The Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory: Music and Intercultural Understanding

by

Kanykei Mukhtarova

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Music
University of Alberta

Abstract

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the transnational social impact of ethnojazz, the synthesis of traditional music with jazz and contemporary music, as a grass-roots musical collaboration across the Central Asian context. Although fusions between traditional music and jazz had taken place during Soviet times, there have been more opportunities for such artistic collaboration since the breakup of the Soviet Union, and the process has unfolded differently and with new meaning, particularly within the Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory project. My case is rather unusual in ethnomusicology. My research project was possible because I first developed a creative environment where ethnojazz evolved; it was only later that I realized I had also created material for my research.

Examining music, interactions, and discourses of musicians brought together in a laboratory setting to create a collective musical composition, I explore how the musical experiences promoted mutual understanding among the different nationalities of the region while celebrating the cultural diversity of Central Asia, something that has been lacking in the national and ethnic conflicts both within and between nations. I study Central Asian ethnojazz in order to understand how its musical processes may facilitate multicultural dialogue, express national, regional, and musical identities in post-Soviet republics, and create new musical compositions reflective of these intercultural improvisations across the Central Asian region.

Another major point of this dissertation is the role of the Bishkek International Jazz festival and its impact in spreading ethnojazz and stimulating the appearance of the other jazz festivals in the region. Moreover, I analyze the intentions of the international organizations and embassies in funding the Bishkek jazz festival and other jazz festivals in the region as a way to use “soft power”, while realizing their geopolitical interests and eagerness to win in a contested region. Ethnographic research at the Bishkek International Jazz Festival from 2006

to 2018 and the Ethnojazz Laboratory from 2014 to 2017 was possible because I was involved as the main organizer. From this vantage point, the Ethnojazz Laboratories became the case study for my research. My findings show that even though these projects were supported by Western funders and by this promoted their own interests, overall these projects helped musicians to generate new ideas, to build social and cultural connections, and express identities.

Acknowledgments

I have reached the concluding stage in writing this dissertation even though there have been moments that raised doubts that this would ever come to be. Writing a dissertation is a long and arduous process, but in my case it was interrupted for a time by a serious illness. Fortunately, in spite of all the challenges, I also received generous support from numerous people, who helped enable its completion. I would like to thank each of those groups of people: professors, colleagues, friends, and my family. I am grateful for their help during the processes of studying, discovering, and writing.

First, I would like to thank the musicians, both formal participants in the festival laboratories and other musicians, whose experience with ethnojazz inspired me to write this dissertation. I appreciate the time they spent participating in interviews as well as the stories and thoughts they shared with me. I admire their passion and talent in creating a new phenomenon—Central Asian ethnojazz—and was honoured to witness and be part of this process. I recognize and appreciate the work of non-musicians, such as festival organizers and jazz critics, whom I met during our round-table discussions, which helped me to understand the importance of the ethnojazz phenomenon. I also want to thank the donor organizations, who continuously supported the Ethnojazz Laboratory Project and the Bishkek International Jazz Festival. Without these donors this project would not have been possible.

I was very fortunate to be surrounded on my committee by so many first-class scholars. I learned from them how to become a scholar. I had two supervisors, Dr. Michael Frishkopf and Dr. Federico Spinnetti, and benefited greatly from their professionalism. Their constructive and insightful suggestions were especially valuable when I was trying to find the core of my dissertation and not lose focus by trying to cover too many topics. Dr. Frishkopf encouraged me to develop the topic of ethnojazz for my first paper in a course, Issues in Ethnomusicology, and he also contributed an article to a Bishkek Jazz Festival collection of essays on Ethnojazz. I much appreciate his humanity and personal support, which was especially important for me during various challenging times. Dr. Spinnetti, who worked at the University of Alberta when I started my program, provided most helpful feedback on earlier drafts of the thesis. Later, I was able to meet with him at Cologne University, which was also very helpful for my research. A special thank you goes to my committee member Dr. Mary Ingraham, with whom I did an independent study course—Kyrgyz Soviet Opera—the results of which I later presented at the ICTM World Conference in Astana. Lengthy conversations with her on this topic helped me to discover and begin to develop another research interest: Central Asian operas during the Soviet time. I appreciated her encouragement, support, and availability. I also thank Dr. Christina Gier, with whom I did an independent study course—Soviet jazz—which later helped me to write a section in my thesis. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Julia Byl, who joined my committee at a late stage, but also provided a number of helpful insights. I would like to thank the external committee, Dr. Razia Sultanova and Dr. Scott Smallwood, for their insightful comments during the defence, which helped me to look at my thesis from a different angle. I especially appreciate the fact that Dr. Sultanova, whom I know through the ICTM Study Group on Music of the Turkic-speaking World to which we both belong, helps young Central Asian scholars to participate in various panel discussions and symposiums, so we have an opportunity to present our culture to other scholars.

I am very grateful to Dr. Robert Desjardins, whom I first met at the Student Success Centre in my beginner years. He was very supportive during my preparation for the candidacy exam, which coincided with the beginning of my illness, and I was touched by his human warmth and kindness. Coming to his office after fatiguing medical treatment, I was helped to re-focus

on my paper as he shared with me his passion for my research topic. This helped me to overcome my challenge and pass the candidacy exam. Later, I met Dr. Kate Pratt, whose professionalism and encouraging attitude I also benefited from greatly.

I am profoundly thankful to friends who provided support, advice and consultations, including: Drs. Mary and Derek Griffiths; Dr. Allen Hazen and Megan Collins. I am especially grateful to Dr. Mary Griffiths whom I worked with during the pandemic and who generously gave an enormous amount of time and encouragement, which helped me to overcome writer's block and stay motivated during the Covid-19 lockdowns.
My good friends Megan Collins, Allen Hazen and Mary Wright supported me—both practically and spiritually—at every step of the way. Feeling the support of these friends was especially important given that my family and I were so far from home. I also thank Nina Wallace-Ockenden, who introduced me to Eurythmy and helped me to find a balance in challenging times.

I was fortunate to receive financial support over an extended period of time in the form of a Doctoral Recruitment Scholarship (University of Alberta). This scholarship was made possible in part through a partnership with the University of Central Asia, specifically the Central Asian Faculty Development Program (CAFDP), which also provided a one-year scholarship in 2018. When this lapsed in 2019, Canadian friends generously provided tuition support.

My family has been my biggest support. I moved to Canada with my husband and four children when the youngest was just two and a half years old. Each of us went through many challenges as newcomers trying to adapt to our new environment. Arstan, my husband, made a large sacrifice to provide for us by changing careers from sound engineer to truck driver. I am very thankful to him for providing significant support to the family, and for his patience during my long tenure as a student. My children, Katagan, Aike, Adil, and Janiya, helped our family unity by supporting each other, and I appreciate their independence, understanding and love. Katagan and Aike helped me with the Jazz Festival, sharing their passion and talent by assisting in its management. I am very thankful that I was surrounded by Arstan, Katagan, Janiya and my son in law Braden during my illness. Their deep love and support helped me to overcome this difficult time for our family. My little Janiya inspires me with her remarkably positive attitude, curiosity, and love; she, too, has been such a big help. I would also like to thank my mother, Esenbubu Moldokulova, my role model, for not just believing in me throughout this period of time, but for providing her love and support all my life. I am grateful to my sister, Chachykei, nephews, Seytek and Ruslan, and niece Aliya, whose love helped to ease my homesickness.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this work to the memory of my late brothers, Daniyar and Rakhim Mukhtarov, and my late father, Hussein Mukhtarov, my greatest inspiration, whose love and support I always feel.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

GLOSSARY

Akyn or *aqyn*: a singer and improvising poet in the Kazakh and Kyrgyz cultures.

Bagshy: an epic reciter, also a shamanic healer.

Balaban: a double-reed instrument with nine holes.

Balalaika: Russian three stringed lute with a wooden triangle-shaped body.

Bayati: a form of folk poetry consisting of four seven-syllable-long lines.

Chopo-choor: a clay ocarina with three to six holes.

Chogoino choor: an end-blown flute.

Daf: a frame drum.

Dastgah: a modal system in Persian music.

Deramed: instrumental introduction in *Mugham*.

Dombyra: Kazakh two-stringed long-necked fretted lute.

Dungan: a Chinese Hui Muslim minority ethnic group.

Dutar: two-stringed long-necked fretted lute.

Falak: a musical genre of southeastern and southwestern Tajikistan.

Ghaval: a frame drum.

Jetigen: Kazakh and Kyrgyz plucked zither.

Jyrschy (also Kyrgyz-*yrchy*): a singer, song-writer in Kazakh and Kyrgyz traditions.

Jygach ooz-komuz: Kyrgyz wooden jaw harp.

Kamancha: a spike fiddle found in Azerbaijan, Iran, Turkey.

Kanykei: wife of *Manas* from the Kyrgyz epic *Manas*.

Khanende: a singer of *mugham*.

Kobyz or *qobyz*: two-stringed fiddle, spread among Kazakhs and Karakalpaks.

Komuz: Kyrgyz three-stringed long-necked fretless lute.

Koshokchu: Kyrgyz lamenter.

Koshnai: a wind instrument, consisting of two connected reed pipes with single reeds and seven holes found in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Kyl-kyak: Kyrgyz upright bowl fiddle, with two horsehair strings.

Manas: a Kyrgyz epic.

Manaschi: reciter of the Kyrgyz epic *Manas*.

Maqam: the modal principle in various cultures; referred to as *maqom* in Tajik and Uzbek music.

Maqomat: plural form of maqam.

Mugham: the modal principle in Azerbaijani music.

Nai or *nay*: an end-blown flute.

Rast: the first mode of *mugham* music.

Rubab: a lute with a skin-covered deck, bowed and plucked.

Setar: a long-necked lute with four steel strings used in Persian classical music.

Shoba: a section of *mugham* composition.

Shehnai: a loud oboe.

Surnai: a double-reed wooden shawm.

Sybyzgy: end-blown or side-blown flute.

Tabla: pair of hand-played drums.

Tanbur: a long-necked fretted plucked lute.

Tar: a fretted, long-necked lute with a double-pear-shaped body.

Oud or *ud*: short-necked plucked lute of the Arab world.

Usul: a rhythmic formula within a particular meter performed on percussion.

Note on Transliteration

Many terms I use in this thesis to name musical traditions and instruments of the region came from Arabic, Persian, or Russian (which was the common language during the Soviet time) and have similar or different pronunciations in local languages. For instance *maqam*, a modal system in various cultures, is pronounced *maqom* in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. I use the current spelling for Kyrgyz and Kyrgyzstan, rather than the previously used Kirghiz (which is the transliteration of the Russian pronunciation Kirghiz and Kirghizia). Therefore I decided not to use a specific transliteration system, but to make use of the modern English spelling which is commonly found in the international press and modern scholarly books.

Examining Committee

Dr. Michael Frishkopf, Department of Music

Dr. Mary Ingraham, Department of Music

Dr. Julia Byl, Department of Music

Dr. Scott Smallwood, Department of Music

Dr. Razia Sultanova, University of Cambridge

Chapter I: Introduction: The Origins of the Thesis and its Objectives

Remembering my roots and Central Asian nationality

I remember an evening from my childhood, in my paternal grandmother's country house, in the village of Ken Bulun, about forty minutes from our home in the Kyrgyz capital of Bishkek. Two women, my grandmother's neighbours and friends, came to visit her. We were all on a k'ang (plank-bed). I was lying near my grandmother, who was sewing something using her hand sewing machine. I recall a kerosene lamp on the table, a loudly ticking clock, the knocking sound of the sewing machine and a song sung by all three women. I do not remember the exact melody, but it was a quiet and beautiful Dungan song. My grandmother was Dungan,[1] an ethnic minority who moved to Central Asia from China after suppression by the Qing dynasty at the end of the 19th century.[2]

I also remember my summer school breaks in my maternal grandmother's house, which was located in a small village in the Talas region, in the northwest part of Kyrgyzstan. She would also sing while we were weaving a mat from chii stalks, a Kyrgyz art form widely used in the everyday life of the people. My uncles, young men, were singing in the street without any hesitation, while walking to their jobs herding cows or feeding the sheep. These were Kyrgyz songs sung by Kyrgyz people living in the Talas region, a beautiful place located in a river valley and mostly surrounded by mountains, the hometown of Manas, a Kyrgyz epic hero. My grandmother was Kyrgyz.

---

[1] Chinese Hui Muslim minority.

[2] There were two migrations: first, in 1877, when Chinese Muslim from Kansu and Shensi provinces had to flee after being defeated and chased by the Manchu army. The second migration was in 1881-1884, after the Treaty of St. Petersburg when the Ili region, which had been ruled by Russians, was given to the Chinese. Some Dungans from this region migrated to Russia [the territory of current Central Asia]. (Dyer, Svetlana Rimsky-Korsakoff, 1991, 1)

Another memory brings me back to an Uyghur village near Almaty, Kazakhstan, where we went with my parents to visit our Uyghur relatives. We stayed there for about a week, visiting one or two new families every day and enjoying their hospitality. I remember a melody in their language, delicious dishes, and a warm welcome. They looked so different to me, both because of their appearance[3] and because they spoke an unfamiliar language, and I was trying to accept the fact that they were my close relatives. My paternal grandfather was Uyghur. Although I did not meet any of my Uzbek relatives, I have a connection to them as well, as my great-grandmother was Uzbek.

From my childhood I spoke three languages, Dungan,[4] Kyrgyz and Russian. My father's passport recorded him as Dungan, although nationality was supposed to be based on paternal nationality, Uyghur. However, he grew up among Dungans, and my grandmother followed the traditions of the Dungan people. I remember that when my sister and I studied at the Central Music School when we were young, we were sometimes teased because we were Dungan, by children who were mostly Kyrgyz, as it was a Kyrgyz school. On our birth certificates our father's nationality was written as Dungan. Perhaps adults at the school talked about it, so children picked up this information. I suffered from bullying which pointed to my nationality; I couldn't understand why I was different from the others and was shy about my nationality. Later, my mother managed to change our nationality in our passports to Kyrgyz and explained that she didn't want us to deal with unfairness like my father had experienced. Even though my father achieved great success as a Soviet opera singer and received all the highest awards, he experienced discriminatory treatment from Kyrgyz officials and his merits were downplayed in favour of another Kyrgyz bass.

[3] I look more Chinese than Turkic, because of my Dungan blood.
[4] I spoke Dungan with my father and grandmother.

