



REVIVAL OF UZBEK FOLK GAMES IN THE PRESENT PERIOD (GAMES TRANSMIT VALUES AND CULTURE TO THE YOUNG)

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: 20 th July 2022	Uzbek folk games have been played on various holidays for thousands of years. Currently, a lot of work is being done to develop these games and distribute them throughout Central Asia and the rest of the world. The purpose of these folk games is to bring people together, improve their health and help preserve the cultural heritage of the people.
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By decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on measures for the further development of physical culture and mass sports, as well as by decree on measures to further improve the promotion of physical culture and sports in the Republic of Uzbekistan, many events are being held, as well as sets of actions aimed at developing the structure of "physical culture". Folk games played an important role in the formation and development of mankind. Since the olden days, nations have practiced various kinds of games. Great

morally strong. Games were vehicles for teaching ideas of freedom, independence and love of country.

Today, folk games give us more informatoins history of Uzbekistani people, reflecting their labor, life experiences and victories, as well as their knowledge and spirituality. One can learn about the Uzbek people's history, their values, aspirations and dreams through their games. Games function not only as a source of culture (dance, music, sports, theater performances and others), but of spirituality as well.

Physical and spiritual development

Uzbek folk games were often specific to certain regions, districts or villages. Certain games were peculiar to each historical process, educating the young the spirit of the epoch. These games cultivated values and qualities that enhanced an individual's whole life and contributed to his full development-both at the physical and spiritual levels

The fore, character and maintenance of ancient folk games depended on the needs of the people, as well as on external and internal factors, such as the environment, people's occupations, and the character of the expression of social contradictions existing in a community.

Shepherd games

To shepherds, who were often out in the fields, isolated from humanity, games served as a way to spice up their time. Games gave them a chance to move their bodies while not separating from the herd. A grassy field, where they grazed the cattle, was an excellent place to play a game. The shepherd's stick, which was always in his hand, served as an original "stick". Also, the cattle wool would serve as material for a ball. Shepherd games had been formed this way. At the beginning, such games were played mainly among the shepherd-horsemen, but other social classes adopted them later on.



numbers of games were widespread in Central Asia, where Uzbek traditional games took an important place. Uzbek traditional folk games have an old and rich history.

In ancient times, traditional games were important in the Uzbek's people's life. They were considered an effective method of bringing up children or transmitting values and culture to the young. Games provided children with opportunities to overcome difficulties, gain this skills, and prepare for their future. Games trained the young to be both physically and



Compared with modern societies which have numberless choices, Uzbek ancestors had a monotonous lifestyle. Games made this way of life interesting and entertaining. Through games, people had an opportunity to embody their desires, which they could not carry out in real life otherwise.

Momentarily tearing him off from his daily problems, games somehow helped a person to

overcome difficulties and contradictions. While playing, he could forget his negative emotions and energize himself. Games provided him release, as well as occasions for "happy moments". At the heart of traditional folk games, there were opportunities in promoting the physical, emotional and spiritual development of an individual.



Ritual hunting games

One of the earliest types of Uzbek traditional games were ritual hunting games, during which people tried to practice a forthcoming hunting, in the process demonstrating their skills and bravery. Subsequently, such games became a prototype for many genres of art, as well as rituals and ceremonies.

Traditional Uzbek games were diverse. Based on the means of expression they used, the traditional games can be classified as follows:

- Intellectual games require reflection, elaboration of a logical decision, and solution of riddles. Examples are *Shat-range* (chess), *Nard* (toss), *Kuvmok* (catching up) and *Uylab top* (puzzles).
- Verbal games represent a colloquial genre, where words are the main vehicle. Examples are *Tez aytish* (tongue-twisters) and *Topishmoq top* (riddles).
- Song games are original round dances in the form of games. An example is *Qizil gul* (red flower).
- Dancing (or pantomimic) games are usually accompanied by dancing actions. An example is *Kim oladi* (who can win).

