

## The Role of Women in the Traditions Associated With Hashar in Uzbekistan

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**Annotation:** This article, based on field ethnographic data and historical literature, describes the hashar rituals among women in the south of Uzbekistan.

**Keywords:** Uzbeks, women, help each other, tradition, labor, cotton, silk, khalaji, charkh, embroidery.

Diligence has long been absorbed in the life and household of Uzbeks. In the past, our people had specific traditions of labor organization. Old people constantly taught the younger generation labor traditions and skills. From the beginning to the end of the Uzbek labor force, it continued with its unwritten special “iron” laws and regulations, as well as with a high level of work. At the end of the work, according to the traditions, special dishes were prepared and hospitality was organized. The word “hashar”, which has played an important role in the life and way of life of our people, has an Arabic meaning: “to gather.” As noted in the Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek language, “khashar” (التجزئة- assembly, meeting, conference) is a voluntary, impartial participation, voluntary support of the majority in the performance of any task [1.517]. In some sources, the word “hashar” is interpreted as “gathering”, “crowd” [1.362]. The word “Hashar” is called “ashar” by some parishioners of the Uzbek people and by the Kyrgyz, and by the Kazakhs it is called “asar”. Also, Uzbeks, Kazakhs and Karakalpaks use the term “support”. Currently, the words “hashar” and “kumak” have the same meaning and both are used [5.34]. In fact, hashar is when many people voluntarily help each other without discrimination, gratitude and gratuitously. Collecting to perform any work means mobilizing people for construction work. The term “Hashar” was often widely used in the works on the digging of the aric and the extraction of water. The Russian orientalist P.P. Ivanov noted that khashar was a feudal duty, which consisted in using people in the construction and construction of fortresses. According to historical sources, during the time of the Sheibanids (XVI century) this duty was especially common.

In the past, our ancestors performed most of the agricultural work with hashar. In early spring, the hardest work, such as opening vineyards and pruning branches, plowing fertile lands, collecting fodder, storing fertilizing, watering with autumn washing water, digging and cleaning large ditches, channels, trenches, was carried out by hashar. In addition to the craftsmen, hashar participants were invited to build a new building or repair an old one. In the villages, sheep, goats (“chaganbokar”) and cattle (“shepherd”) were grazed by hashar, exchanging queues every day. This tradition is still preserved in some of our villages.

In the Kashkadarya and Surkhandarya regions of southern Uzbekistan, there is a tradition of “khayrov”, which is carried out in late autumn and on clear winter days through hashar. By tradition, the main canal was cleaned by hashar once a year. Everyone who was able to work went out to dig hayrov (channels). A stranger passing along the edges of the Aryk Canal removed from his horse to help Khayrov and continued on his way again. By tradition, those who built the building with by hashar were usually told: “Strength and diligence to you”. In the Karshi and Sherabad oases in the south of Uzbekistan, until the end of the 20s of the XX century, there was a paikal

(precinct) system. The common land of the rural community was called “paikal”, where community members worked there together.

The head of the Paykal was elected by the dehkans themselves. The shares of the khanates and beks were determined and paid, and the harvest was distributed equally between them. Academician K. Shaniyazov described the khashar process of Uzbek-Karlucs living in the lower reaches of Kashkadarya in very interesting passages. Usually, from the beginning of March to the middle of April, the hashar of cleaning the ditches was carried out and it was led by aksakals (elders) or mirabs. The aksakal (Mirab) counted the amount of work that the participants of the hashar had to do from early in the morning. If a certain number of people did not come from a certain paykal, mirab announced “boki” - a fine, each boki cost 15-20 tenge (3-4 soums). The elder charged a horse, donkey or chapan from a less active member of the paykal who participated in the hashar.