I grew up in a musical family as both my parents were Soviet opera singers. From age seven I studied piano at the Central Music School in Frunze[5] *and later at the Academic Music College in Moscow and the Bishkek Conservatoire. I was trained as a classical pianist, as were my brother and sister, because my parents needed accompanists to fulfill their busy schedule performing Soviet, Kyrgyz, and world operas, as well as their concert repertoire, which included arias, romances and folk songs in different languages. My love for jazz and traditional music of the region developed later. My cultural heritage and musical background allowed me to appreciate European musical culture, as well as jazz, and the traditional music of my region. It opened up an opportunity to study ethnojazz, a new genre developed by Central Asian musicians almost two decades after the breakup of the Soviet Union.*

There is no such thing as a Central Asian nationality, but this is what I say when people ask about my nationality: I was born in Kyrgyzstan, and carry a Kyrgyz passport, but as my family history shows there is much more than a passport to the concept of "nationality": I am Central Asian, as I accumulated all these cultures in my life. Some of these ethnic groups have experienced conflicts both during and after the Soviet time. However, my experience shows that by creating music together people of different nationalities can find connections across national boundaries. It is the transnational social impact of ethnojazz as a grass-roots musical collaboration in Central Asian that partially motivated my work for many years and became the subject of my research.

[5] Previous name of the capital of the Soviet Kyrgyz Republic (*Sovetskya Kirgiziya*), which was renamed as Bishkek in 1991, after Kyrgyzstan achieved independence.

An example of my research material: Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory

In March of 2017, fifteen musicians from five post-Soviet countries, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan gathered in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, for the fifth ethnojazz laboratory. Over ten days, they created a fifty-minute composition, a joint collaborative work synthesizing the traditional music of Central Asia, jazz and contemporary music. They blended European musical instruments with the traditional instruments of Central Asia, as well as different musical traditions, such as falak and mugham. During this time, musicians worked collaboratively through discussion and musical improvisation to develop the initial ideas for creating a composition that reflected the cultural heritages represented by this group.

As this laboratory took place, I was sitting outside of the circle, observing this process by taking notes and recording the rehearsal on my phone. During the intensive rehearsals, there was not even a minute of boredom, since the musicians were engaged with the process of creating music and deeply interested in each other's ideas. I was intensively trying to decode their thinking process. Clearly, this was a complex process that involved more than just bringing musicians from different countries to play together; it was something very rich and multifaceted, which I felt further justified my decision to study these musical collaborations.

I.1 The origins and purpose of the study

I.1.1 Objectives

This dissertation examines the phenomenon of Central Asian ethnojazz, a synthesis of jazz, contemporary music and the traditional music of Central Asia, including orally transmitted traditions based on improvisation, as a path towards intercultural understanding.

This dissertation is the first in-depth academic study of Central Asian jazz fusion. In addition to the 2014–2017 Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory project, which is the main focus of my research, it covers the preceding project, Ethnojazz Development in Central Asia (2009-2013). Since both projects were realized within the Bishkek International Jazz Festival, this also became a case study for my research, which fits particularly well within the realm of applied ethnomusicology. My dissertation fills a gap in the study of the New Music of Central Asia, specifically with respect to ethnojazz practices.

My study examines the meaning and impact of ethnojazz as a grass-roots musical collaboration in the Central Asian context. I study Central Asian ethnojazz as manifested in the Ethnojazz Laboratory project in order to understand how its musical processes may facilitate multicultural dialogue, express national identities in post-Soviet republics, and create new musical compositions reflective of these intercultural improvisations across the Central Asian region. I analyze the music and surrounding discourse, presenting ethnojazz both ethnographically and historically. My research shows the cultural significance of the newly emerged ethnojazz in Central Asia. It is an important contribution to new studies of jazz and to understanding the global jazz diaspora as it fills a gap in the study of Central Asian ethnojazz.

In 2006, I was the initiator and one of the co-founders of the Bishkek International Jazz Festival in Kyrgyzstan (as I explain in section 1.4), an annual event which held its 16th festival in April 2021. The festival with its motto “Music without borders” was designed to unite people of different backgrounds and contribute to friendship, mutual understanding, and peace. Since the start of the Bishkek jazz festival spontaneous performances by musicians from the US and Europe with Central Asian musicians have continued to be a distinctive feature of the festival. The positive audience responses and the high degree of interest shown by the musicians gave me the idea of starting a project to encourage the development of a

fusion of traditional music with jazz, something I called ethnojazz. Since 2009, ethnojazz has been a unique feature of the festival where various traditional and jazz musicians have developed and presented their ethnojazz compositions.

I.1.2 The term ethnojazz

Thinking about how to name the project, I selected the term *ethnojazz,*[6] which is pronounced the same way in Russian, a language spoken by many of the musicians. I felt that the combination of the words *ethno* and *jazz* would be able to express our core idea. I did not investigate where the term came from, but understood that for musicians, donors, and audiences, this concept would be understandable. During our seminars there were discussions around the term ethnojazz, which was criticized by some scholars and musicians, as they argued that jazz from its origins has always incorporated traditional music, being the synthesis of African polyrhythms and European harmony. According to them there is no need for the word "ethno" to show the component of the traditional music in this new phenomenon. These discussions were reflected in the collection of essays, which I present in Chapter II of this dissertation.

I.1.3 Ethnojazz Development in Central Asia project (2009-2013)

In 2008 I initiated Public Fund Central Asian Arts Management (PF CAAM) to help raise funds for the Bishkek festival and realize other arts projects in Kyrgyzstan. In 2009, as the artistic director of that fund I applied for a grant for a project titled *Development of*

[6] The term ethnojazz had already been used by various musicians and festival organizers, including: Brahma, Nada. 1994. Ethnojazz. Music CD. Baltimore, MD; since 2002 the Ethnojazz festival in Moldova had been organized by ethnojazz group Trigon, http://www.trigonjazz.com/festivals.html

Ethnojazz in Central Asia, which proposed holding an ethnojazz contest and theoretical seminars for Central Asian musicians during the Bishkek jazz festival. The Christensen Fund (US) supported this idea and has continuously funded the ethnojazz component of the festival. Between 2009 and 2012, PF CAAM implemented four ethnojazz contests.The requirement for Central Asian musicians was to create a composition on a given theme prior to the festival, and perform it at the festival. The themes were "Hodja Nasreddin"[7] (2009), "Music of Eastern City" (2010), "Spring of Ala -Too" (2011), and "Caravan" (2012).[8] The contest was a major attraction at the jazz festival and received positive feedback from the audiences. All compositions from the four contests were released on CDs by PF CAAM and distributed among musicians and partner organizations. In addition to the contest, PF CAAM organized round tables and seminars where musicians, scholars, and jazz critics from Central Asia discussed their perspectives on ethnojazz development in Central Asia. Later PF CAAM summarized their discussions and published them in essay collections.

"Ethnojazz in Central Asia" which had started in 2009 as a pilot project, became a strong musical form of expression for Central Asian musicians, because of the requirement to prepare an ethnojazz composition in advance of the festival. Musicians' understanding of ethnojazz grew as they worked together over the four-year period. Many had gained valuable experience by the time we started the subsequent Central Asia Ethnojazz Laboratory.

[7] "Hodja Nasreddin, a well-known hero of folk stories and legends in the cultures of different nations. The image of wisecracker and serious wag, thinker and truth-seeker has its prototypes in the folklore of many nations of Central Asia: for the Kyrgyz – Apendee, for Uzbeks and Tajiks – Afandee or Hodja Nasreddin, for Kazakhs – Aldar Kose. Traditional memory created and preserved its hero – defender of the justice, who fights against social disparity through humor." (Booklet of the Bishkek International Jazz Festival 2009)

[8] In 2013 there was a request to include an ethnojazz composition in the program of Central Asian musicians, based on the traditional heritage of their countries, with the name of the composition also being the program title, so no contest was held.

I.1.4 Central Asia Ethnojazz Laboratory

Although the ethnojazz contest had been a successful project, to develop ethnojazz further we needed a fresh approach. I proposed a new format, where musicians, selected by the festival organizers, could meet prior to the Bishkek festival and create a composition together which then would be performed at the festival. On behalf of PF CAAM I applied to the Christensen Fund for a new grant with the title "Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory." I thought the word "laboratory" was the most appropriate for such a new approach, since musicians would have an opportunity to experiment, in a more private setting, within a given time-period. Through this new approach, I hoped to see collaboration between different musicians in the region in order to contribute to the multicultural dialogue between different nationalities, which was one of the goals of the project and the expectation of donor organizations that supported it.

Public Fund Central Asian Arts Management (PF CAAM) launched the Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory project in 2014, which implemented five ethnojazz laboratories (2014-2017) within the setting of the Bishkek International Jazz Festival. For the first time musicians from different Central Asian countries, as well as from outside the region, had to meet other musicians and prepare and perform a composition together. This was a new experience, since in the previous project musicians precomposed their ethnojazz composition and rehearsed within their own group. This unique form of musical collaboration in the laboratories allowed the musicians to express individual national and ethnic identities while also engaging in intercultural dialogue; it also forced them to be more creative and exploratory in improvisations, stretching to make connections they would not have otherwise made.

I had acted as the organizer and coordinator of this project before I decided to do my research on ethnojazz. However, during my observation of the laboratories I started to get

interested in the process of music-making, witnessing the engagement of musicians in the creation of a composition as well as their challenges. Not only did the Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory project start a new stage in ethnojazz development in the region, my observations brought me to research this complex and interesting phenomenon.

Examining the experiences of musicians brought together in a laboratory setting to create a collective musical composition, I show how and to what extent the creative process enabled them to bridge differences while expressing national identities. In addition, I explore how these musical experiences promoted mutual understanding among different nationalities while celebrating the cultural diversity of Central Asia, something that has been lacking in the national and ethnic conflicts both within and between nations. Finally, I explore the motives of the foreign governments and international funding organizations in supporting jazz festivals in the region after the breakup of the Soviet Union. An overview of the laboratories and musicians' backgrounds is presented in Chapter III.

I.2 Research questions and hypotheses

In my dissertation I aim to answer the following research questions, each of which is followed by a hypothesis:

1. How do Central Asian musicians of different nationalities synthesize traditional music, based on oral culture and improvisation such as the *Manas* epic, *maqom, mugham,* and *falak*, with jazz and contemporary music, and how do they combine indigenous and European instruments to create a unique sound identified as Central Asian Ethnojazz?
   Hypothesis: The collaboration of contemporary and traditional musicians from diverse backgrounds in a laboratory setting will initiate the creation of a new, unique sound which is described as Central Asian Ethnojazz and allows them to explore foreign cultures and new aesthetic norms, as well as discover the commonalities of tradition.

2. How do Central Asian musicians of different nationalities overcome ethnic, national, cultural and professional differences and build a dialogue after the breakup of the Soviet Union while expressing their identities during collective music-making?
   Hypothesis: Active participation in a creative process which involves attentive listening and adapting one's own cultural heritage and musical background to the common sound of the collective composition leads to constructive dialogue, which can help to overcome differences and mitigate the tensions that especially heightened after the breakup of the Soviet Union.

3. How do Central Asian musicians of different nationalities find the musical settings or materials that are most effective or successful in creating connections?
   Hypothesis: Musicians are able to enter a creative state faster and be more effective during the process of collective composition by referring to traditional regional literary culture, including myths, epics (such as the Epic of Manas) and fairy tales, which existed before the establishment of modern political boundaries, and which help to awaken the subconscious and facilitate access to a deeper cultural knowledge that may be described as belonging to our shared humanity.

4. What are the motives of international donors such as wealthy NGOs and governments represented by embassies, who arrived in the region after the collapse of the Soviet Union, in supporting jazz festivals realized by newly established local NGOs?
   Hypothesis: A number of international donors enthusiastically supported various cultural initiatives by funding Central Asian NGOs as part of their "soft-power" approach to advance their geopolitical interests and gain influence in the contested zone.

I.3 Discursive and performative approaches

I approach ethnojazz from musical and socio-political perspectives by using performative and discursive methods. The discursive perspective addresses the transnational social impact of ethnojazz across Central Asia, discussing issues of identity and multicultural dialogue, as well as the geopolitical interest of international funding organizations in

supporting jazz festivals in the region from the time they first appeared in 2000. In the discursive analysis I also examine different categories of musicians participating in the jazz laboratories and Bishkek International Jazz Festival by investigating their various backgrounds and trying to understand the perceptions, creativity and motivation of Central Asian jazz and traditional musicians.

From the performative perspective, I analyze how musicians synthesize different genres and blend European and indigenous instruments to express their identities and build a dialogue. I not only examine the final sound product of each jazz laboratory, but also recount my observations on the interactive process of creating a composition during a workshop. Even though I have the final products of all the laboratories and analyse some excerpts in Chapter V, I concentrate on the process of music making. In my analysis I focus on various aspects of this creative process: how the musicians met; what type of interactions they had at the beginning of the process and at the end; how they created new music; what they thought about the whole process; and how they built a musical conversation.

As mentioned above, I was mostly interested in the final product when I started to organize the laboratories as a coordinator of this project, but in fact I started to focus on the process right from the first laboratory. As I spent hours with the musicians, I noticed their complex thinking process as they listened to the ideas of others, presented their visions, defended their positions, sacrificed their own ideas, and embraced the group idea. I realized that the process that unfolds during the creation of a composition cannot be seen in the final performance at a concert. Yes, the audience comes to the concert to listen to performances which are usually well prepared and well performed, but what is behind the final performance is the most interesting. As my second hypothesis states, active participation and attentive listening help musicians to overcome various differences, explore others' culture and lead to constructive dialogue. I was able to observe all these features during the process of collective

music-making. The discursive and performative perspectives and their interconnections provided opportunities for cultural criticism, musical analysis and an ethnographic description of ethnojazz and its aesthetics.

I.4 My role as a founder, organizer, and a researcher

This dissertation is almost entirely based on my own experience and original ethnographic research. By establishing the Bishkek International Jazz Festival in 2006, and within the festival initiating and realizing two sub projects—the Ethnojazz Development in Central Asia project (2009-2013) and the Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory project (2014-2017)—I had created a case study which allowed me to observe the creative process and research the new phenomenon of ethnojazz over a nine-year period. Moreover, as a musician born in Kyrgyzstan who studied classical music in Moscow during the Soviet era (1984-1991), and who after the breakup of the Soviet Union worked until 2012 in different cultural organizations in Kyrgyzstan (including governmental, international and non-governmental organizations), I brought many other first-hand perceptions to the subject.