- Dramatized games, in artistic and staged form, reflect the most impressive and interesting moments of life.
- Active games are conducted as a competition of experiences and powers between two or more opposing parties.

These games widely used familiar items, such as balls, as in *Top uyin* (solve the game); pebbles, in *Besh tosh* (five hidings); nuts, in *Toq, juft* (even, not even); bones, in *Oq suyak* (white bone); ropes, in *Argon tortish* (rope pulling); and belts, in *Belbog tortish* (belt pulling).

Traditional games also used animals and birds, such as sheep, in *Quchqor urushtirish* (struggle of sheeps); dogs, in *It urushtirish* (struggle of dogs); quails, in *Bedana urushtirish* (struggle of quails); cocks, in *Khuroz jangi* (cockfighting); donkeys, in *Eshak kupkari* (donkey riding); horses, in *Ot poyga agdarish* (turnover of a riding horse) and *Chovgon* (hockey on a horse); and goats, in *Uloq* (race for the goat).

Games specific to age groups

Games which were specific to different age groups were played at certain life stages and were transmitted from one generation to another. Some examples are: *Uy-uy* (small houses), *Kelin-kuyov* (groom and bride), *"Yashinmachoq"* or *"Bekinmachoq"* (hiding), and others.



Games were important in the task of child rearing. They were integral to the development and growth of children, especially at ages four to eleven. Traditional games were unique "school" that prepared children for life. They helped not only to develop their physical and cognitive skills, but to enrich their consciousness, stir their imagination, enliven their memory, and develop their professional skills for the future.

Different seasons, different games

The games were conducted depending on seasons and climatic conditions. For example, the games Kupkari (horse riding) and Uloq (race for the goat) were done in late autumn through mid-spring, because summer heat would exhaust the horsemen and horses. Also, widespread agricultural activities usually ended in autumn.



In summer evening, when the heat had dissipated and people were free from their work, children would play Oq suyak (white bone). This game could proceed at night since the white bone was visible in the dark. This

game could proceed at night since the white bone was visible in the dark. In this game, children elect a leader who throws the leg bone of a cow a long way off with full force. Watching the direction of the bone's flight,



boys run as fast as they can to get to the bone. The one who finds it first and gels it to the leader wins and is usually rewarded with a sizeable prize.



Through the centuries, the original system of traditional games of the Uzbek people had developed in this manner. There are many types of traditional games, but it is impossible to describe all of them in this article. The following are some examples:

Donkey race

Eshak mindi (donkey race): Participants are divided into two groups of five persons each. On the ground, one participant draws a straight line of two steps in length. The captains of the teams, standing at

this line, throw their *tyubeteikas* (traditional caps). The player whose *tyubeteikasi* reaches the furthest point wins the race. The captains of the teams, standing at this line, throw their *tyubeteikas* (traditional caps). The player whose *tyubeteika* reaches the furthest point wins the race. The losers stand in a row, tightly gripping each other, imitating a donkey.

The winners jump in and sit on the losers, as if they are mounting donkeys. Being on the "donkey's" back, the winners should stay on for a certain time, not





losing the balance. The losers, in turn, should keep themselves balanced and keep their chain. If any of the losers cannot carry a rider, all efforts of his team will be in vain. The chavandoz (donkeyman) tries to choose the weakest member of the losers, and two or three persons try **suput** aneously to sit on him.

The game develops the physique and professional skills of the participants; it also teaches them the secrets of becoming a good horseman.

Horse riding

Kupkari or *Uloq* (horse riding or rase for the goat): Horses **h--e** been bred in Central Asia for millenniums. Horse breeding was one of the traditional occupations of the predecessors of modern Uzbeks. According to an ancient manuscript, Chinese emperors haq sent special envoys to Central Asia to buy thoroughbred horses from Ferghana Valley. One of the most ancient horse-breeding areas was the Zarafshan

oasis with centers in Samarkand, Urgut and Kattakurgan. There were various breeds, but the most popular were the Karabayirs.

