li, whose students (apprentices) continue to develop traditions, in particular, of Shakhrisabz school.

Surkhandarya school (centers in Sherobod, Boysun, Qiziriq, Qumqorgon, Denau, Shorchi) or Sherobod-Boysun school is associated with the name of prominent

bakhshi, who is representative of this school, Shernazar Beknazar oqli (or Sherna bakhshi). Manner of performances is recitative-declamatory with use of special guttural singing (*bogiq ovoz*). Dostons have 5-15 tunes (*nagma*) which are accompanied by *dombra*. Repertoire includes heroic, historical and romantic dostons. Notably, it is exactly here that famous folk epic “Alpomish” emerged during early Middle Ages.

For above-mentioned performance schools typical is delivery of diversity of materials: the prose is narrated with normal voice, natural register and strength of sound, whereas poetic verse, which contains certain tunes (*nagma* or *bakhshi kuy*), is performed in guttural manner (*bogiq ovoz*). Exactly this ensures certain diversity (in terms of tone-register and emotionality and dynamism). Each phrase of a tune corresponds to one verse of poetic text. It is also simple and laconic with a small range; and melody of repetitive structure. Narrators also use instrumental tunes- interludes called “bakhshi kuy” (tunes of bakhshi), which are based on popular folk melodies or melodies, created by bakhshi himself. Each performance of doston is based on introductory instrumental tune, which is called “sayqal” or “parda”, and then – addressing to listeners by singing *terma* “Qaysi doston aytayin” (“Which doston I should sing for you”). Performance of doston lasts several hours or even days with some breaks inbetween. When a break is needed, bakhshi refers to his instrument (*dombra*) and tells “Dombira tontarmoq”, i.e. “dombra also wants to have a rest”. Recitative-declamatory or recitative-songful types of *dostons* differ with their expressiveness, richness of emotions being transmitted. Bakhshi slowly and step-by-step moves to the peak or culmination point and by doing so energizes emotionally the listeners. The manner of singing is muffled, which contrast with the accompaniment on musical instrument. Tunes have certain intonation and sound scale. They are also well-organized in terms of tonality and rhythm. Instrumental interludes, which divide song phrases, are constructed on the basis of motifs of introduction or on the basis of repetition of certain phrases or a melody itself. Motifs repeat many times and vary in step-by-step flow of melody. Each narrator sings by using a variety of tonal and dynamic inflections (*tints*).

Dostons of Khoresm differ with their expressiveness; and they attract listeners with their music-poetical emotionality. In Khoresm became widespread songful types of *dostons* (*ichki ovoz*; song-recitative or songful style), in which main musical genre became song in genres of *terma*, *qoshuq* or *ashula*. Narrations of dostons is accompanied by instrumental ensemble (in the past main musical instruments used were *dutar*, *gidjak*, *bolaman*; since XX century these have been *tar*, *bolaman* (or *qoshnay*) and *doira*), which is an important part of epic. In each doston of Khoresm 15-36 or even more tunes are used (they are called “nola” or

“nolish”), and they are constantly enriched with new intonations, rhythms and forms. Songs of *dostons* are different in terms of their character. They are lyrical ones, dance-oriented ones, elevated ones, easily comprehended, joyful and bright ones. Melos is more developed, of wide range, songful. Songs of *dostons* enjoy popularity in the region. Each tune has its own name (“Bartovil”, “Besh parda”, “Ilgor”, “Zorinji”, “Qoshim polvon”, “Muhammas”, “Eshvoy”, “Nolish”, “Naylarman”, “Oromijon”, “Rakhm ayla”, “Sarparda”, “Tabriz”, “Uch top”, “Sho kochdi”, “Qora dali”, “Shirvoni”, etc.) and does not repeat. The art of *bakhshi* (or *bakhshichilik*) is distinct in Khorosm. It is possible to observe not only individual performance of *dostons*, but also collective one (small groups of narrators and musicians consisting of 3-5 people). And this naturally determined intonation-melodic structure of *dostons* and their tonal character.