My research is rather unusual in ethnomusicology. First, together with launching the jazz festival, I also discovered that various Central Asian musical traditions fit well with jazz, which was shown during the first and second festivals when Central Asian, American, and European musicians played together on stage. Inspired by this discovery, I raised funds for two projects—the Ethnojazz Development Project and the Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory Project—where ethnojazz could evolve. Only later did I realize that I had also created material that provided me with a unique opportunity for research. Until recently, I was still going back to Bishkek to organize the festival. A serious illness in 2017, which meant that I had to stop travelling and focus on the treatment and my health, was a turning

point that allowed me to reflect on what had happened during the fifteen years of festival history and realize its full potential as material for my research.

My research fits particularly well within the field of applied ethnomusicology. Although the synthesis of traditional music with jazz and contemporary music is a main focus, the research was people-centered insofar as the musical processes are always integrated within social processes. I felt fortunate as a researcher because in significant ways I was already a member of the community that I was researching. This privileged position produced challenges of its own but, on the face of it, I was not impeded by the distance between researcher and subject inherent in the normal processes of academic 'abstraction' from the source material of the culture under observation and discussion. Thus, I realized at various points in my on-site note-taking that I was a party to many forms of informal (as well as formal) communication that anyone not a member of the culture under 'investigation' would not have had such direct access to. Although I could be seen as somewhat of an outsider given my status as a coordinator of the project, representing funding and implementing organizations, at the same time, I was also a musician, a local person and a speaker of the same language, Russian, which is the *lingua franca* for all of the post-Soviet countries. I thought these factors were all advantages until I later had challenges in communication with some of the musicians I interviewed for my research.

These difficulties arose after the end of my field trip in 2017, when musicians of the Omnibus Ensemble did not respond to a number of my emails and messages on social media. I was aware of an incident which happened during the fifth laboratory which might explain this.[9] The experience stimulated my further thinking about the position of a researcher who is

[9] The director of PF CAAM had sent me an email which was leaked. In this email he mentioned his disappointment with artistic and financial requests that Uzbek musicians had made. Shortly afterwards we received a long letter from Artyom Kim, the director of the Omnibus Ensemble, in which he expressed his disillusionment with the email he had received by accident.

engaged at multiple levels and what lessons could be learned from this unresponsiveness. I questioned the whole insider/outsider dichotomy: not only could a foreign researcher be an outsider, but also a local researcher could suddenly appear to "change sides" and be perceived as an outsider by his own community.

In the panel discussion "Negotiating the Personal and Professional: Ethnomusicologists and Uncomfortable Truth," presented at the ICTM World Conference in Astana, Kazakhstan, which was published in Yearbook 2016,[10] four scholars shared their experiences to bring attention to problems ethnomusicologists face in their discipline. For me it was an uncomfortable moment when I realized that from an insider's position, which I thought I was in during the fieldwork, I had become an outsider.

It is possible that the fact I am doing my research at a Western institution contributed to this as well. The discussion also reminded me of the gender imbalance prevalent in the region, because all my emails were addressed to male musicians and I was the only female among them; perhaps this was another reason why none of those from the Ensemble responded in 2017 and 2018. Without having access to additional information, I had a challenging time finishing the research, especially that related to the fifth laboratory, which I had chosen as one of the examples for my musical analysis. However, at a later stage, I received help from a non-Uzbek participant, Ignat, who immediately responded to my additional research queries.

I.5 Field research methodology for the five laboratories (2014-2017)

My research sample included fifteen musicians from five former Soviet republics: Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, and Belarus. Beginning in 2014, these musicians attended the five ethnojazz laboratories, two in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), and three in

[10] Miller et al. 2016, 186

Tashkent (Uzbekistan). My field observation focused on the last two laboratories, which involved fifteen and ten musicians, respectively. The majority of musicians attended both laboratories.

There were several steps to the research process:

1. Participant observation. While I have video recordings from all five laboratories, the process of participant observation was most intense during the labs of 2016 and 2017, which were held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. I attended all the rehearsals, observing the process of music creation and noting how the musicians communicated and thought in a collaborative manner. During this stage, my field notes captured every moment of the creative process. I also made audio recordings of my informal conversations within the rehearsals, which I transcribed and combined with my field notes into a single document. In a 10-day period in 2016, I spent around sixty hours at rehearsals collecting field notes. When the group travelled to Kyrgyzstan to perform the final composition at the Bishkek International Jazz Festival, I spent another ten hours at the final rehearsals and the soundcheck.

In March of 2017, I followed the same approach as in 2016: I collected field notes and spent around seventy hours at rehearsals both in Tashkent and Bishkek. Besides the actual time I spent at the rehearsals, there was time in between when I also continued my participant observation. The Uzbek musicians lived in Tashkent, and we mostly met at the rehearsals. The guest musicians from Azerbaijan, Belarus, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan and I stayed at the same hotel, which gave me an opportunity to meet them more often and talk in an informal atmosphere. We met during breakfast almost every day and at other informal occasions, when I had a chance to speak with some of the musicians. During these informal gatherings, I continued my observations and used my notes to continue writing after returning to the hotel. All these informal communications were a significant contribution to my participant observation experience. Moreover, I felt that the musicians did not see me as an outsider.

Although I had my status as the coordinator of the project, at the same time, I was a musician, which helped to lessen the distance between us. Equally important was the fact that, as mentioned above, I am also from Central Asia and speak Russian.

2. Interviews with musicians. Following the participant observation, I conducted one-on-one interviews with twelve different Central Asian musicians during 2016 and 2017. Since it was a project funded by the Christensen Fund I asked their permission to combine my role as a coordinator of the project and a researcher. My idea was supported by the local representatives of the Christensen Fund, whom we worked with directly. I started to prepare for the trip by writing interview questions. I did not have elaborate research questions at that time and was focusing on general questions such as how musicians build a multicultural dialogue and synthesize jazz and traditional music. I wanted to video the interviews and in 2016, I was able to hire the manager of the Omnibus Ensemble to schedule and videotape all the interviews.

Most of the eleven musicians I video-interviewed in 2016 were Uzbek: five of them were laboratory participants from the Omnibus Ensemble, three were not from the laboratory, but were participants in the earlier ethnojazz project; I also interviewed three other laboratory participants from Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. On my second trip in 2017, I audio-interviewed four musicians; three of them were the same musicians I had interviewed in 2016, one was a new musician from Azerbaijan. On that trip I used my phone for recording the interviews and organized the process myself. In both years, I orally informed musicians about my doctoral research on ethnojazz and the way in which laboratory musicians collaborate. All of the participants were asked questions about the creative process, synthesis of genres, the instruments they played, and the importance of multicultural collaboration. Afterwards, I transcribed the interviews and then translated the transcripts from Russian and Kyrgyz into English so I could use direct quotations in this thesis.

Besides the laboratory participants I also interviewed other Uzbek musicians who participated in the Ethnojazz Development Project, whom I also met in Tashkent, but I did not use these interviews in my work, as I later decided to focus only on laboratory participants. Finally, between 2018 and 2021, I interviewed eight more people, both musicians and organizers of the jazz festivals in Dushanbe and Almaty. Altogether, over the four years, I interviewed twenty-two musicians and non-musicians of different ethnicities from seven countries: Azerbaijan (1), Belarus (1), Kazakhstan (2), Kyrgyzstan (3), Tajikistan (4), Turkmenistan (2), and Uzbekistan (9). Of the twenty-two interviews I used fifteen for my research.

When I interviewed musicians whom I had known for a long time through their participation at the Bishkek jazz festival, our conversations were held in a warm atmosphere; they saw me as an insider, a person they knew very well, whom they had a long-time relationship with. They were open and enthusiastically shared their thoughts with me. I personally felt that interviews with new musicians, mostly participants of the Omnibus Ensemble, were more difficult for me to lead, since I did not know them so well.

3. Production and analysis of audio and video recordings of the ethnojazz laboratory rehearsals and concerts. Analysis of these materials involved listening to all five laboratories and seeing how musicians approached the given material in each case. In addition to my own recordings, I used video recordings from the Bishkek jazz festivals of 2014 and 2017. The links for the audio excerpts and video performances are provided in this dissertation.

I attempt to answer my first and second research questions and evaluate the related hypotheses using examples from all the labs. My analysis for these questions, which is described in Chapter IV, are based on my observations of participants and interviews. I focused on how musicians interacted when mixing European and traditional instruments, as

well as how they experimented to match a sound and create a new sound. To show the musicians' working process, I have described different episodes from three laboratories.

In my musical analysis I chose Labs 1 and 5 to investigate my third hypothesis, as I describe in Chapter V. I observed how musicians worked with traditional music and literature, and their attempts to integrate them with both jazz and contemporary music. I started my analysis of the first episode by examining the joint performance by a *manaschi* and a Tajik singer who sang in *falak* style; I then transcribed an episode from the *Manas* recitation and notated this excerpt to show the irregular formulaic lines in the metre of the Kyrgyz epic as well as its interval range. I also notated a vocalization of the Tajik singer to see the melody line. After analysing each performer separately, I used a software program SPAX,[11] which helped to identify pitches, intervals, and dynamics, to compare these two different performers to see how they combined together.

In the second episode I mostly used my musical ear and visual perception to analyze collaboration between the *manaschi* and the pianist. In addition, an interview with the *manaschi* shed some light on understanding this episode. In analyzing four other episodes, which were from Lab 5, I mostly relied on my participant observation and interview analysis to understand how the musicians in that lab reacted when working with material from literature.

4. Evaluation of written records. These records included articles written by scholars and non-scholars, and published in essay collections which were distributed among musicians and local musical institutions. They were gathered and published from 2011 until 2016 as part of the Ethnojazz Development in Central Asia project and at a conference in 2016. These materials contain important discussions and thoughts of the participants from Central Asia

[11] SPAX software invented by A. Kharuto

who were invited to submit articles on the theme of ethnojazz,[12] articles which I believe are an important record of the musicians' own assessment of their accomplishments. Some scholars also contributed to the essay collections.[13] I wrote an article—"Ethnojazz – as a musical phenomenon of Central Asia"— in the 2012 essay collections. Transcripts of seminar discussions and the 2016 conference were published as well. I acted in seminars as an organizer, coordinator and scholar, managing the whole process, including writing the program and moderating the seminars in some of the years.

5. Evaluation of audience perception. Although I did not have the results of a survey which we conducted once during the festival history, I have audience responses on the film about the first jazz festival which I produced in 2006. Moreover, I evaluate audience perceptions and reactions to ethnojazz and the Bishkek festival in general, and to the music created at the ethnojazz laboratories in particular, based on pictures and video recordings of the festival and the performances. The fact that the tickets were always sold out before the festival and that there were calls from the public and messages on social media prior to the festival enquiring about ticket sales shows the popularity of the event. The festival concerts always had a full house, in the Kyrgyz National Philharmonic Hall[14] or the Kyrgyz National Opera and Ballet

[12]Some of the articles are: 2011 essay collections – Beisheev Taalay (Kyrgyzstan) "Opinions about ethnojazz"; Hakimov Naim (Tajikistan) "Jazz in the system of musical practice"; Kabdurakhmanov Alibek (Uzbekistan) "Ethnojazz–an inside view"; Kydykbaev Bakyt (Kyrgyzstan) "A walk through ethnojazz"; Ruzakhunov Vikram (Kyrgyzstan) "Ethnojazz as super-national phenomenon"; 2012 essay collections – Nafikov Sanjar (Uzbekistan) "Ethnic jazz – the art of communicating with ancestors"; 2013 essay collections – Gaparov Aziz "The peculiarity of ethnic jazz is in its international quality"; Khalilov Jasur (Tajikistan) "Jazz encourages artistic innovation."

[13] Vladimir Feyertag, no title, 2011; Michael Frishkop, "Ethnojazz," 2012; Cyril Moshkov, "Ethnojazz in the twenty-first century," 2012; Cyril Moshkov, "Between local and global: incorporating regional musical traditions into jazz idiom," 2012.

[14] The Philharmonic Hall is named after Toktogul Satylganov (1864-1933), the most famous Kyrgyz aqyn-improvisator.

Theatre[15] which each hold about a thousand seats. In addition, jam sessions at night clubs and master classes at the musical colleges increased the number of people who visited the festival and are further evidence of its popularity.

I.6 Chapter outlines

The chapters in this dissertation are organized in such a way as to show that the emergence of Central Asian ethnojazz is the result of a transformation of jazz through the shared culture and history of Central Asian countries, and also the impact of the Bishkek International Jazz Festival.

I.6.1 Chapter II

Chapter II, Background: Central Asian Music and its Oral Traditions, reviews the theoretical and historical background of Soviet jazz, Soviet popular music, Central Asian jazz fusion and jazz *mugham* followed by jazz fusion. By studying different periods of jazz history, I investigate the emergence of Central Asian ethnojazz as a contemporary musical form and its social impact. Next, I review US jazz diplomacy and the Jazz Ambassadors program, including reviewing the 21st century continuation of American jazz diplomacy in the region. I then discuss new independent Central Asian countries and their search for identity. Using Kyrgyzstan as an example, I describe the current cultural scene in Central Asia.

[15] The Kyrgyz Opera and Ballet Theatre is named after Abdylas Maldybaev (1896-1978), a Kyrgyz composer who wrote the first Kyrgyz opera, *Ay-Churek*, together with two Russian composers, V. Vlasov, and V. Fere in 1939.

I.6.2 Chapters III, IV, and V

The next three chapters focus on my data and share my ethnographic observations, interview transcripts, and musical analysis.

Chapter III: First, I present the concept and mission of the Bishkek International Jazz Festival and its role in the cultural, economic and political life of the region and briefly introduce the Ethnojazz Development in Central Asia project, which preceded the Central Asia Ethnojazz laboratory. The section on the Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory sets out the ethnography, provides an overview of all five laboratories and descriptions of the musicians' backgrounds. In presenting the musicians I divide them into two groups: traditional and non-traditional. From the interviews, I draw a picture of selected individuals, their backgrounds and their musical influences in order to show how each of them gained the ability to improvise and synthesize different genres. In the overview of the laboratories, I give my assessment of each labs' success, the musicians' collegiality, and musical results.

Chapter IV continues my examination of the Central Asian laboratory. It covers the synthesis of my data and attempts to answer my research questions of how musicians overcome differences and create a multicultural dialogue and a unique sound. I argue that three factors contributed to the success of the project: (1) the meeting of musicians with both shared and diverse backgrounds; (2) active participation in a collaborative and creative process; (3) the opportunity to explore other cultures and discover commonalities among traditions. I also illustrate the importance of active listening in the process of collaborative music making.