Kupkari/Uloq is the most popular tyre of horse riding not only mong Uzbeks, but among Central Asian peoples as well. The word *kupkari* comes from the Turkic words *kuk* and *buri* which together mean "a blue wolf".

There are variations to the game, but the aim is the same-for the horsemen to get control of the goat car-cass and bring it to the finish line. Hundreds of horsemen are usually involvtd. Their target is to gather the 50-70 kilo goat carcass from the ground while escaping from other competitors. The game continues for 60 minutes in three 20-minute periods.

The horseman who throws the greatest number of carcasses into *toy-kazan* (a huge wedding pan) becomes the champion.



Rules and prizes

The rules of the game are rather strict. Horsemen are not allowed to ride in the direction of the spectators, and spectators are not allowed to help the horsemen pick up the carcass from the ground. No one is permitted to ride a horseman who bends over to pick up the carcass from the ground.

Usual prizes for the winners are camels, bulls, goats, horses, carpets and household accessories. *Kupkari* was usually organized during festivals and celebrations, and most often during marriage and circumcision (*sunnat-toy*) ceremonies.

A game in the spring

Like *Kupkari* or *Uloq*, the game *Dughish* (tail) also requires a strong fighting spirit. It proceeds in an open

field in the spring, during holidays and weddings. The players are divided into two equal groups. They elect commanders, then cast lots. The lucky team begins the game, i.e., they spurn their opponents et the tail. The other team tries to prevent it. The game lasts until one team prevails. The winners dictate their terms, which the losers must carry out, i.e., barking, imitating a donkey, cock or goat calls, reciting verses, or telling a funny story.

Rope-walking

The training of future actors is the function of the famous game *Dorboz* (rope-walker). A big rope is set up for the performance on the square. The performer engages the rope with a *langar* (a special stick), but he performs his task mostly without it.



A dorboz shows his great strengths if he navigates the length of a rope without a stick. Moreover, he tries to demonstrate technically difficult tricks such as walking on the rope while in a haversack or bag (*qop kiyib dorga chikish*); walking with a tray tied to his legs (*oioqqa*

patnis bog 'lab yurish); teetering (*chig`iriq, arg`imchoq*); Lying on the rope every once in a while (*sim ustida muallaq yotish*); walking on the rope with a cup of tea balanced on his head (*piyolani ichidagi choi bilan boshda kutarib dorda yurish*); and other gimmicks.





EDUCATIONAL FUNCTION

In ancient times, horse riding was not only a game, nor was it mere entertainment; it **cafed** an important educational function. It developed in boys such attitudes and skills as boldness, bravery and mastery of horses-a kind of military training.

While in a horse race . Young men learned how to develop physical and mental strength, persistence and agility-traits necessary in bringing up a "true man". Kupkari helped young men value physical power and fearlessness. In the past, such competitions developed

the military skills of the remarkable Turkic cavalry and served as a good school for horses and horsemen.

The game also made an important contribution to the development of cattle breeding. It led to the development of the horses' endurance and speed and the improvement of horse breeds in general.

REVIVAL OF TRADITIONAL CULTURE

The spirit of the ancient culture of horse riding still lives in Uzbekistan; chavandozes (horsemen) are still winning races and enjoying the great respect of the people.



After gaining independence, the Republic of Uzbekistan has launched the revival of traditional culture, including folk games. The revival of such national holidays as Nawruz and Mehrjon, as well as the

conduct of various games and competitions, has promoted the development of games forgotten during the Soviet past.





Nowadays, national games are carried out **inostly** in the provinces, where people conduct more traditional way of life. Today, the need for further revival of traditional Uzbek games among the population ranks high in national priorities. While modern types of sports are emerging, they are not able to fill the niche previously occupied by folk games. Going back to folk games can help increase the ranks of physically strong and spiritually balanced people.

From centuries past to the present, ancient folk games have helped the Uzbek people to express themselves; relate with nature and the environment; develop their minds, bodies and spirit; and secure an interesting and meaningful lifestyle.

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