Khorosm school of narrators of epic is divided into two leading schools: Northern one, or so called “Ironi” school (or Mangit; it is spread in present-day territory of Khorosm, Karakalpakstan and Dashauz region of Turkmenistan) and Southern one or Khiva school (or so called “Shirvani” school). Though, what makes different these both school is their repertoire and composition of musicians. Narrators of “Ironi” school accompany their *doston* with play on *dutar* and *gidjak* (and *gidjak* is traditional one, i.e. three-stringed; *dutar* and *doira* is used rarely in combination). In “Shirvani” school, narration was accompanied by *dutar*, *bolaman* and *gidjak* in the past. However, since XX century the musical instruments used are *tar*, *qoshnay* (or *bolaman*) and *doira*. Each *doston* is opened by instrumental interlude called “sayqal” or “bartovil” (“Sarparda”). Its tune is used in instrumental melody inside *doston* itself or before music-poetic genres. Each tune (*nola*) has its own name. The name of song depends on the first few words of a verse. Some tunes in *dostons* are unchanged and are obligatory. Their range varies from fifth to octave and the form is couplet-based. Melodies are developed and sometimes with culmination points (*audj*). Manner of singing music parts is diverse: it depends on the preparedness, artistic taste and skill of narrator. During narration, after instrumental introduction and before beginning of the new song, narrator (*dostonchi*) always tunes up his musical instrument. In other words, each song is performed in a half-tone or one tone higher than the previous one. Predominant type of melodic flow is graduality, ascending-descending movement with coverage of registers. *Audj* (peak or culmination) and endings of the phrases are more songful. Developed music-poetic form and expressiveness of *dostons* of Khorosm became the reason as to why its fragments and extracts are performed widely in the form of individual songs (more often without any preliminary explanation of the situation in which they are sung in *dostons*).

The repertoire of Khoresm narrators is very rich and diverse. It includes heroic, historical, romantic, book-based, military-related and contemporary *dostons*. Most famous is considered the cycle of *dostons* “Gorogli”, which comprises of 40-100 *dostons*. Leading representatives of the “Ironi” school are: Khudoybergan Utegenov, Tengel Kamolov and his students (apprentices). Leading representatives of the “Shirvani” school – Bola bakhshi (Qurbonnazar) Abdullaev, his his sons (Norbek, Muhammad, Yetminbay) and students (apprentices).

In Khoresm, along with male *dostonchi*, popular are female narrators (*khalfa-dostonchi*), who sung in the past exclusively among women. In their repertoire predominant role played *dostons* of romantic nature, for instance, “Tokhir and Zukhra”. Singing of *dostons* is accompanied by instrumental ensemble, which includes such musical instruments as *qol soz* (Russian diatonic accordion or harmonica) and *doira*. Performances of *khalfa-dostonchi* differ with their softness, heartiness and lyricism.

Folk epic of Karakalpakstan, which is subdivided into *baksy* and *jyrau*, also differs with its own peculiarities and performance manners. *Dostons* (folk epics) have ancient roots and enjoy great popularity to nowadays. For *baksy* typical is performance of heroic and romantic *dostons* such as “Alpomish” (“Alpamys”), “Gorogli”, “Oshiq Garip”, “Sayatkhan and Khamro”, “Yusup and Akhmad”, “Bakhran and Gulandom”, etc. Manner of performance – recitative-songful and accompanied by *dutar* or *gidjak* (traditional one, three-stringed). The style of singing – *ichki ovoz*, which combines the traditions of Khoresm epic and Kazakh *aytys*. Apart from folk epic the repertoire of *baksy* includes popular song genres - *terma* and *qoshuq*, including lyrical ones. Among *baksy* significant place is occupied by women. Women-*baksy*, accompanying their singing with play on *dutar*, are more emotional. Their singing is of elevated character.