And a member of the Paykal was telling his boss about what had happened. Chekboshi (paykalboshi) collected a fine from the members of the paykal and gave it to the aksakal (mirabu) and took back the pawned things: a horse, a donkey and a chapan. The Aksakal (Merab) distributed the fine among those who actively participated in the hashar. Mirab measured the volume of the excavation and controlled the cleaning of the channel with a given amount of each paykal. Farmers who did not participate in the hashar were deprived of the right to use water throughout the season. Neighbors were the first to come to hashar. Sometimes people who had helped each other before took part in the hashar. Hashar was also widely used in the processing of corn and cotton. Delicious food was prepared for the participants of the hashar. At the beginning of the XX century, to the participants of the hashar began to give yaktaks, and to the craftsmen, mainly skullcaps, chapans, belts, shirts, and handkerchiefs to children. According to ethnographic data, in Kashkadarya there was also a method of mutual assistance of “algovs”. If a peasant lacked something (a horse, an ox, a plow, a yoke, seeds, etc.), then he collaborated with another farmer. Their mutually beneficial cooperation with pets, weapons and equipment was also considered as an algov. Until recently, in the mahallas and (guzars) of cities and villages, if someone built a house with the help of a hashar, then every man living nearby, especially his close relatives, had to participate in the help of a hashar. If the father could not go, in this case the son went instead of him. Traditionally able-bodied men tried not to miss hashar. The elders drank tea at the place of kashar and gave useful advice, and tried to help as much as they could. Often they tried to do the work in one day, and tried not to postpone it to the next day. Sometimes the work lasted a day or two, and in some cases several days. Uzbek women also had khashars, such as cleaning cotton, beating and picking [2.7-74]. Uzbek peasants left part of the cotton they grew for household needs, and sold the rest on the market. Cotton processing at home was mainly the responsibility of women. They performed this work in groups based on hashar of mutual voluntary assistance. Cotton harvesting was carried out mainly in winter, and sometimes in spring and summer. At first, the cotton was dried on sandalwood, as the dried cotton is quickly cleaned, and the fiber becomes of higher quality. Since cleaning cotton from cotton seeds was a very difficult task, the women took turns organizing mutual assistance - hashar. Hashar was held at the group level of mahali (guzara) and village. Such collective work was called “chigirik hashar” (to clean cotton from seeds) in the Tashkent oasis and the Fergana Valley, and “khalaji hashar” in Bukhara, Samarkand, Kashkadarya and Surkhandarya oases. This variety of names depended on which tool the work was done with. Khalaji consists of two circular devices rotating against each other. With the help of such a machine, women cleaned up to 30 kg of cotton seeds per week, extracting 10.5 kg of cotton fiber and 21 kg of seeds. The fiber was used to make bedding, coats and yarn [5.150].

Women of the settled peasantry and semi-settled shepherds used a spinning wheel to process wool and cotton. The spinning wheel facilitated heavy manual labor and significantly increased

productivity. The yarn was much softer and stronger. “Charkh hashar” is a joint women’s activity in fiber spinning, which is a very common form of mutual assistance in Central Asia, especially in Uzbekistan. This occupation is also known among people from a vast territory stretching from Central Asia to India and the eastern country of Japan.

Usually such a hashar was arranged in the spring under the awning of the house. The work that had to be done with a spinning wheel was carried out by the women of the district or the whole village at the request of the workforce. There were poor housewives and pious wives among the participants of the hashar. Such hashar usually lasted from two days to a week or more. The hostess prepared special dishes for the participants of the hashar. Women came to khashar with their spinning wheels. Of course, there were cases when poor women were forced to work during hashar in rich families. Spinning hashar in the Zerafshan valley is called “big hashar”, in the Tashkent oasis “chaksan”, in the Fergana valley “chakhsan”, in (Kokand, Andijan) “chok hassan” [2.67-74].

In most regions of Uzbekistan, women did not spin on Mondays and Tuesdays. Because on Tuesday, a female rite was held. A banquet was organized for the participants of the hashar, which also required considerable expenses. Naturally, not all housewives could organize such a large hashar. The participants of the hashar worked sitting under the supports of vines on wide wooden beds. Before starting work, the hostess set the table for the participants of the hashar. A basket of cotton peeled from seeds for spinning yarn was placed in front of each participant of the hashar. There was also a girls’ cooperative for the production of yarn - the association “Maiden Dahsan” and “Maiden ten-day”.

