

KHALFA ART

Khalfa is a woman-performer of folk songs and instrumental music, a poetess in Khoresm Oasis, who embodies traditions of oral folk art. In term of activity, there are the following types of khalfas: *khalfa sozi* (khalfa-musician), who performs folk instrumental melodies, and *khalfa yodoghiy* (khalfa-singer and khalfa-poetess), who performs folk songs at wedding ceremonies and festivities while accompanying her singing by playing on a musical instrument. Both of them served the women “from inside”. Both types of khalfas performed inside of the place, where only women are sitting.

In the performance of ‘khalfasozi’, there exist accompaniment and solo genres. The ensemble consists of three people: khalfa (plays on accordion and sings songs), drummer (accompanies the songs, sometimes dances too) and dancer (dances and sings lapars). The repertoires of khalfas mainly consist of *Toy Mubarak* (Happy wedding), “*Yor-Yor*”, from the group of “*Oshiq*” (“lover”) — “*Tokhirva Zukhra*”, “*Oshiq Albani*”, “*Asli and Karam*”, “*Khurliqo and Khamro*”, admonitive and dance songs and on the bases of poems of Makhtumquli and other poets. Creative khalfas created compositions and composed melody dedicated to their period’s important issues. For instance, Khonim Suvchi Saidakhmadqizi (1858–1926)’s “*Bevafo zolim*” (“Unfaithful oppressor”), “*Bibijonim Qosim Devon qizi*” “*Ayrildim*” (“Separated”), Ojiza (Onabibi Otajonova, 1889–1961)’s more than 30 compositions are being performed by Nazira Sobirova, Roziya Matniyozqizi, Saodat Khudoyberganova and by other khalfas.

“*Kitobiy Khalfa*” (“*Khalfa poetess*”) were performed mainly in condolence ceremonies, and in the ceremonies called “*Ullipir*”,

“*MushkulKushod*” and reading such religious books as “*GavsuliAzam*”, “*Paygambar Hikoyati*” (Prophet’s story), “*BoboRavshan*”, “*Bibise-shanba*” served to seize women’s pain.

Khalfas participate in all weddings and other ceremonies of the people. For example, Khalfa opens a wedding feast by performing wedding-related ritual songs, such as “*Toy Mubarak*”, “*Toy Boshlovi*” and concludes by singing “*Toy Javobi*”. Khalfa traditions are being continued in such places of Khorezm region and the Republic of Karakalpakstan as Ellikqala, Totrkol, Beruniy.

Currently the traditions associated with this genre are mastered not only through “*ustoz-shogird*” (master-apprentice) traditional method of learning, but also through studying at music schools and art colleges. In Khorezm and in Karakalpakstan various competitions of khalfa performers are organized (in particular, there is a competition of khalfa performers which has been organized since 2013 within the framework of the festival “*Nafosat bostonim manim*”). Khalfas from Khorezm can demonstrate their art of performance and skills in open folk festival “*Boysunbahori*” (Boysun’s spring), traditional art festival “*AsrlarSadosi*” (Echo of the centuries) and international music festival “*Sharq Taronalari*” (Eastern melodies).