The art of *jyrau* has ancient roots. The manner of performance is recitative-declamatory with guttural singing style. The singing is accompanied by own play on *qobuz* (stringed instrument; to present days it is created based on ancient tradition its body is open, scoop-like; strings and bow are made of horse hair) style. *Jyrau* have been for centuries keepers and disseminators of epic poems and stories (*dostons*) of heroic, religious-mythological, historic, romantic, lyrical nature. From among such *dostons* it is possible to mention “Edige”, “Alpomish” (“Alpamis”), “Nurali”, “Oychinor”, “Tolganoy”, etc. It is exactly *jyrau* who did not let listeners forget important events and turning points in history. They were creators of heroic and romantic characters, which were imitated by many generations. It is thanks to the impact made by narrators selfconsciousness of the nation got shaped and formed. In their creativity *jyrau*, like *bakhshi* from other

regions, used different methods of impact on listeners: poetic text, story, musical accompaniment, gestures and mimicry. The oldest *gyrau* is considered to be Korkut ota (XI-XII centuries). It is with his name emergence of *doston* and musical instrument *qobuz* is associated.

Though, epic story and narration is not characteristic feature of the Ferghana Valley, there were some who were engaged in it in Namangan region. For instance, Razzoz bakhshi (from Chartak) and Madraim bakhshi (from Pop), whose repertoires included fragments from some *dostons* and terms and which were performed in guttural singing manner in accompaniment of *dombra*.

In fact, folk epic of Uzbekistan testifies to high artistic talent of the people, from among whom folk narrators, i.e. *bakhshi-shoirs* and *dostonchi*, creators and keepers of national epic traditions emerged. Many of them kept in their memory and popularized from 20 to 100 *dostons*. From among such people it is possible to mention narrators of the XX century such as Pulak shoir (who knew more than 76 *dostons*), Qodir bakhshi Rahimov (who knew up to 72 *dostons*), Fozil Yoldosh ogli (who knew 60 *dostons*), Ergash Jumanbulbul ogli (50 *dostons*), Mardonaqul Avliyoqul ogli (43 *dostons*), Bola bakhshi Abdullaev (more than 20 *dostons*), Yusuf Otagan ogli (31 *dostons*, etc).

The art of Uzbek *bakhshi* has been enjoying great popularity up to present and bright evidence for this is invitation of narrators to family occasions and folk festivities. The Government of Uzbekistan, on its side, highly values the creative activity of folk narrators. It already awarded honorable title of “People’s bakhshi of Uzbekistan” to many *bakhshi* people: Bola bakhshi Abdullaev and his sons, Norbek Abdullaev (Abdulla Qurbonnazarov) and Yetmishbay Abdullaev, Qalandar bakhshi Normatov (from Khoresm); Shomurot Togaev and Abduqahhor Rakhimov (from Kashkadarya); Ziyodulla Islomov (from Samarkand); Shoberdi Boltaev, Abdunazar Poyonov, Boboraim Mamatmurodov and Qora bakhshi Umirov (from Surkhandarya); Jumaboy *gyrau* (from Karakalpakstan). At the same time young narrators of bakhshi receive “Nihol” awards. From among such young people it is possible to mention Feruz Normatov, Janibek Piyazov, and others.

Already in the past *bakhshi* were performing in royal palaces. For instance in the palace of Genghis Khan there was Ulug jyrchi; in the palace of Tokhtamish – Kamolzoda and Jakhon Mirza; in the palace of Khiva khan Muhammad Rakhimkhon II – Rizo bakhshi; in the palace of emir of Bukhara, Nasrullokhon – Ernazar bakhshi. Also, some narrators dealt with folk medicine (carried out medical treatment rites for mentally sick people).

