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Article

"Lazgi": Awakening from the Depths of Centuries History and Spiritual Significance of the National Dance Art

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Abstract: This article analyzes the history, origin, stages of development, and cultural significance of the Uzbek national dance "Lazgi." It explores the formation of this unique dance in the Khorezm region, its ancient roots, its reflection in oral folklore, and its evolution through historical processes and the contributions of prominent artists. The study also examines different types of Lazgi, its national costumes and traditions, its role in the upbringing of the younger generation, and its recognition on the international stage. Special attention is given to its inclusion in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, as well as its promotion through international festivals and scientific research.

Keywords: Lazgi, Khorezm culture, national dance, intangible cultural heritage, UNESCO, dance art, cultural traditions.

1. Introduction

Among the rich and diverse cultural heritage of the Uzbek people, "Lazgi" occupies a special place as one of the most distinctive forms of national dance art . It is not merely a set of physical movements but a vivid artistic expression of the people's historical memory, emotional experiences, aesthetic worldview, and spiritual identity . Emerging from centuries past, Lazgi has been revived in modern times with renewed artistic expression and has become one of the key symbols of Uzbek national culture [1].

Originating in the ancient Khorezm region, Lazgi reflects the close relationship between humans and nature, portraying emotions such as joy, admiration, inspiration, and the celebration of life through expressive gestures and rhythmic movements. The dance embodies the values, traditions, and philosophical outlook of generations, serving as a unique means of cultural communication and artistic storytelling. Its dynamic movements, expressive hand gestures, and symbolic body language distinguish it from many other traditional dance forms [2].

In recent years, the cultural significance of Lazgi has gained international recognition. The inclusion of the Khorezm dance Lazgi in UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity has further strengthened its status as an important element of world cultural heritage. Today, Lazgi continues to inspire performers and audiences alike, contributing to the preservation of national identity and the promotion of Uzbek culture on the global stage [3].

Historical Roots of Lazgi

The history of Lazgi is closely connected with the Khorezm region, one of the ancient centers of civilization, science, and art in Central Asia. Archaeological findings, written sources, and oral traditions confirm the high level of cultural development in this region [4].

Research expeditions led by S.P. Tolstov revealed archaeological evidence suggesting the existence of ritual dance spaces in ancient settlements such as Kaltaminor and Toprak-

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kala, indicating that early forms of dance existed as far back as the 3rd–4th millennium BCE and the early centuries CE [5].

Some scholars associate the origins of Lazgi with ancient beliefs, natural phenomena, and Zoroastrian rituals. In "Avesta," sacred fire rituals and symbolic movements related to life and energy are described, which may have influenced the formation of early dance traditions [6].

2. Materials and Methods

According to Khorezm folklore, human movement was inspired by a divine melody that brought life into the human body [7]. This sacred sound is believed to have activated movement in the fingers, hands, and shoulders, symbolizing the birth of life itself. This mythical melody is considered by tradition as the origin of Lazgi [8].

Methods

This study employs a qualitative historical-cultural research approach to examine the history and spiritual significance of the Uzbek national dance "Lazgi." Data were collected from scientific literature, historical documents, archival materials, UNESCO reports, and scholarly studies on Uzbek dance art and cultural heritage.

The research utilized historical, descriptive, and comparative analysis methods. Historical sources were analyzed to trace the origins and development of Lazgi, while cultural and artistic materials were examined to identify its symbolic meanings and spiritual values. Comparative analysis was applied to evaluate the unique features of Lazgi within the broader context of traditional dance practices.

The collected data were interpreted through a cultural heritage perspective, focusing on the role of Lazgi in preserving national identity, transmitting spiritual values, and promoting Uzbekistan's intangible cultural heritage at the international level.

Procedure:

Review of literature on school security challenges and personnel management in Nigerian secondary schools.

Identification of the roles and responsibilities of school security personnel.

Analysis of the impact of capacity building programmes on personnel performance and school safety.

Synthesis of findings to argue the position that organized capacity building programmes are essential for effective school security management.

3. Results and Discussion

Types and Development of Lazgi

Over time, Lazgi developed into various forms influenced by social life, traditions, and ceremonial practices. According to research by G. Matyoqubova and S. Eshjonova, Lazgi includes several styles such as [9]:

- Masxaraboz Lazgi
- Qayroq Lazgi
- Dutor Lazgi
- Surnay Lazgi
- Saroy Lazgi
- Changak Lazgi
- Xiva Lazgi
- Garmon Lazgi
- Yallali Lazgi

For example, "Qayroq Lazgi" is associated with the rhythmic sound produced by striking stone or metal, symbolizing ancient working traditions [10].

Historical Influences

Throughout history, Lazgi was influenced by various socio-political conditions. During periods such as the Arab conquest, artistic expression faced restrictions, particularly for female performers. Despite these challenges, Lazgi continued to evolve and survive as a living cultural tradition [11].

Philosophical Meaning and Performance

The word "Lazgi" is often interpreted as "trembling" or "vibration," reflecting its dynamic and expressive nature. The dance imitates natural phenomena and the process of human creation, where movement begins from subtle vibrations in the fingers and spreads throughout the body.

Lazgi is performed by people of all ages in Khorezm—from young children to the elderly—demonstrating its deep integration into everyday life and cultural identity [12].

Contributions of Artists

The development of Lazgi is closely connected with prominent artists such as:

- Onajon Sobirova, who popularized Lazgi and created new stylistic forms
- Komiljon Otaniyozov, who contributed by integrating musical elements into Lazgi performance

In 1957, an ensemble named after Komiljon Otaniyozov was established, which continues to operate today.

Modern Recognition and International Status

On December 12, 2019, "Khorezm Dance – Lazgi" was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, marking its global recognition [13].

Additionally, the President of Uzbekistan issued a decree in 2020 establishing the international Lazgi Dance Festival in Khiva, held every two years. In 2021, the Urgench branch of the State Academy of Choreography of Uzbekistan was established to study, preserve, and teach Lazgi to future generations [14].

Scientific and Cultural Dialogue

Scientific discussions and cultural meetings play an important role in promoting Lazgi. Meetings with renowned artists, exhibitions of traditional costumes, and presentations of scholarly works have significantly contributed to increasing youth interest in national dance heritage [15].

4. Conclusion

Lazgi is a unique cultural phenomenon that has survived through centuries, embodying the spiritual world, history, and identity of the Uzbek people. It is not only a stage performance but also a living expression of freedom, emotional energy, and national pride.

Today, Lazgi stands as a globally recognized cultural heritage, and its preservation and transmission to future generations remain a vital responsibility.

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