In Chapter V I focus on two laboratories, Labs 1 and 5, to test my third hypothesis that the musicians functioned more effectively when referencing folk elements. I illustrate how musicians were impacted by working with a *manaschi* in the first lab and with literary elements, such as the Bushmen poem, *falak,* and reference to Propp's morphology of the

folktale, in the fifth lab. As evidence to support my research questions and hypothesis, I present literary and musical analyses of five excerpts from Labs 1 and 5 to help explain the source and manifestation of the musicians' special abilities.

I.6.3 Chapter VI and Chapter VII

Chapter VI presents the theoretical and practical implications of my research. I discuss the broader picture of Central Asian ethnojazz and its geopolitical significance by reviewing the input of funding organizations and their influence on cultural development in Central Asia, and the appearance of other jazz festivals in the region which are supported by these international organizations. I investigate how their support fits into the political and economic agendas of these countries. In particular, I question whether Western countries are furthering their own interests, by supporting arts projects in the region including jazz festivals. With special attention to the Dushanbe Ethnojazz Festival which appeared under the influence of the Bishkek International Jazz Festival, I present a comparative analysis of the two festivals to show a similar funding model, but different outcomes.

Chapter VII, the Conclusion, sums up the findings from my research as they relate to my research questions and hypotheses and describes steps for future research. I review the phenomenon of ethnojazz in Central Asia and the willingness of musicians in the region to express their identity in a new way. I aim to show how music can contribute to a broader discourse on identity and how integration of different musical cultures can help to overcome boundaries and build bridges of understanding between different nationalities and countries.

Chapter II: Background: Central Asian Music and its Oral Traditions, Soviet Central Asian Jazz Fusion, and Jazz Diplomacy

In this background chapter, I review a range of literature that is relevant to this dissertation, following an approximately chronological order. After summarizing some historical and cultural features of the region I describe the traditional music of Central Asia and its oral musical traditions, such as *maqom, epos*, and *aqyn* improvisation. Second, I review Soviet Jazz and Soviet popular music, including jazz in Soviet Central Asia and Azerbaijani jazz-mugham. Next, I discuss the American Jazz Ambassadors program which appeared during the Cold War. This is followed by a section on the jazz fusion and jazz diaspora, to show that today jazz extends far beyond its country of origin and has become a universal musical language.

II.1 The music of Central Asia

II.1.1 Ethnomusicological scholarship on music of Central Asia

The definition of the region of Central Asia varies based on the definition of its geographical, cultural, and political boundaries.[16] The scope of my research is five post-Soviet republics: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. My scope also includes Azerbaijan, even though it belonged to Transcaucasian countries during the Soviet time, as it shares musical traditions with Central Asia. In this section I review some of the written sources by foreign and local scholars for English-speaking audiences before and after the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991.

[16] Levin, 2016, 3

In the 1920s and 1930s Russian folklorists and musicologists, such as Alexander Zataevich, Viktor Beliaev, Viktor Vinogradov, and others, researched and wrote about the music of the region. Central Asian musicologists who studied at the Soviet conservatories started to write about the music of their republics much later, continuing the tradition of the Russian school of musicology. Very few works about the Central Asian region were written by foreign scholars, although the first notes had been made by travellers such as John Wood.[17]

The first comprehensive work in English about the music of the region was by Johanna Spector, an American ethnomusicologist, in 1967, who wrote a chapter "Musical Tradition and Innovation," in the book *Central Asia: A Century of Russian Rule* edited by Edward Allworth. A new edition of the book was published in 1989 with one added chapter written by Allworth—"The New Central Asians"—but the rest of the book has remained unchanged. In her article Spector used various Russian sources and presented her view on instruments, scales and forms and compared these forms with other Near Eastern countries showing the different historical influences. Although the article is full of important information and describes the musical traditions of sedentary people, with a detailed analysis of Uzbek and Tajik *maqom* for instance, which is relevant to my research, it leaves out information about historically nomadic people, especially Kazakh and Kyrgyz musical traditions, which she mentioned only briefly.

Another American ethnomusicologist, Mark Slobin wrote *Kyrgyz Instrumental Music* (based on his M.A. dissertation), published in 1969,[18] in which he referred to the above-mentioned sources (Zataevich, Beliaev, Vinogradov, Spector and others). In this book Slobin examines the *komuz*, a three string Kyrgyz lute, and compares the *komuz* with other lutes of

[17] Wood, John. 1872. A *Journey to the Source of the River Oxus.* London, J.Murray.
[18] Slobin, Mark. 1969. *Kirgiz Instrumental Music*. Society for Asian Music. New York.

Central Asia. Later, in 1975, Slobin, together with his wife Greta Slobin, translated the book by Victor Beliaev—*Central Asian Music: Essays in the History of the Music of the Peoples of the U.S.S.R.*[19]—with his editions and annotations.

A few scholars, foreign and local, have written about the music of Central Asia after the breakup of the Soviet Union. Alexander Djumaev, an Uzbek scholar, was the first Central Asian scholar who started to publish articles in English in Western scholarly journals. His article entitled "Power Structures, Culture Policy, and Traditional Music in Soviet Central Asia,"[20] reviews traditional music of the region during the Soviet time, based on Uzbek and Tajik archival materials and medieval manuscripts on music. American scholar, Theodore Levin, in his book *The Hundred Thousand Fools of God : Musical Travels in Central Asia*,[21] shares his ethnography about music and its social contexts through the point of view of musicians whom he met during his travels. The author examines the Uzbek musical tradition, with a strong focus on Bukharan Jews.

More works on the music of the region and different Central Asian musical traditions were written in the 2000s by various scholars such as Federico Spinetti, focusing on Tajik popular music,[22] Inna Naroditskaya[23] and Aida Huseynova[24] on Azerbaijani music, Rachel Harris on the music of Uyghurs,[25] Razia Sultanova on *shashmaqom*, an Uzbek music

[19] Beli͡aev, V. 1975. *Central Asian Music: Essays in the History of the Music of the Peoples of the U.S.S.R.* Wesleyan University.
[20] Djumaev, Alexander. 1993. "Power Structures, Culture Policy, and Traditional Music in Soviet Central Asia." *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 25 (January): 43-50
[21] Levin, Theodore Craig. 1996. *The Hundred Thousand Fools of God: Musical Travels in Central Asia* (and Queens, New York). Bloomington Indiana University Press.
[22] Spinetti, Federico. 2006. *Music, Politics and Identity in Post-Soviet Tajikistan*. Thesis (Ph.D.), University of London.
[23] Inna Naroditskaya. 2003. *Song from the Land of Fire: Azerbaijani Mugham in the Soviet and Post-Soviet Periods*. London: Routledge
[24] Huseynova, Aida. 2016. *Music of Azerbaijan : From Mugham to Opera*. Indiana University Press
[25] Harris, Rachel. 2004. *Singing the Village : Music, Memory, and Ritual among the Sibe of Xinjiang*. British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship Monograph. Published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press.

tradition,[26] and Razia Sultanova and Megan Rancier who edited a collection of essays on music of the region.[27]

One comprehensive book, *The Music of Central Asia,* which was published in 2016 and edited by Theodore Levin, Saida Daukeeva, and Elmira Köchümkulova, includes some previously written articles together with new ones. This collection of essays written by scholars and non-scholars covers topics on the music of sedentary and nomadic people, and music "in the age of globalization."[28] It fills a gap concerning music of the region. The book is accompanied by a website which presents audio and video examples, a very useful source for those who would like to get acquainted with the different musical cultures of the region. The authors stated in the preface that the book "can be used as a textbook—read systematically to build comprehensive knowledge about interlinked topics—or approached as a reference work for information on specific musical styles, repertoires, and traditions."[29] At the end of each article there are study questions and listening guides useful for the students. This book is a project of the Aga Khan Music Initiatives in Central Asia (AKMICA) program and is used as a textbook for undergraduate students at the newly established Aga Khan University of Central Asia in Naryn (Kyrgyzstan) and Khorog (Tajikistan). This "all in one" textbook gives a general overview of the musical cultures of Central Asia and is very useful for those who would like to teach a course on the Music of Central Asia for undergraduate students. However, for those who need to find more background information about certain musical traditions, this book is not sufficient and they need to read more widely.

---

[26] Sultanova, Razia. 2014. *From Shamanism to Sufism: Women, Islam and Culture in Central Asia*. London: I.B. Taurus.
[27] Sultanova, Razia, and Megan Rancier. 2018. *Turkic Soundscapes : From Shamanic Voices to Hip-Hop*. SOAS Musicology Series. Routledge.
[28] The book consists of four parts: "Music and Culture in Central Asia," "The Nomadic World," "The World of Sedentary Dwellers," and "Central Asian Music in the Age of Globalization."
[29] *The Music of Central Asia,* 2016, ix (edited by T. Levin, S. Daukeeva, and E. Köchümkulova)

II.1.2 Jazz scholarship on Central Asia

Discussion of ethnojazz as a new phenomenon is not fully treated by Levin's book. However, in the final part he mentions a collaboration of students from Centre Ustatshakirt.[30] This involved Kyrgyz traditional musicians, who performed together with the New York-based Ari Roland jazz quartet during their joint performance at the Bishkek Jazz Fall Festival,[31] which was another of my initiatives. A picture of this event is included in the book.

Another book, *From Mugham to Opera*, published in 2016, mentions Azerbaijani jazz-mugham, but there is no reference to Soviet Central Asian jazz fusion or current musical trends in Central Asian jazz. The author, Azerbaijani scholar Aida Huseynova argues why jazz successfully integrated with Azerbaijani *mugham* traditions and not with the traditions of Central Asia (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan), even though these countries also have "*maqam* and improvisatory traditions", and Azerbaijan shared the Soviet "sociopolitical context" with Central Asia.[32] She explains that this was due to the country's "unique geographical and cultural position."[33] It is true that the geographical position of Azerbaijan at the crossroads of Europe and Asia and its proximity to the sea allowed the flow of jazz musicians from abroad. However, I argue that jazz appeared in Central Asia at the same period as in Azerbaijan, where it also combined with traditional music and developed in its own unique way. Jazz was popular in the Soviet Union in the Soviet era and even though its development was not easy, it was played in almost all Soviet Socialist Republics, including Central Asia. For example, the Turkmen group *Gunesh,* which appeared in the 1970s, as well

[30] Centre Ustatshakirt was a project by AKMICA (Aga Khan Music Initiative in Central Asia), located in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
[31] Levin 2016, 527
[32] Huseynova, 2016, 219
[33] Since the nineteenth century Baku had become a "rapidly growing multiethnic metropolitan area", and as a seaport developed an "ideal cosmopolitan environment for jazz." (Huseynova, 2016, 219)

as other Central Asian groups (see section II.5.9), fused jazz and Turkmen music by using the pentatonic, traditional modes and rhythm. As the recordings present, these were the forerunners of the music that was given a forum in the Bishkek International Jazz Festival right from the start and especially in its two sub-projects, Ethnojazz Development in Central Asia and the Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory, which played an important role in encouraging the development of this new genre in the region.

The next section, on Soviet and post-Soviet identities in Central Asian countries, is important for understanding how music, including jazz, has evolved in the region.

II.2 The emergence of the Central Asian republics

Central Asia in the modern context refers to five post-Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, which is a scope of my research. The people of Central Asia are linked by a common history and geographic proximity. One important feature in the history of Central Asia was the existence and relationship of "pastoral-nomadic people of the steppe and the sedentary farming peoples of the agricultural oases to the south."[34] They had a long-standing relationship. Although there were tensions at times between these peoples, who lived independently within their groups, they "needed each other to survive."[35] The nomads could not engage in agriculture because they had to move from place to place to provide grass and water for cattle, while at the same time the sedentary people did not engage in cattle breeding; thus, through communication and trade these peoples provided each other with what they were missing.[36] Ancient Central Asian culture was distinguished by significant achievements which included irrigation systems, weaving of textiles and carpets, woodcarving, the making of metal objects, the creation of sculpture and

[34] Levi, 2007, 15
[35] Scott Levi, 2007
[36] Ibid.

the fine arts, the construction of architectural monuments, and the invention of forms of writing.[37]

The main commonality these people share is their historical struggle against both local oppressors and foreign conquerors, which has occurred repeatedly since ancient times.[38] There were several main khanates in Central Asia before the Russian conquest: Bukhara, Kokand, and Khiva. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Central Asian people lived under the rule of the *Khanate of Kokand* in the Fergana Valley. There were no territorial borders or national states, so the land was just separated by a "chain of fortresses."[39] People were identified by language, religion, place they were from; "designations such as 'Uzbek' and 'Kyrgyz' were in currency but their meanings were fluid."[40] In 1876 the Russian empire annexed the Kokand Khanate and created the Turkestan province.[41]

Although many territories were excluded from the Turkestan province, one of the main factors binding the region is cultural similarities. So there were political, but also cultural boundaries. The people of the Turkestan province, who became five national states during the Soviet time, share cultural and musical traditions with other people living in this wide territory, that includes Iran, Afghanistan, the Uyghur area in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region of western China, Azerbaijan, and part of Russia and Turkey.

---

[37] Belyaev, 1962, 5 (my translation)
[38] "The Achaemenids of Iran in the VI-IV centuries B.C., the Greco-Macedonians in the IV-II centuries B.C., the Sassanians Iran in the IV-VI centuries A.D., the Arab conquest in the VII-IX centuries, the invasions of Mongol hordes of Chingis Khan in the XIII century, and the conquest of Central Asia by Timur in the XIV century" (Belyaev, 1962, 5, my translation.)
[39] Megoran 2017, 9
[40] Ibid.
[41] For further reading on the early Central Asian history see W. Barthold, 1968, *Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion* (3rd ed., London: Luzac)

Figure II.1: Russian penetration of western Central Asia in the 19th and 20th centuries[42]

Borders. The current borders of Central Asia took shape after changes made first at the end of the nineteenth century as a result of a Russian-British agreement, which was then changed in 1924 and 1936, during the Soviet time.[43] In 1920 Lenin had started planning the division of Turkestan into different national states[44] and his initiative was implemented in 1924. Five Soviet republics were created in Central Asia in the 1920s and 1930s: the Kazakh, Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Tajik and Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republics.[45]

Geographical features. The conventional borders of Central Asia were formed during the Soviet time. The geographical territory of Central Asia stretches to the shores of the Caspian Sea in the west, on the other side of which there is Azerbaijan, a country that belongs to the Caucasian region but shares cultural and musical traditions with Central Asia. Azerbaijani people are Muslim and belong to the Turkic-speaking group. In the east, the Uyghurs in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region of western China, are also a Turkic-speaking Muslim people.