The names of the following folk *bakhshi-shoirs* are well-known: Muhammad shoir, Yoldosh bulbul, Fozil Yoldoshbulbul ogli and his brothers (Yoldosh, Qoldosh and Suyar shoir), Ergash shoir, Pulkan Shoir, Egamberdi bakhshi, Jumanbulbul shoir, Ergash Jumanbulbul ogli, Abdulla Nurali ogli, Islom Nazar ogli, Sherna bakhshi, Mardonqul Avliyoqul ogli, Qodir bakhshi Rahimov, Umir Safar ogli, Normurod bakhshi, Nurali Boymat ogli, Shomurot bakhshi Togaev, Shoberdi Boltaev, Abdunazar Poyonov, Bola bakhshi Abdullaev, Rozimbek Murodov, Ollanazarov Matyoqubov, Qalandar bakhshi Normatov, Norbek Abdullaev, Khudoybergan Utegenov, Tengel Kamolov, Garatdin Utemuratov, Bakbergen Syrymbetov, Bakhtiyor Esemuratov, Tengelbay Kallyev, Gulbakhor Rametova, Ziyoda Sharipova, Ogiljon Boyjonova, Yodgor Iskhoqov, Ziyodullo Islomov, Zoir Qochqorov and many others.

Traditions associated with epic have always been transmitted from master to apprentice, from father to son. Bright evidence for succession, continuation and development of epic traditions became participation of *bakhshi-shoirs* and family-based ensembles of *bakhshi* (Bola bakhshi Abdullaev and his sons – Norbek, Muhammad and Yetmishbay; Qalandar Normatov and his sons – Feruz and Bakhrom; Abduqahhor, Abdumurod and Bakhrom Rakhimovs from Dekhqonobod, who continue traditions of their father, Qodir Rakhimov; sons of Islom shoir, who was very famous in the past; sons of Pulkan shoir – Umarqul Pulkanov; sons of Umir bakhshi – Qora and Chori Umirov and others) in traditional competitions, conducted in Uzbekistan since 1975.

Doston exists not only in traditional form, but also is present on concert stage. Examples for this are: the activity of the group “Doston” established under State Philharmonic Society of Uzbekistan; folk ensemble “Doston” of the city of Khiva, which is led by people’s bakhshi of Uzbekistan, Norbek Abdullaev; ensemble “Khalfa” under the Palace of Culture of Khiva. In several districts traditional schools of mastery were established. For instance, the school of Qodir bakhshi Rakhimov in Dehqonobod (Kashkadarya); school of Shomurod bakhshi Togaev in Chiroqchi (Kashkadarya); school of Islom shoir in Samarkand; school of Shoberdi Boltaev in Boysun; school of Abdunazar Poyonov in Qumqorgon, etc.

Every year republican review competition of *bakhshi-shoirs* and *akyns* take place in Uzbekistan. The last one was held in the city of Parkent of Tashkent region in 2013. In addition, competitions were organized among young narrators in the city of Kitab (Kashkadarya). Since 1999 International competition of *bakhshi-shoirs* and *akyns* has been held in Termez, in which, along with Uzbek narrators of epics, folk narrators of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan participated. Also, numerous competitions among folk narrators (*bakhshi*) were

organized within the framework of the Open Folklore Festival “Boysun Bakhori” (2002-2006), and Festival of Traditional Culture “Asrlar sadosi” (2008-2013).

Based on *dostons* several music-scenic works were created by *bastakors* and composers of Uzbekistan. These include music dramas, opera and ballet works (such as “Tokhir and Zukhra”, “Layli and Majnun”, “Farkhod and Shirin”, “Alpomish”, “Oshiq Garib and Shokhsanam”, “Ravshan and Zulkhimor”, “Malikai ayyor”, “Qirq qiz”, etc.).

Along with other genres of traditional culture, *dostons* became part of the Uzbek treasure house of music and performance creativity and of the intangible cultural heritage of Uzbekistan in general.”

It should be noted that all elements of ICH of Uzbekistan, which were included in the National List, have their own databases, providing detailed information material on the element. They are also provided with references.

The references for the ICH element “*Dostons (folk epics)*” are given below:

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4. *Book of my grandfather Korkut*. Moscow-Leningrad, 1962.
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6. Mirzaev T. *Epic and narrator*. Tashkent, 2008.
7. *Music of epic*. Yoshkar-Ola, 1989.
8. *Uzbek Folk Poetry*. Leningrad, 1990.”

2. Non-Governmental Inventory²

There are no changes in non-governmental ICH inventories since 2010 in Uzbekistan.

² Refers to inventories made and managed by non-governmental organizations.