

**CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF KHOREZM
ETHNOGRAPHY AND THE SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTION OF FEMALE
SCHOLARS (CASE OF THE INDEPENDENCE PERIOD)**

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Abstract. This article provides a general analysis of contemporary studies conducted in the field of Khorezm ethnography during the years of independence. The research examines scientific works devoted to the ethnic and cultural heritage of the oasis, folk traditions, customs, rituals, national clothing and jewelry traditions, gastronomic and dance culture, wedding ceremonies, as well as the distinctive features of Turkmen communities. Particular attention is paid to the scientific contributions of women scholars, whose research has played a significant role in the development of Khorezm ethnography.

Keywords: Khorezm ethnography, national identity, customs, rituals, jewelry traditions, national clothing, dance culture, traditional cuisine, Turkmens, transformational processes.

INTRODUCTION. During the years of independence, the process of reassessing Uzbekistan's historical and cultural heritage intensified, leading to the formation of new scientific approaches to issues of national identity. This process significantly increased scholarly interest in the in-depth and systematic study of Khorezm ethnography. The republication of historical and ethnographic sources, the opening of archival documents, and the expansion of field ethnographic research made it possible to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the rich ethnic and cultural layers of the Khorezm oasis [24]. On this basis, the customs, rituals, folk dances, clothing culture, and lifestyle of the local population, along with the transformational processes occurring within them, have been reexamined using modern scientific methods [10; 21; 22].

LITERATURE REVIEW. During the independence period, studies on Khorezm ethnography expanded in content and became methodologically enriched. In particular, research conducted by women scholars occupies an important place in illuminating the ethnic history, tangible and intangible cultural heritage, rituals, and social processes of the oasis.

The works of M. Jumaniyozova are especially significant in the study of ethnic processes and transformational issues in Khorezm ethnology. Her research on the

settlement of Kipchak Uzbeks in Khorezm, folk medicine, gastronomic culture, and dance art contributes to a deeper understanding of the ethnic formation processes of the oasis [20; 21; 23].

Jewelry art and ornamental traditions of the Khorezm oasis were analyzed by Q. Bakdurdiyeva from historical and semantic perspectives, revealing the symbolic meanings of jewelry items, patterns, and their connection with ethnic identity [1; 2; 3; 4].

Studies by Sh. Nurullayeva examine national clothing and dance costumes of Khorezm through the prism of aesthetic values, symbolism of colors, and patterns [11; 12; 27].

Khorezm gastronomic culture was fundamentally studied by S. Matkarimova, who analyzed traditional dishes, their composition, preparation technologies, and ritual significance [26]. Wedding ceremonies were comprehensively examined by N. Matkarimova using a historical-ethnographic approach [25].

The culture, ethnic identity, and transformational processes of Turkmen communities in the Khorezm oasis were scientifically analyzed in the studies of M. Egamberganova, contributing to an understanding of the region's multi-layered ethnic composition [6; 8; 30].

METHODOLOGY. This study employs a комплекс approach to examine the development of Khorezm ethnography during the years of independence and the scientific contributions of women scholars. The methodological framework is based on the principles of historicism and systematic analysis.

The historical-comparative method was used to analyze differences and continuity between ethnographic studies conducted before and after independence. Source studies methodology facilitated the incorporation of monographs, dissertations, scholarly articles, archival documents, and museum collection materials into scientific analysis.

Descriptive and analytical methods were applied to systematize ethnographic data related to customs, rituals, national clothing, jewelry traditions, gastronomic culture, and dance art. A transformational approach was used to analyze changes in traditional cultural elements under the influence of modern socio-cultural processes.

A gender-based approach was also applied to evaluate the role of women scholars in the development of Khorezm ethnography, including their research topics and methodological perspectives. Inductive and deductive methods were employed to generalize research findings.

DISCUSSION. The scholarly research conducted by women ethnographers of Khorezm has played a crucial role in deepening the understanding of Khorezm culture, national identity, aesthetic values, and transformational processes, thereby making a significant contribution to the development of the field.

In particular, M. Jumaniyozova conducted research on the settlement of the Dashti Kipchak population in the Khorezm oasis during the medieval period. Her study analyzes the migration routes of Uzbek tribes from the Kipchak steppe, socio-political conditions, and ethnic formation processes. The research also explores the adaptation of Kipchaks to local populations, changes in lifestyle, economic activities, and traces reflected in village names, tribal structures, dialects, and ethnographic traditions.

Additionally, Jumaniyozova examined new scientific approaches formed in Khorezm ethnology after independence and identified methodological challenges and research gaps. Her works also address transformational processes in customs, culinary traditions, Iranian cultural elements assimilated into the ethnic composition of Khorezm, and ethnographic codes in national dance art.

Subsequent studies focused on traditional medicine, its historical roots, connections with primitive beliefs, and mystical foundations, producing valuable results for Khorezm ethnography.

Sh. Nurullayeva conducted extensive research on national clothing as a key ethnic code of Khorezm culture. Her studies, including analyses of dance costume patterns, traditions and customs of Khorezm Uzbeks in the 20th–21st centuries, and museum collections of the Ichan-Qala Museum, serve as an important scientific foundation for understanding the symbolic meanings and ethnic markers embedded in clothing.

S. Matkarimova's research on traditional Khorezm cuisine and dining culture represents a fundamental study of the region's gastronomic heritage. The work analyzes preparation technologies, dietary customs, ritual practices, and their social functions from an ethnographic perspective.

N. Matkarimova's research on wedding ceremonies provides a comprehensive historical, ethnographic, and cultural analysis of marriage rituals among Khorezm Uzbeks, including pre-wedding, wedding, and post-wedding practices, religious influences, and transformational changes.

Special attention was also paid to the study of Turkmen culture in the Khorezm oasis. M. Egamberganova's research comprehensively examines Turkmen ethnic identity, social structure, economic activities, and cultural transformations, including linguistic, religious, and ritual practices.

Q. Bakdurdiyeva's studies on jewelry traditions analyze the historical and modern forms of Khorezm jewelry using museum collections. Her research highlights not only technical and artistic features but also the social and symbolic functions of jewelry as markers of ethnic identity.

RESULTS. The research demonstrates that during the years of independence, the traditions, customs, national clothing, jewelry traditions, gastronomic culture, wedding ceremonies, and folk dances of the Khorezm population have been studied systematically and comprehensively. The findings highlight the significant

contribution of women scholars to Khorezm ethnography. The works of Sh. Nurullayeva, S. Matkarimova, and Q. Bakdurdiyeva have substantially contributed to the understanding of regional culture, national identity, aesthetic values, and transformational processes, as well as the preservation of cultural heritage.

CONCLUSION. During the years of independence, Khorezm ethnography has developed systematically based on modern scientific approaches, contributing to an in-depth study of the region's ethnic and cultural heritage. Research findings demonstrate that customs, rituals, national clothing, jewelry traditions, gastronomic culture, wedding ceremonies, folk dances, and the ethnocultural characteristics of Turkmen communities have been analyzed within the framework of historical continuity and transformational processes.

The reviewed scholarly works confirm the significant role of women scholars in advancing Khorezm ethnography. The studies conducted by Jumaniyozova, Nurullayeva, Matkarimova, Bakdurdiyeva, and Egamberganova have made an important contribution to revealing national identity, identifying ethnographic codes, and evaluating the role of traditional culture in contemporary society. Overall, ethnographic research carried out during the independence period plays a crucial role in preserving, interpreting, and transmitting Khorezm's cultural heritage to future generations, while women scholars' contributions expand the possibilities for integrating regional ethnology into the modern academic landscape.

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