[42] Encyclopaedia Britannica, https://www.britannica.com/place/Central-Asia#/media/1/102288/886
[43] Capisani 2000, xxi
[44] Megoran 2017, 9
[45] "Central Asia." n.d.

However, today Central Asia is normally considered to be bordered by Iran, Afghanistan, and China to the south and east and by Russia to the north.

Central Asia has diverse territory, with high mountain ranges, like the Pamir and the Tian Shan, deserts, oases and fertile valleys. Two major rivers, the Amu Darya and the Syr Darya which drain into the Aral Sea, are the main source of water in the region.[46] Because of the overuse of water for agricultural purposes the declining flow of the rivers has caused problems over time.[47] Water use and distribution were the main issues in the past and are current issues as well. Even as far back as prehistoric times ". . . scarcity of sustenance was the principal reason for the movement of peoples, rather than attempts to deliberately create hegemony over others for self-aggrandizement."[48]

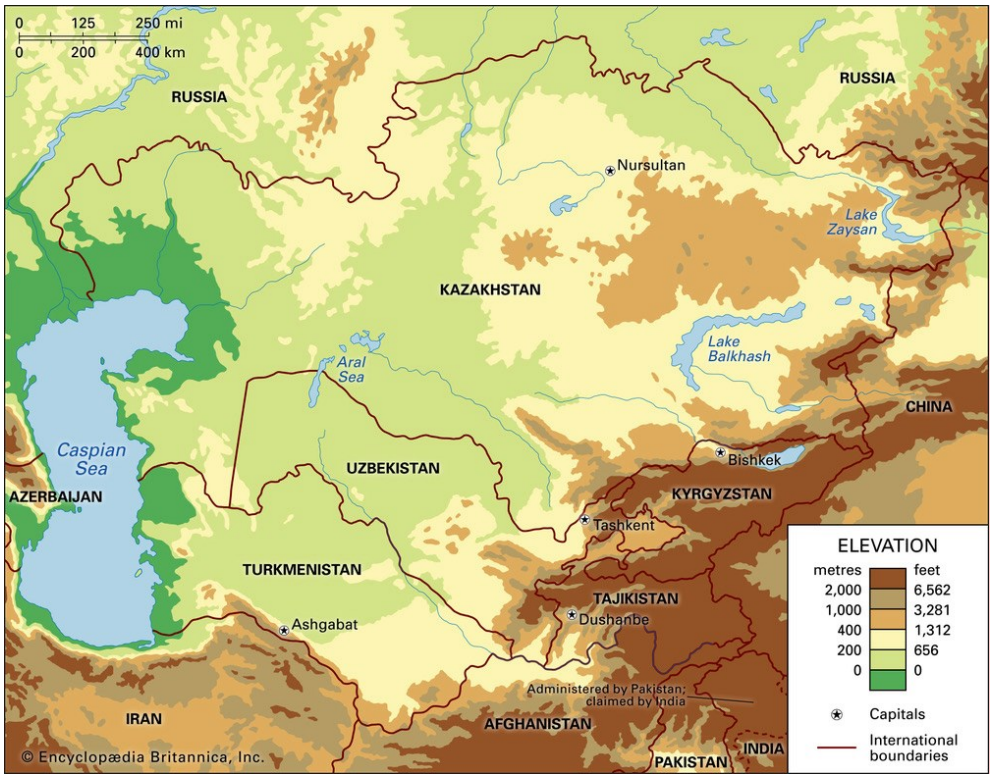

Figure II.2: Map of Central Asia[49]

[46] "Central Asia." n.d.
[47] Frye 1996, 13
[48] Ibid., 15
[49] Central Asia. Encyclopaedia Britannica, https://www.britannica.com/place/Central-Asia#/media/1/102288/6233

Turkic ethnicity and Turkic language; sedentary people and nomads

Turkic-speaking people are spread all over Central, Eastern, Northern and Western Asia and part of Eastern Europe.[50] The Turkic people who live in these different regions have certain characteristics in common: they speak the Turkic group of languages, are linked by their historical background and have common cultural and musical traditions. Among the modern Central Asian peoples, the Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, and Turkmens are Turkic people and speak Turkic languages.[51] Only Tajiks, who belong to the East Iranian group, speak Farsi, a language related to the Persian of modern Iran.[52]

Central Asian people historically can be divided into the nomadic and the settled. The Uzbek and Tajik were settled people, while the Kazakhs, Kyrgyz and Turkmens were traditionally nomadic. Although there were tensions between these people over the years, they had a long-standing relationship. Moreover, both groups learned to negotiate with each other; the nomads were not afraid of political domination by the settled communities and these two groups lived in partnership, which was not the case with the Chinese merchants who were regarded with suspicion due to their country's political agenda.[53]

II.3 The Soviet past

The countries of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) were created as part of the establishment of the Soviet Union, as I mentioned

[50] Sultanova and Rancier 2018, 1

[51] "The term Turkic represents a broad ethno-linguistic group of peoples, including existing societies such as Altai, Azerbaijanis, Balkars, Bashkirs, Chuvashes, Crimean Laraites, Gagauz, Karachays, Karakalpaks, Kazakhs, Khakas, Krymchaks, Kyrgyz people, Nogais, Qashqai, Tatars, Turkmens, Turks, Tuvans, Uyghurs, Uzbeks, and Yakuts, as well as ancient and medieval groups such as Dingling, Bulgars, Chuban, Gokturks, Khazars, Khikjis, Kipchaks, Kumans, Ottoman Turks, Seljuk Turks, Tiele, Timurids, Turgeshes, and possibly Huns, Wusun, and the Xiongnu." (Sultanova and Rancier 2018, 1)

[52] Levi, 2007, 15

[53] Frye 1996, 197

above, and were included among the fifteen Soviet republics. Since its formation Soviet people have had a dual identity, as Soviet citizens by passport and as representatives of a national republic and the national territory.[54] As Bassin and Kelly noted, "the Soviet nationalities was [sic.] succinctly expressed in the Stalinist dictum 'national in form, socialist in content'. National identities would be tolerated [. . .] only to the extent that they could be shaped and controlled by the central authorities."[55] Stalin had his own concept of nation which he described in his article written in 1913: "A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture."[56] Since then, new Central Asian leaders have been particularly concerned about the issue of national identity by "inventing traditions" in their "imagined community." The concept of a nation, once created by Stalin, has contributed to the nationalism which fully thrived in new Central Asian countries, which I discussed below (II. 7).

These countries declared independence after the Soviet Union's breakup in 1991, which no one ever expected to happen. As Sergey Abashin emphasized, "Not one republic in Central Asia had a mass secession movement or its own dissidents prior to the actual break-up; indeed local leaders remained loyal to the central Soviet leadership to the very last moment, never raising any demands for autonomy or independence."[57] However, after gaining independence the political elites of these countries represented this change as the "long-awaited liberation from imperial shackles, resulting from national aspirations and ongoing struggle."

[54] Bassin and Kelly 2012, 4
[55] Ibid.
[56] Stalin 1952, 307, quoted in Schoeberlein-Engel 1994, 6
[57] Abashin 2012, 151

Since then the newly emerged states of Central Asia have faced the problems of cross-border, ethnic conflicts and tensions in the region. These real threats had always existed even during the Soviet time,[58] but they were carefully and deliberately hidden behind an ideology of *Druzhba narodov*[59] (friendship among peoples) between the different nationalities of the peoples of the USSR. In Soviet times, the government advocated a policy of friendship between the peoples of different union republics. A great deal of attention was paid to the popularization of the national heritage of the various peoples of the USSR. This was done by holding ten-day festivals called *dekady* in Moscow or in a neighbouring republic. The *dekady* of arts and culture of the Soviet republics were presented by the Soviet government from the mid-1930s.[60] The different Soviet national republics held *dekady* events in Moscow one after another, showing the achievements of local professional arts and music, which had barely emerged three to five years before the event.[61]

Recent ethnic tensions. During the seventy-year history of the Soviet Union there had been no question of borders. The situation changed with the collapse of the Soviet Union when the newly emerged republics revealed their territorial claims on each other. This marked the beginning of interethnic hostility and border conflicts. Ethnic conflicts continue to this day. For example, there was a repetition of the 1990 ethnic conflict between Uzbek and Kyrgyz in Osh, a southern city of Kyrgyzstan, in 2010, and cross-border conflicts between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in 1999 in Batken, a town in southwestern Kyrgyzstan. Occasional conflicts continue with the most recent being between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in Batken in 2021.

[58] For instance ethnic conflicts between Uzbek and Kyrgyz in Osh city in 1990.
[59] "Druzhba narodov was introduced into the Soviet vocabulary in 1935. [. . .] With friendship the diminution of the notion of a kinship tie had the advantage of an emphasis on equality among the Soviet peoples." (Suny 2012, 26.)
[60] Bullock 2006, 94
[61] First pre-war series of decady: 1936: Ukraine (11-12 March) and Kazakhstan (17-25 May); 1937: Georgia (5-15 January) and Uzbekistan (21-20 May); 1938: Azerbaijan (5-15 April); 1939: Kyrgyzstan (26 May – 4 June) and Armenia (20-29 October); 1940: Belarus (5-15 June) and Buryat-Mongolia (20-27 October); and 1941: Tajikistan (12-20 April). (Bullock 2006, 94)

II.4 Traditional music of Central Asia

The traditional music of Central Asia is distinguished by considerable variety due to the cultural diversity. Over time some cultures were influenced by each other's musical traditions, so some traditions merged and have become hard to differentiate. Theodore Levin emphasized that, "After millennia of intermingling, Turkic, Mongolian, and Iranian cultural traditions have become so tightly interwoven that in many cases it is all but impossible [. . .] to try to distinguish their ethnic or geographical origins."[62] However, the traditions of sedentary dwellers and historically nomadic people mostly stayed unchanged and can be identified in various ways, such as the type of performers, selection of instruments, repertoire and musical genres, use of rhythm and musical scales.[63] Even though historically nomadic groups (Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, and Turkmens) resettled in the villages and cities in the 1930s, due to Soviet policy, they continue their cultural traditions as nomadic people up to the present day.[64]

The early history of traditional music in the region

Although there are many archaeological finds of musical remains in Central Asia, they mostly relate to the urban culture of the sedentary people.[65] One of the rare pieces of archaeological evidence of music existing among the nomads has been found in petroglyphs. For example, among forty thousand petroglyphs found at the Saimaluu Tash site in the territory of Kyrgyzstan, dating back to the III-II century BC, there is one petroglyph illustrating a ritual dance with a man holding a tambourine, a very large one, which suggests the importance of the musical instrument at that time.[66]

[62] Levin 2016, 8
[63] Ibid.
[64] Köchümkulova and Qojakhmetova 2016, 149
[65] Sultanova and Rancier 2018, 15
[66] Vyzgo 1980, 14 (my translation)

Figure II.3: Ritual dances. Saimaluu Tash State Natural Park, Kyrgyzstan; photo by PF CAAM[67]

II.4.1 Oral traditions and performers

The various forms of traditional Central Asian music are based on both unique and shared cultural traditions. The shared traits include how music is improvised and the strong oral traditions on which it is based. These elements are reflected in each of the main musical forms: sung and instrumental *maqams,* recited epic and the art of *aqyn* improvisation.

Maqam has different meanings in the musical traditions of the Middle East and Central Asia. There is no consensus in the scholarly works about the meaning of *maqam.*[68] As Karomatov and Elsner noted, one of the problems is the Eurocentric approach which ignores "historical and ethno-regional differences and originality of the practice of developing traditional musical culture."[69] In Tajikistan and Uzbekistan *maqam* is pronounced as *maqom*, and used with various meanings.[70] First, it was a mode for a plucked instrument, especially tanbur, where tied frets was associated with a certain *maqam*; it is also a place

[67] PF CAAM photo archive
[68] Karomatov and Elsner 1984, 89 (my translation)
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.

where the string touches the fretboard (*parda*); second, it means a melody, tune, and also a fret structure; third, the maqom is a suite of musical pieces of Uzbek and Tajik professional music of oral traditions.[71] The term maqam, as well as parda, denoted frets on stringed instruments, especially on tanbur. These were tied frets. Each of them was associated with one or another.

Central Asian *maqoms* has been developed primarily in the cities of Bukhara, Khiva, and Qoqand, which were cultural centres in the Bukhara Emirate and Khiva and Qoqand Khanates.[72] Over time each of these three cities has developed its own style of *maqoms*: *shashmaqam* (six *maqoms*), a tradition of Bukhara city, is a suite consisting of pieces in different musical modes; *alti-yarim maqom* (six and a half *maqoms*), also known as Khorezmian *maqom*, was developed in the cities of Khiva and Urgench; and a *maqom* which was developed in Qoqand called *chormaqom* (four *maqoms*), which is also known as the Tashkent-Ferghana *maqom.*[73] A master performer of this style was Turgun Alimatov.[74]

Although Azerbaijan is not geographically part of the Central Asian region, it shares its musical traditions. Azerbaijani *mugham,* the most important musical tradition in that country, developed over centuries as an offshoot of the traditions of the *maqams* of Central Asia and the Middle East; the Persian *dastgah* is closest to the Azerbaijani *mugham.*[75]

***Epos* and its narrators** – different names were used for epic narrators in the region. The Greek word "epos" is pronounced the same way in Central Asian countries to identify epic traditions; the term probably has been used since the Russian Revolution. Similarly, a term *manaschi*, a narrator of the Kyrgyz epic *Manas*, has been used since the Revolution as

[71] Ibid.
[72] Sumit and Levin 2016, 321
[73] Ibid., 322
[74] Turgun Alimatov, Albom 1980: The Great 1960s and 80s, https://open.spotify.com/album/7FdNtXktYDFYB2MzDWWdzp?si=cEz4UL6zQvqe-yJuf6wCVg&dl_branch=1
[75] Huseynova, 2016, 39

Karl Reichl noted,[76] but before that it was called *jomokchu,* from *jomok.*[77] The Kazakh and Karakalpak epic singers are called *jirau* from a *jyr/yr,*[78] a Kazakh singer of oral epic poetry is also called *aqyn.*[79] The Turkment, Uzbek, and Karakalpak epic singers are called *bagshy,* however this term has a different meaning in Kyrgyz and Kazakh, referring to a shaman or healer.[80] In earlier times, however, Uzbek *bagshy* combined the arts of singer and healer.[81]

Epic traditions are still a living tradition in Central Asia; they have been preserved through oral transmission from generation to generation. Traditions were well preserved among historically nomadic Karakalpaks, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and Turkmen.[82] While there are differences between the epics of these groups, the "Kirghiz tradition in particular occupies a special position."[83]

The epic poem *Manas* is the pinnacle of Kyrgyz creativity; it is considered to be the longest epic known to the world.[84] The poem's three episodes contain a total of more than 500,000 verse lines, according to the version of the greatest *manaschi* of the 20th century, Sayakbay Karalayev.[85] This fact alone suggests that a *manaschi* possesses a phenomenal memory; equally important is that each re-telling (or rather singing) is an improvised re-enactment of the epic. Monumental in its form, it is the most treasured expression of the national heritage of the Kyrgyz people. The *Epic of Manas* captures pages of history, cultural

[76] Reichl 2018, 62
[77] *Jomok* (Kyrgyz) – fairy tale
[78] *Jir/yr* (Kazakh/Kyrgyz) – song
[79] Reichl 2018, 64
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid., 65
[82] Köchümkulova 2016, 49
[83] Reichl 2018, 4
[84] Vinogradov 1979, 16 (my translation)
[85] Sayakbay Karalayev: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-adfroPwXc&ab_channel=AgaKhanMusicProgramme

traditions, pictures of social life, and nature formed over thousands of years.[86] The main idea of the epic, running through the entire narrative, is the idea of freedom and independence.[87] Chokan Valikhanov, a famous Kazakh ethnographer and traveller wrote in 1856, "*Manas* is an encyclopedia, a collection of all tales, narratives, legends, geographical, religious, intellectual knowledge and moral concepts of the people into one whole. [...] it is a folk epic, a kind of *Iliad* of the steppe."[88] The *Manas* epic holds the most important position in the Kyrgyz cultural heritage and plays a significant role in Kyrgyz cultural identity.