The girls started hashar in the house, with the spindles and spinning wheels given to them, and until a certain time, they did not go home until the work was finished. Currently, the term “Reaching the age” has been preserved to this day. The girls participating in the hashar prepared themselves for the dowry of shirts, dresses of different colors and household items. The owner of the house cooked pilaf, the national dish naryn and other delicacies for the participants of the hashar and the reception was very thick. The hashar was prepared from Wednesday and Friday, and the hashar lasted until the next Friday. Future grooms sent gifts to their engaged girls - for congratulations.

Each girl brought bread, various fruits and products from home. It was called “harfona” and “honor”. The girls spun yarn together. Married women with children did not enter the maiden hashar, but arranged a separate hashar – “chaksan”. Such hashars were held with humor, female entertainment, dancing in a circular accompaniment [4.35-38]. Also, an atmosphere of free communication, discussions and debates on various topical issues was set up in the circle of participants. At the end of the hashar, the women sang in a circle and joined in the dances, complementing the circle with their humorous and interesting performances. Hashar was filled with interesting stories and jokes. Humorous poems, songs, made a great impression on the participants of the hashar. Currently, such khashars have been preserved only in a few villages. Although the organizers of the hashar were elderly women, teenagers, boys and girls also took an active part in it. Adults, as mentors and educators, taught them their life work experience and gave them advice. Female interaction was very useful before family celebrations, especially wedding ones. For example, before the bride's wedding, a hashar “cotton spanking” was organized. Women wove and sewed blankets and pillows made of cotton for a dowry for the bride and groom. Before the wedding, hashars such as “dowry sewing”, “sarpochi”, “tun bichar” were held in a special way. Close relatives, friends and neighbors took an active part in such hashars in the house of the future bride. At the same time, similar hashars were arranged in the groom's house.

By tradition, these khashars were headed by elderly, reputable, respectable and large women. The older woman was the first to start sewing, and the rest of the sewing was continued by other women. Sometimes women, skilled tailors, were invited to such hashars. Since time immemorial,

one of the female occupations that require fine and elegant craftsmanship is embroidery. For example, the fame of the Shakhrisabz suzanes has spread all over the world. These gentle suzans amaze not only with their intricate craftsmanship, but also with the selection and arrangement of colors. Embroidery is considered the hardest work. In Kashkadarya and Surkhandarya, flowers are embroidered on skullcaps, on the collar of a shirt, on cardigans, tablecloths and so on. In the region there are such types of embroidery as “Sanama”, “Ilma”, “Surma”, “Bosma”, “Jimalai”, which, of course, required great skill from the seamstresses. [3.36-37].

Khashars have always been organized in the process of carpet weaving under the guidance of experienced, skillful and skillful women, and they also gave advice on unique flowers, decorations and carpet structure. In Southern Uzbekistan, wool carpets, fiber carpets (“julhirs”), Arab carpets, maiden carpets, gajari carpets, bags, kebanak, chakman, supra (surpa) and embroidery felt were widely used. This was done by women through hashar “needlework”. If one of the women could not participate in the hashar for a good reason, then her daughter participated instead and the daughter brought treats with her [6.67-74]. Women who did not participate in the hashar for no reason, of course, gradually disappeared from the public eye.

When kashars were arranged in new houses, men did hard work, women cooked food, and female neighbors and relatives set the table. Women have always supported each other and participated in hashar in high spirits and solidarity. In particular, the customs of participating in hashar were strictly adhered to by women of close relatives. They felt like true relatives and participated in hashar in cooperation with each other. Women also organized hashar, such as fruit harvesting, pressing raisins, drying melons, building a furnace, weaving carpets. In short, many types of hashar, which are among the labor traditions of Uzbek women, occupy a significant place in the life of our people. In the current period of renewal, radical changes in the political, economic, social and spiritual life of the newly independent Uzbekistan based on the idea of “From national revival to national progress”, it is necessary to introduce more and more respect for women’s labor traditions.

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