

O'TOV

O'tov — is the living place of Central Asian nomadic tribes. As it can be constructed and removed within a short period of time, it was evolved on the basis of long time knowledge and experience of nomadic tribes. Its rib structure is made of wood, and wooden pieces are combined with the skin, not by metal wire or nails. There are special holes for joining wooden parts of otov together. The ribs of otov are constructed in round shape and its outer layer is covered with felt (wood fabric). The interior is covered with various carpets and other covers.

Since otov consists of one big room, a meal is cooked and eaten, guests are met and people have rest in this very room. For this reason there are special parts separated for women and children, and for men. The parts

made of bones, wood and other raw materials were made by the men, the objects necessary for outer and inner parts of it were made by women. Patterns of mainly plants and geometric figures are used in the decorations and objects made by women,

Necessary objects for otov are made of natural raw materials. Therefore it is warm in winter, cold in summer. The hole for opening and closing is set at the top of the pad to release the smoke from the burned fire and for better air circulation. The lower part of the felt that is wrapped around the otov during the hot summer days will cause the air circulation and the cooling down of the interior. At present such otovs can be met in shepherds of Surkhandarya and Kashkadarya regions of Uzbekistan and in Karakalpakstan. In canteens situated in Tashkent and in other large cities otovs are also being largely used.





SNOWDROP FESTIVAL

Boychechak (snowdrop) festival represents a ceremony, which is conducted among the Turkic people after arrival of spring, after *boychechak* (snowdrop) blooms. It also represents a festival, which is organized on the occasion of blooming of the first flower. And it is *Boychechak* (snowdrop) festival which stands at origins of such festivals as "*Lola sayli*" ("Tulip festival"), "*Gulsayli*" ("Flower festival"). Analysis of the festival indicates that in the antiquity it embodied the struggle between winter and spring. Such festivals were organized in foothills, steppes and gardens. They were considered important in the life of the people. Therefore preparation for them was special as well. Indeed, preservation of word components in a relatively complete form, which is observed in this festival, acknowledges this fact. Initially organized with participation of adults, *Boychechak* (snowdrop) festival, later on acquired the form of children's folklore. In general, it is interesting to note that the traces of many forgotten festivals have been preserved in the form of children's folklore. Children gather snowdrops in groups from the foothills near the village. In this process a competition may be observed among the groups. The group, who brings snowdrops first to the village, wins the contest and gets the most of the presents and gifts.

As a rule, during *Boychechak* (snowdrop) festival children, carrying snowdrops, walked around houses by expelling winter from them. And the more solemn the ceremony was, the louder songs glorifying spring were performed, the faster winter left houses.

Qattiq yerdan qatalab chiqqan Boychechak
Yumshoq yerdan yumalab chiqqan
Boychechak

(Grown through the layers of the solid ground
Rolling through the soft ground, snowdrop)

These words describe how difficult is growing through the hard ground to the Earth surface for the snowdrop.

It was believed that a snowdrop, which is a spring flower, brought joy, happiness and luck, abundance and grace to houses. The owners of houses, in their turn, gave presents to children, who brought snowdrops, and by expelling winter from houses, brought spring into them. To be happy by seeing snowdrops, passing them over one's eyes meant the triumph of spring and snowdrops, meant ending of winter and beginning of spring.

Imaging the nature as something that lives, considering that all the living dies in winter and comes to life with arrival of spring, interpreting this in the context of grim struggle between winter and spring — all these can be found in the practice of different nations of the world. Based on this distinct way of understanding the nature, these nations conducted their rituals by incorporating some magical features. In these rituals they demonstrated in a spectacular manner the struggle between winter and spring. In addition, it was popularly believed that spring's victory over winter in such struggle impacted the nature.

It bears mentioning that "*Boychechak*" (snowdrop) festival and the songs associated with it continue to be performed in different regions of Uzbekistan.