The art of *aqyn* improvisation

The art of *aqyn* improvisation belongs to both Kazakhs and Kyrgyz. Since their two languages are very similar the word *aqyn* is used in both languages "to designate an oral poet and musician."[89] The *aqyn* is a popular performer at the various festivities (*toys*) and life-cycle ritual traditions (celebration for a newborn, wedding etc.), traditions dating from the time when these groups lived as nomads. Often a competition is organized between *aqyns*; these competitions are called *aytysh* or *aytys.*[90] The art of *aytysh* was added to UNESCO's intangible heritage list in 2015. In the new era of independence *aytysh/aytys* are organized between Kazakh and Kyrgyz *aqyns,* in which the Kyrgyz sing in Kyrgyz and accompany themselves on *komuz* and the Kazakhs sing in Kazakh accompanying themselves on *dombyra*. These performances are usually well received by the Kyrgyz and Kazakh audiences, who listen attentively, trying to understand their neighbour's language, since it is still different. This new trend of organizing *aytysh* between Kazakh and Kyrgyz has become

[86] Vinogradov 1979, 16 (my translation)
[87] Ibid.
[88] Valikhanov 1985, 70 (my translation)
[89] Köchümkulova and Qojakhmetova 2016, 49
[90] *Aytysh/Aytys*—"Aitysh(Kyrgyz)/Aitys(Kazakh) is a contest centred on improvised oral poetry spoken or sung to the accompaniment of traditional musical instruments—the Kazakh *dombyra* or Kyrgyz komuz. Two performers (*aqyns)* compete with one other [sic] to improvise verses on topical themes in a battle of wits that alternates between humorous ripostes and penetrating philosophical reflections. (Aytysh/Aytys, Art of Improvisation." n.d.)

especially popular during the summit meetings of the presidents of the two countries and also other Central Asian leaders, showing the similarity of traditions and historical ties.

II.4.2 Musical instruments

Traditional musical instruments in Central Asia likewise have some similarities, even though they are extremely varied and over the centuries have undergone changes and improvements. Already in the era of Central Asian antiquity[91] music "was a complex and versatile phenomenon created by the efforts of many peoples."[92] Central Asia was part of the Silk Road,[93] the trade route in antiquity connecting China with the West for the silk trade.[94] Because Central Asia was at the crossroads between East and West, the influences of both were found on musical instruments as well as musical style.[95] For instance, the use of the pentatonic scale in Kyrgyz and Kazakh music came from the East.[96] ". . . In border areas there is always a great deal of give and take, and just as people living at the border of two countries usually speak both languages, they also know and appreciate each other's music. Therefore, music on the Turkmen-Persian, Uzbek-Afghan, Tajik-Indian, and Kirgiz-Chinese borders has the benefit of dual cultures."[97]

There are some differences between the musical instruments of sedentary people and historically nomadic people. In a table entitled "Tendencies and typologies in Central Asian

[91] "At the time of Central Asian antiquity (3rd century B.C – 3rd century A.D) there existed several centres of musical culture in the territory of Central Asia—Marakanda (ancient Samarkand) in Sogdiana, Nisa in Parthia (the territory of modern Turkmenia), Khorezm (on the right bank of the Oxus) and cities of Northern Bactria (today, the southern region of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan)." (Vyzgo 1968, 174, my translation)
[92] Vyzgo 1980, 14 (my translation)
[93] The term "Silk Route" was invented by the German geographer Baron von Richthofen in 1877 (Frye 1996, 153)
[94] Frye 1996, 153
[95] Spector 1994, 440
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid., 44

musical instruments," Theodore Levin identified similarities and differences between musical instruments played by nomads and sedentary dwellers, which to some extent appear to reflect their different life-styles. The historically nomadic people, for instance, from ancient times relied on gut (also horsehair) from their animals for stringing their two-three stringed bowed fiddles and fretless lutes, which were plucked or strummed. The musicians from nomadic groups mostly performed as soloists and used diatonic intervals on the scales; percussion instruments were rare among this group.[98] The sedentary dwellers, in contrast, made their instrument strings from metal or silk and used wooden or metal spectrums to play on their long-necked, many-stringed, fretted lutes. Their music was typified by "non-diatonic intervals such as microtones and neutral thirds for a structural feature of modes and scales."[99] The performances were usually given by a small ensemble where a singer was accompanied by string instruments and/or by frame drums and other percussion instruments.[100]

Uzbek and Tajik music have strong rhythmic music and dance traditions. Musicians from these countries play rhythmic patterns in most of their music for which they use a frame drum, a *doira* or *daf*.[101] Nomadic people do not use drums, except in ritual ceremonies,[102] but express the rhythm by "plucking, strumming, bowing, blowing, or twanging" on lutes, fiddles, flutes, and jaw harps.[103]

The main traditional musical instruments of the people of Central Asia and Azerbaijan have a variety of names but most are types of lute, which differ in sound depending on their shape, construction, and the material from which each is made. Although they have different numbers of strings and different holding positions, they are all plucked

[98] Levin 2016, 33
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid., 35
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.

string instruments. The Kyrgyz *komuz*, Kazakh *dombyra*, Turkmen *dutar*, Tajik *rubab*, Uzbek *tanbur* and Azerbaijani *tar* are used either as solo instruments or to accompany singing. In some Central Asian cultures singers usually accompany themselves on the lute, while in Azerbaijani culture, *tar* and *kamancha* players accompany the *khanende,* who also play on the *ghaval* as they sing. In the fifth ethnojazz laboratory four lutes were present, *Afghan rubab, komuz, tanbur, and tar.* Sitting side by side, the musicians studied each other's instruments, adapted the sound of their instruments to the general sound, and shared their tuning experience. Other distinctive features are *maqamchi* singers and instrumentalists (Tajikistan and Uzbekistan), and *khanende* and *mugham* players, as singers and instrumentalists of *mugham* are called (Azerbaijan).

The close cultural similarity between Kyrgyz and Kazakh, and Uzbek and Tajik can be explained by the fact that these people had been living in the same territory for a long time. All of the above-mentioned factors are reflected in the musical characteristics of the cultural traditions of these Central Asian countries.[104]

II.4.3 Traditional music of Central Asia during the Soviet Era

In the countries of Central Asia between the 1930s and 1990s, the efforts of musical institutions were directed towards the development of European musical art which, as Spinetti has noted, also encouraged local regional music to develop in a more European style.[105] While the traditional music of Central Asia was supported during this time, it was shaped by the academics who studied it. Soviet rule supported the study of western classical music instruction and performance, with a focus on the music of European composers, and especially Russian composers. Prior to the 20th century, traditional music had not been

[104] Belyaev 1962, 6 (my translation)
[105] Spinetti 2005, 186

deeply affected by western influences despite the many political and social changes that occurred in Central Asian societies.

Before the revolution, the majority of the peoples that became part of the USSR were colonies of tsarist Russia. It was not an easy task for the Soviet government to bring together peoples with different levels of development under one umbrella. The Soviet government adopted two approaches; as Russian musicologist Nona Shakhnazarova observed, they promoted the norms of the European professional tradition as the basis for development and the "accelerated development of cultures" as a way to attain that development.[106]

The “accelerated development of cultures,” which included implementing a European musical education, had a negative impact on the traditional musical culture of the national republics which had their own long-standing professional musical culture. As Shakhnazarova wrote, because European tradition through the Russian experience was forcibly imposed as a single form of professionalism it took some time to realize that this approach brought many problems to the indigenous cultures of the national republics.[107] This approach created a pressure in the national republics, where operas, symphonies, ballets, and other artistic forms were previously unknown to the local people. For instance, in 1936 the Soviet Government sent a number of educated Russian professionals to the national republics to initiate and influence classical artistic creations. Two of these professionals, Vladimir Vlasov and Vladimir Fere, arrived in the Kyrgyz republic in 1936, where they were responsible for routine management tasks associated with establishing arts organizations, the musical drama theatre and the philharmonic hall. On top of this, they undertook to write, with help from others, a groundbreaking musical creation, the musical drama *Altyn kyz*[108] which was staged

[106] Shakhnazarova 2013, 11 (my translation)
[107] Ibid.
[108] *Altyn kyz* (The Golden Girl) – First appeared as *Partizandyn kyzy* (Guerrilla's daughter) (Alagushev and Kaplan 1973, 7)

in 1937. The following year came the next musical, *Ajal orduna*, and within three years, in 1939, they presented the first opera, *Ay-Churek*. All three were performed at the first *decady*[109] in Moscow in 1939.

Vlasov and Fere chose *Altyn kyz* for the first musical drama to reflect Socialist realism, the cultural policy of the Soviet government which had started in the mid 1930s. The libretto, however, was written by a Kyrgyz writer, Joomart Bokonbaev. In addition to bringing a Kyrgyz voice to the project, the Russian composers included original Kyrgyz *kuis* in the musical drama,[110] with the help of Abdylas Maldybayev, a Kyrgyz singer and melodist, who had sung a role in *Altyn kyz. Ay-Churek* was the first Kyrgyz opera, and continued the fruitful collaboration between Vlasov, Fere and Maldybayev. Together they wrote six operas and many other works, including the Kyrgyz national anthem.[111]

Soviet ideologists, in their approach to traditional Central Asian music that had formed over centuries, sought to overcome its "limitations" by adopting a modernist aesthetic and introducing the norms of the European professional tradition. Traditional musicians were forcibly taught European notation according to tempered pitch. All of this was not completely acceptable for Central Asian music, especially for Tajik and Uzbek music, which abounds in quarter tones, ornamentation, and intervals that do not correspond to the intervals of European music. Musical instruments were modernized so that some of them lost the ability to produce microtonal pitches. For instance, *tanbur* in Uzbekistan were made with fixed *pardas* (frets) to be tuned according to tempered European pitch.[112] Well-respected Uzbek scholar Faizulla Karomatly noted that: "New low and high-registered ones [instruments] were

[109] *decady* – ten-day festival
[110] Kyrgyz *kuis* (tunes). *Burulcha* and *Oljo* notated by Russian folklorist A. Zaeyevich, were used for dance scenes and *Kyz-kerbez*, written by the great Kyrgyz *aqyn* Murataly Kurenkeyev, were selected for Chynar's aria.
[111] Summary from the book: Alagushev and Kaplan, 1973
[112] Shukurov 2017, interview with author. (my translation)

created, which had the same name, but did not have anything else in common with them [the originals], since they had been adapted primarily to the performance of polyphonic compositions by Western European composers."[113] All these 'innovations' negatively impacted the traditional performance culture of Central Asia.

In Central Asian music institutions traditional instrumentalists had been members of the folklore department, which also taught Russian folklore instruments such as *balalaika*. So when the Russian scholars came to the region in the 1930s they modernized the traditional instruments with the aim of creating folklore ensembles. Just as in European classical orchestras there were prima-*komuz*, alto-*komuz*, and bass-*komuz*, in the same way the *kyl-kyak* was reconstructed, with two additional strings being added to the original two-string instrument, so the instruments sounded like violin, viola, cello and bass.[114] From around twenty-two Kyrgyz traditional instruments only three were chosen to support the folk ensembles and included in the music school curriculum: *komuz*, *kyl-kyak*, and *temir ooz komuz.*[115]

As a result of the new Soviet regime imposing the same kinds of limits as Western Europeans, the spiritual aspect of education—especially the old practice whereby the *ustat*[116] conveyed to the *shakirt* [117] the substance of the musical tradition—was lost. As Cowell remarks:

> Western minds and ears were so busy with the contrapuntal and harmonic development of music that none of them heard anything else. Since it was these elements that remained almost undeveloped in Eastern cultures . . . [they concluded] . . . that eastern music was primitive and monotonous. Europeans were not prepared to perceive the greatest melodic and rhythmic complexity and sophistication of the

[113] Karomatly 2009, 221 (my translation)
[114] Aisaev, interview with author, 2018 (my translation)
[115] Nyshanov, interview with author, 2018 (my translation)
[116] Ustat (Kyrgyz), also Ustad, Ustod, Ustadh – teacher, a master musician
[117] Shakirt (Kyrgyz), also Shogird, Shäkirt, Shagird – student, a disciple of a master

> music of the East . . . Eastern musicians were also resistant to Western music because they were not prepared to perceive its harmonic nature.[118]

Sergey Balasanyan, a Soviet composer of Armenian descent, was among the Russian professionals who were sent by the Soviet government in the mid-1930s from Moscow to the Central Asian Soviet national republics in order to develop Western classical arts and music. He was sent to Tajikistan in 1939 and in the same year he wrote the first Tajik opera *The Vose Uprising*-, which became the first Tajik professional opera. Its plot is based on the uprising of peasants against local feudal lords in 1883-85 led by the historically known Tajik hero

Vose.[119] In his article "What hinders the development of opera in Central Asia?" Balasanyan describes composers' challenges in writing national operas, which provides valuable feedback from the composers' perspectives, at a time when he and others were trying to carry out the Party's order.

> We are engaged in such a complex genre as opera, without really knowing the music, customs, language, and traditions of these peoples and not having the opportunity to delve into the intonation system and specific music of the speech of these people as it happens with a person who has grown up among them. The composer involuntarily writes abstract recitatives alternating them with citation and development of the corresponding folk songs. Formally, everything is correct, but the listener is not satisfied, considering this music foreign.[120]

Moreover, he criticizes the practices of the *dekady* in Moscow. According to Balasanyan, although these practices motivated composers to write new operas within a certain timeline, they negatively affected the quality of the operas. He continues by saying that some of those operas were soon taken out of the repertoire and even forgotten. Interestingly, the initial article was written in 1960 for the *Sovetskaya Muzyka* magazine and was also to appear under the new heading "Let's talk about opera," but it was never published

[118] Cowell 1982, cited in Mazievsky, 2007.
[119] "Sergey Balasanyan." n.d.
[120] Balasanyan 2003*,* 28-36 (my translation)

during the Soviet era. Moreover, the chief editor of the magazine was fired, likely because of the attempted publication of this article.[121] The article was eventually published in 2003, after the breakup of the Soviet Union (1991).

II.5 Central Asian jazz: Origins of jazz, jazz fusion, Soviet jazz, Soviet popular music, jazz in Soviet Central Asia and jazz mugham

II.5.1 Origins of jazz

In most jazz history books, such as those by DeVeaux (1991), Johnson (1993), Gabbard (1995), among others, the authors canonize jazz as an American phenomenon, and most of them consider jazz as American classical music. As Hasse and Blumental noted, "Jazz did not appear in a vacuum. Some of its elements can be traced to other cultures—its rhythmic accentuations and call-and-response patterns to Africa, its instrumentation and harmonies to Europe—but the synthesis is entirely American, rooted specifically in the earlier African American blues and ragtime styles."[122] However, already in the mid 2000s, there was a shift in jazz studies impacted by the earlier works,[123] with the appearance of books such as *Jazz Planet*[124] and *Jazz Worlds/ World Jazz*.[125]

II.5.2 Jazz fusion

The confidence and ability that Central Asian musicians showed in synthesizing traditional music with jazz techniques was possible, not only because of their own ability in improvisation, but also because of the way jazz had evolved. Miles Davis revolutionized the jazz world in the late 1950s with his "modal improvisation," when, for instance, in *Kind of*

[121] Ibid.
[122] Hasse, John Edward and Bob Blumental, 2010, in *Jazz,* The Smithsonian Anthology
[123] Plastino and Bohlman 2016
[124] Atkins 2003
[125] Plastino and Bohlman 2016

Blue (1959), he "transformed jazz performance, replacing bebop's harmonic complexity with a style that favored melody and nuance."[126] Berendt states that "Miles, and with him John Coltrane , . . made this method of improvisation based on scales standard practice for the whole jazz world, thus creating the last step required for the total freedom of free jazz. This is also referred to as 'modal' improvisation."[127] Miles Davis's groundbreaking jazz fusion in the 1970s continuously experimented in jazz, this time by adding electric instruments.

At the end of the 1960s and in the 1970s a number of musicians experimented in jazz fusion by synthesizing jazz with rock, funk, and electric instruments, among them Larry Coryell, John McLaughlin, Chick Corea, and Herbie Hancock. Some fusion forms analogous to Central Asian ethnojazz have arisen in quite a few different cultures, reflecting geographical heritage. For example, different musicians experimented in synthesizing Indian music and jazz, among them Don Ellis and John Mayer in the sixties and guitarist John McLaughlin who developed John Coltrane's fusion with Indian music in the seventies. There was also Latin jazz by Tito Puente popular and Vietnamese by Nguyen Le, to name some more. All these musicians prefigured world music, which spread through the seventies and eighties. This evolution was similar to the blending of traditions found in the development of Soviet jazz at the end of 1960s and in 1970s, including Azerbaijani jazz *mugham* by Vagif Mustafa-Zadeh and Rafigue Babayev, and Yuri Parfenov's Central Asian jazz, described below in the Soviet jazz section of this chapter.

The all-absorbing quality of jazz allowed these talented musicians to express themselves through compositions and improvisation. As Larry Coryell noted, "If music has something to say to you, whether it's jazz, country-and-western, Indian music or Asian folk music, go ahead and use it."[128] The musician is the main figure in the creative process,

[126] DeVeaux and Giddins 2009, 372
[127] Ibid.
[128] Keepnews 2017

combining the dual role of being a performer and a composer. Modal jazz enabled world music fusions of various types and laid the groundwork for the musical synthesis and cultural collaboration that were reflected in our ethnojazz project. However, it is first important to consider how early forms of jazz developed in the Soviet Union and Soviet Central Asia and how the nature of jazz facilitated the evolution of ethnojazz.

II.5.3 Publications on Soviet jazz

While the Soviet influence in Central Asia focused on classical European styles like opera and musical drama, jazz was also being developed and promoted in the country and had its own unique path. This also began to influence some musicians and music in Central Asia.

There are six books written about Soviet jazz, three in Russian, by A. Batashev (1972), A. and O. Medvedevs (1987) and V. Feyertag (1999); and three in English by Leo Feigin (1985), S. Frederick Starr (1994), and William Minor (1995). Although there were articles by Russian scholars and musicians published in unofficial essay collections and journals in earlier years,[129] the first book about Soviet jazz published by the state publisher *Muzyka* was the monograph by Alexey Batashev *Soviet Jazz (Sovetsky djaz)* in 1972. Batashev's book is an important source of information about the appearance of jazz in the 1920s in the Soviet Union and its development up to the 1960s.

The book by Leo Feigin *Russian Jazz: New Identity* (1985), is a collection of essays by Western scholars which cover the 1970s and 1980s in Soviet Jazz history. The same period is covered in the Russian book edited by Alexander and Olga Medvedevs, *Soviet Jazz:*

[129] Ginzburg, Semyon. 1926. *Jazz Band and Contemporary Music*. Leningrad, Academia. (This is a collection of four essays by Australian composer Percy Grainger, American pianist and composer Louis Gruenberg, a French composer Darius Milhaud, and the editor Semyon Ginzburg.) Also, Mysovsky. V. and V. Feyertag. 1960."Jazz", Leningrad, *Muzgiz*. (A brochure about the history of American jazz with brief information about Soviet jazz orchestras at the end of the book.)

Masters, Events, Problems (*Sovetsky djaz – problemy, sobytiya, mastera*) a collection of essays (1987), written by diverse authors: scholars, musicians, engineers, physicists, philologists, and teachers; the book also presents thoughts of renowned Russian composers such as Prokofiev, Khachaturian and others. William Minor in his book *Unzipped Soul: A Jazz Journey through the Soviet Union* (1995), shares his personal experience and research as a musician and scholar during his field trip to the Soviet Union at the end of 1980s. Vladimir Feyertag,[130] wrote an interesting book about Soviet jazz in his hometown, Leningrad,[131] *Jazz from Leningrad to Petersburg* (*Djaz ot Leningrada do Peterburga,* 1999), sharing his personal experience as a student at the philology department of Leningrad University, his growing interest in jazz, becoming a musician and band leader and lecturer. The book expresses well the situation around jazz at that time, and presents all the main figures in jazz in Leningrad.

Soviet Jazz (*Sovetsky djaz*) by Russian scholar Aleksei Batashev and *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union* by American scholar Frederick Starr offer two separate narratives, one from a western perspective, and one from inside the Soviet Union, about what was happening to jazz in the Soviet Union during the 1920-30's. Analysis of the texts suggests bias and state restriction; both authors leave out crucial information. Therefore, reading the texts in tandem offers a deeper understanding of the situational dynamics of changing political ideologies. Frederick Starr used Batashev's book as the main reference but gave a Western interpretation of the information. Interestingly, Starr neglects to mention Batashev's interpretation that "Music of the Gross," an article by the famous Russian writer Maxim Gorky, was not against jazz; rather, it was against the imperialistic influence of the West. However, writing for a western audience, Starr focuses on the state's suppression of

[130] I know him well personally because I invited him to the first three Bihskek jazz festivals (2006-2008)
[131] Leningrad—former name of Saint Petersburg

jazz but excludes the fact that Batashev was under Soviet censure and that the Gorky article was not intentionally against jazz. At the time that Batashev was writing, the Soviet Union exerted ideological control and therefore Batashev could not explicitly critique the Soviet's Union's former policies against jazz. Starr was biased in the sense he wrote what the West wanted to read—they wanted to hear about the communist ideology and their oppression of Western influence. Batashev also left out information, but in his case, it was not due to bias, as the Soviet "Zensura" (censure) was still enforced in 1972 when the book was published. Batachev's book is focused on the musical genre while Starr is more politically focused.

Another episode in Starr's book was questioned by Vladimir Feyertag. Starr wrote that Teplitsky, whom I mention below, was sent to jail in 1931 during the first persecution of jazz. Feyertag refutes this statement saying that there were no persecutions related to jazz in 1931 and that Teplitsky's was not related to jazz.[132] The complete narrative of the Soviet government's suppression of jazz music is best told through analysis of scholarly work written from both inside and outside the Soviet Union,

There appears to be little written about early jazz in Central Asia, but I refer to primary sources, two articles in Alexander and Olga Medvedev's book, and a small book by Sergey Gilev, a Russian jazz musician who lived in Uzbekistan and wrote about the history of jazz in that country. With respect to jazz *mugham*, I also refer to another article in Medvedev's book and a book by Farkhadov and Babayeva (2010).

II.5.4 Soviet jazz and Soviet popular culture (1920-1930s)

Soviet jazz, which until recently was a relatively unknown genre to the western public, has a long history that stems from the early 20th century. It developed almost in parallel with American jazz but has its own unique features, which led to the emergence of

[132] Feyertag 2014, 14

the great Soviet jazz musicians. The history of Soviet jazz was characterized by an alternating period of acceptance and banning by the Soviet state. As Feyertag noted, "Jazz was like a well-fermented dough that constantly came out of the pot, no matter how tight the lid was closed."[133] Throughout its history, jazz in the Soviet Union was always under the special attention of the Soviet authorities. This happened for two reasons: first, because jazz appeared after the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 and has been closely connected to music from the US; second, the strong appeal of jazz and its freedom of expression was attractive for the youthful audience.[134] As Efim Barban noted:

> Jazz, with its free self-expression, swing and the Dionysian atmosphere of the contact between performer and listeners, could not fail to attract a youthful audience. [...] jazz became a form of escapism, of flight from odious and depersonalized reality. [...] jazz became a safety-valve, an outlet for the realization of individual life, for the manifestation of human privacy in an alienated world.[135]

Soviet jazz: its emergence and integration with Soviet popular culture

Jazz started in the Soviet Union due to Parnakh's efforts to make Russian musicians aware of the possibilities for this art form.[136] Parnakh became a founding father of the new style of music since he was the first who wrote articles about jazz and perhaps even came up with the word "djaz" (jazz) in Russian.[137] The first appearance of jazz before a Soviet audience which counted as the birth of Soviet jazz was in Moscow in October 1, 1922 with the concert of "The First Eccentric Orchestra of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic – Valentin Parnakh's Jazz Band" where Parnakh performed as a mime. Since he

[133] Ibid., 7
[134] Barban 1985, 11 (my translation)
[135] Ibid., 12
[136] Valentin Parnakh, a poet, who had lived in Paris since 1913 fell in love with jazz after hearing a Louis Mitchell jazz band. When he went back to Moscow in the 1920s he took in his luggage a full set of jazz instruments, which included a banjo, a saxophone, set of mutes, cymbals and noise instruments. (Batashev 1972, 9) (my translation)
[137] Batashev 1972, 9 (my translation)

was not a musician and did not play any musical instruments he perceived jazz first of all as "melodic rhythmic accompaniment to the plastic movements."[138]

In Leningrad, the second largest cultural centre in Russia, the spread of jazz was different. As noted by Feyertag, Leopold Teplitsky returned to Leningrad after his trip to Philadelphia, with a suitcase of Paul Whiteman's arrangements, as well as with recordings and musical instruments.[139] Taking jazz seriously, Leopold Teplitsky invited renowned classical musicians, professors of the conservatory, to perform works from sheet music that he provided.[140] The band gave its first concert in April of 1928, performing popular foxtrots by Gershwin, Donaldson and arrangements of songs by Russian composers.[141] But before that was a tour by "Chocolate Kiddies," an American jazz band led by Samuel Wooding which toured Europe and performed in Moscow and Leningrad in February 1926 and "played a huge role in the development of Russian [Soviet] jazz."[142]

Soviet jazz by the mid 1930s had quickly become integrated into popular culture, especially Soviet songs, with contributions by significant figures such as Isaak Dunaevsky (1900-1955), a Soviet film composer, and Leonid Utyosov (1895-1982), a singer, actor and a band leader. This time marked the tremendous spread of jazz among the Soviet population, especially the youth.

The Medvedevs noted that Isaak Dunaevsky was not a "jazz composer," but he saw the great possibilities of jazz and intuitively felt that it could be compatible with Soviet mass songs and that "the fusion of song and jazz manifested itself in I. Dunaevsky's music in

[138] Ibid.
[139] Feyertag 2014, 12 (my translation)
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Ibid., 8

various ways—in melody, rhythm, and harmony. The composer subtly, unobtrusively introduced elements of jazz into the song form, dynamized and colored it."[143]

Leonid Utyosov established his theatrical jazz ensemble—"*Thea-Jazz" (Tea-Djaz)*[144] in 1929. His concept was close to Valentine Parnakh's idea of "a mimetic orchestra," and helped his "self-identification as actor rather than musician."[145] He became extremely popular after playing a main role in the first Soviet jazz comedy, the musical film, *Happy Go-Lucky Fellows* (*Veselye rebyata*). The collaboration of Utyosov and Dunaevsky reached its peak in this film. Dunaevsky felt the need for a major key in the social atmosphere at the beginning of the 30's.[146] His famous song, *The March of the Happy Go-Lucky Fellows,*[147] from the film became a kind of hymn among the working class and youth population. Below is the lyric from this song:

> *The song helps us to build and live*
> *As a friend it calls and leads*
> *And whoever walks with the song of life,*
> *He is never ever lost!*[148]

As Feyertag noted, "With this film, the Soviet version of the Hollywood standard was born—the story of Cinderella in the spirit of socialist realism."[149] Song-jazz (*pesennyi djaz*), as it was once named by Leonid Utesov[150] was popular in the 30s and 40s but lost its relevance by the end of the 1950.[151]

---

[143] Medvedev A. and O., 1987, 33 (my translation)
[144] *Thea – Jazz* by Leonid Utyosov: https://youtu.be/z7IO1TPg6TI
[145] Starr 1994, 147
[146] Batashev 1972, 71 (my translation)
[147] *The March of the Happy Go-Lucky Fellows* sung by Leonid Utyosov and Lubov Orlova Youtube:https://youtu.be/z0Xj1mI9f6Q
[148] Text by Lebedev-Kumach, 1934 (my translation)
[149] Feyertag 2014, 26 (my translation)
[150] Medvedev A. and O., 1987, 33 (my translation)
[151] Ibid., 34

Another direction in which Soviet jazz developed simultaneously with song-jazz was instrumental jazz. Big bands led by musicians such as A. Tsfasman, A. Varlamov, V. Knushevitsky and N. Minkh "mastered the most important elements of jazz aesthetics: improvisation, a special type of melody and harmony, form, metro rhythm, and performance technique."[152] There were several ways for musicians to create a repertoire for bands: first, by using available scores which were widely published abroad; second, by notating by ear from recordings and even from radio broadcasts, and third, by composing their own music.[153] The third method was chosen by two highly professional musicians, A. Tsfasman[154] in Moscow, and G. Landsberg[155] in Leningrad; they were the first to compose music for the bands, taking into consideration the individual capabilities of the musicians with whom they worked.[156]

II.5.5 Banning periods

There were two main restrictive periods in the history of Soviet jazz. The first was after Maxim Gorky's article "Music of the Gross" was published in Pravda in 1928. However, despite this, jazz was actively developing in the 1930s, due to the newly emerging jazz bands, which supported Soviet mass songs and dance music, as I mentioned above.

The second ban was during the last years of the Stalin era, at the end of 1940, when the regime's crackdown was so strict that it "was forbidden even to use the word 'jazz' in print."[157] This restriction on jazz occurred during the most challenging period for the country, which was 1948-1953.[158] During this period, the authorities implemented ongoing changes to

[152] Ibid.
[153] Feyertag 2014, 18 (my translation)
[154] A.Tsfasman's band performing his compositions, with Tsfasman himself on the piano https://youtu.be/ytQTTh2rGpM
[155] Landsberg's Leningrad Jazz Kapelle "Matlot" (1932) https://youtu.be/UtLUsJ8FsE4
[156] Feyertag 2014, 19 (my translation)
[157] Barban 1985, 12 (my translation)
[158] Ibid., 41

policies restricting jazz music. They regarded jazz as a dangerous commodity, continuing to ban it even though it had gained popularity with musicians and the public. As Batashev observed, after the famous Party decree in 1948, where Soviet officials evaluated the state of culture and defined its main direction towards nationality (*nazional'nost'*) and Soviet realism (*Sovetskyi realism*), there were some unfair statements regarding the phenomena of Soviet art.[159] Although in a 1948 document[160] jazz was not mentioned, by the beginning of 1950 there were a number of articles which attacked this genre. It was called a "harmful surrogate," and the "music of spiritual poorness." As Batashev noted, "jazz music was identified as hostile not only for Russians, but for World culture."[161] All the jazz bands were disbanded except the Thea-Jazz Orchestra led by L. Utyosov which he quickly renamed as the Estrade (*estradnyi*) Orchestra.[162] Former jazz bands hid in movie theatres, and dance clubs, where dances such as foxtrots, tangos and rumbas were removed from the repertoire.[163] Many popular songs at that time were written in the genre of waltzes and marches.[164]

The Soviet officials carefully prevented the intervention of jazz's "imperialistic influence" from the capitalist world, which could have compromised the Soviet people's "good attitude" (*oblik sovetskogo cheloveka)*, that included moral stability with the right principles of Soviet socialism. This was the threat posed by bourgeois music as perceived by the Soviet authorities. However, the dynamics between official politics and everyday practice was more complex; jazz hid but continued to exist unofficially and gain in popularity. For

[159] Batashev 1972, 109 (my translation)
[160] A Party resolution was published in *Pravda* with its criticism of formalism in arts, after the premier of Muradeli's opera *The Great Friendship*. "Together with Muradeli (and more severely than he), the best composers of the country were criticized and persecuted: Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Myaskovsky, Khachaturian, etc. Subsequently, the charges were dropped by a Party resolution in 1958.(Belcanto.ru)
[161] Ibid.
[162] Feyertag 2014, 40 (my translation)
[163] Ibid.
[164] Ibid.

instance, jazz lovers would meet at someone's apartment (*kvartira*) and hold closed dance evenings where any music was allowed, including jazz.[165]

II.5.6 The mid 1950s

The middle of the 1950s was characterized by a new phase in Soviet jazz history. One of the key factors was the organization of the 6th World Festival of Youth and Students in Moscow in 1957. Thanks to Khrushchev's reforms known as Khrushchev's "thaw" period, the Soviet Union opened its doors to the world. For jazz musicians it was a crucial moment: for the first time Soviet jazz groups performed at a competition together with other foreign jazz groups; Soviet jazz musicians were able to meet and chat with world jazz musicians and exchange important information with them. Soviet jazz musicians were once again convinced, as Batashev noted, that: "…modern jazz music is mostly improvisational, which requires high musical literacy, an active harmonic ear, creative imagination and, of course, virtuosity."[166]

Many jazz lovers were looking for access to jazz music through recordings which they would get at special places and the most popular way was through the radio program – Voice of America (VOA). Willis Conover was the most famous American for millions of jazz lovers across the USSR and East Europe in the mid 50s, as he was the host of a jazz program on VOA, which was broadcast live to the Soviet Union. From 1954, six times a week Soviet people would hear Duke Ellington's *Take the "A" Train* as a cover to *Jazz Hour with Willis Conover*.[167] Although American propaganda was prohibited in the Soviet Union,

[165] Feyertag 2014, 45 (my translation)
[166] Batashev 1972, 117 (my translation)
[167] "Having saved up a sufficient amount, I bought a Baltika radio receiver. There was a lot of jazz music on the air, but I tried to tune in to the Voice of America and hear the majestic bass of Willis Conover, host of The Hour of Jazz. [. . .] I learned the first English words and phrases thanks to Conover. He spoke slowly and clearly, some phrases repeated from day to day. I think Conover was the English teacher for a whole generation of jazz lovers." (Feyertag 1999, 43) (my translation)

jazz lovers would catch the frequency even through the cracks and noise caused by the Soviet authorities' attempts to stifle the radio wave. They would hear a velvet voice with his special American accent, with slow and clear pronunciation: *"This is Willis Conover in Washington, D.C., with the Voice of America Jazz Hour."* This regular radio program informed jazz lovers on the other side of the iron curtain about all the events in the world jazz scene and it became a symbol of American jazz for Soviet jazz musicians.

Indeed, Soviet jazz actively resisted State repression and found its own unique path. Efim Barban has speculated that the government ban on jazz actually stimulated the development of this "forbidden fruit" in the Soviet Union.[168]

II.5.7 End of 1970s and 1980s: Soviet Jazz – a new identity

In the book *Russian Jazz: New Identity* edited by Leo Feigin, the authors focus on the period of Soviet Jazz from the end of the 1970s. As Feigin pointed out, this period was not covered in Frederick Starr's book, *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union,* which had been the first book about Soviet jazz written for Western readers. Starr, who also contributed to Feigin's book, noted that, in the early seventies "jazz appeared decidedly as the lesser evil" and "suddenly gained a new respectability."[169] This time jazz was welcomed and supported by the State organization in many ways: a number of regional festivals were organized, various recordings issued by Melodiya, a monopolist Soviet recording company, and philharmonic societies supported tours of bands playing " jazz-rock fusion music." Moreover jazz was introduced in music institutes throughout the country.[170]

[168] Barban 2007, 23
[169] Starr 1985, 6
[170] Ibid.

The Ganelin Trio[171]

The 1970s started a new page in Soviet jazz history with the appearance of highly professional musicians. Soviet jazz formed its "school of multinational Soviet jazz" with its own traditions which are distinguishable from other jazz schools in the world.[172] A jazz trio from Soviet Lithuania—Vyacheslav Ganelin (piano), Vladimir Chekasin (saxophone) and Vladimir Tarasov (drums), known as The Ganelin Trio, had a special position in the late history of Soviet jazz. The trio existed from 1971 to 1987 and was the first Soviet Jazz group to perform abroad.[173] The trio was widely recorded by Melodiya, the Soviet recording company, and abroad by, for example, Leo Records, a British record label founded by Leo Feigin.[174] Many scholars, both Western and Soviet, wrote about the phenomenon of the Ganelin Trio.[175]

All three musicians graduated from Soviet conservatoires. Vyacheslav Ganelin graduated from the Vilnius conservatoire; he later worked as a musical director at a drama theatre where he wrote music for plays as well as for many movies.[176] He started to play with Vladimir Tarasov in 1970 and Vladimir Chekasin joined them in 1971. Efim Barban in his analysis of the trio's style explains their use of a mixed technique of composition and improvisation.[177] Not following the traditional jazz structure of theme-variation-theme, the

---

[171] Albom "Con Anima/Concerto Grosso" by Vyacheslav Ganelin, Vladimir Chekasin, and Vladimir Tarasov, 2001 https://open.spotify.com/album/1AQvYPKFf6loy4p73mDMI4?si=IK__ceTWSiOgCrb6LKiv0g&dl_branch=1

[172] Medvedev A. and O., 1987, 40 (my translation)

[173] Excerpt from the documentary film about The Ganelin Trio's visit to the US in 1986: https://youtu.be/oywZl_tJz1c

[174] http://www.leorecords.com/

[175] Barban, Efim. 1985. "The Ganelin Trio: An Unguided Comet" In *Russian Jazz - New Identity*; Barban, Efim. 1985. "Leo Records – Review in the Soviet Union" In *Russian Jazz - New Identity*; Fordham, John. 1985. "The Ganelin Trio in London" In *Russian Jazz - New Identity*; Batashev, Alexey. 1987. " Vilnius Triangle (Vyacheslav Ganelin's trio)" In A. and O. Medvedev's book *Soviet Jazz*: *Masters, Events, Problems.*

[176] Batashev 1972, 148

[177] Barban 1985, 31

trio relied on artistic expediency to create compositions that were always written beforehand in the form of a structural "skeleton"[178] (Fig. II.4), which “explains the wealth of different stylistic elements in their music, from folk dance and the Baroque to the aleatory and traditional jazz.”[179]

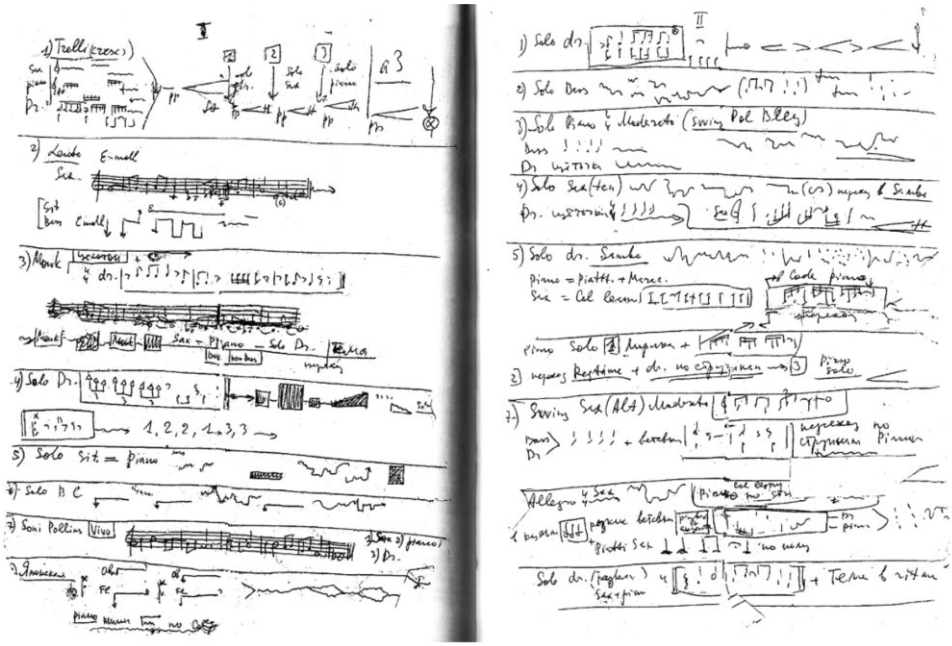

Figure II.4: Excerpt from “Non Troppo” composition by the Ganelin Trio[180]

During the entire seventy years of its history, going through a series of bans and acceptance, one can see the evolution of Soviet jazz from being an external threat to finding its place in the Soviet musical identity, experiencing a transformation from the music of the “decadent” to the music of “new thinkers.” Despite the suppression, advocates and practitioners discovered how to preserve and extend the art form through new ways of expression that showcased their own identity.

[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Tarasov 1998, cited by Jazz.ru https://www.jazz.ru/2017/04/14/ganelin-postludium/

II.5.8 Traditional music of Central Asia and jazz

Before further examining the development of jazz in Central Asia, it is appropriate to examine why jazz became popular there, as it had become in Russia. Due to its flexibility, jazz can mix with the music of different nations and easily incorporate new material presenting the traditional music of different nations in a new and interesting light, without detriment to the original music. However, there may need to be some points of contact, some common features. Central Asian musicians probably recognized some commonalities between jazz and their traditional music, which attracted them to synthesize the two genres, first at the end of the 1960s and then in the 21st century.

The main feature of the music of Central Asia is oral tradition, which developed over the centuries, passing from generation to generation. This oral tradition is based on improvisation, which is the nature of jazz too. The ability to improvise is undoubtedly a common point of contact in both jazz and traditional music of Central Asia. But what else? An Uzbek scholar, Yusupov Leonid, in his article "Jazz in Uzbekistan," said that despite the differences between the monody of Central Asian music and the homophonic style of jazz, and the significant differences in the structure and development of the music, jazz and Uzbek music share some common features. He describes: "The important feature of jazz—a steady rhythmic pulsation with an accentuation of a certain beat—has a kind of analogue in the monodic art of Uzbekistan . . . "usul"—a clear rhythmic formula underlying the piece."[181] In Central Asian music, *usul* is especially developed in the musical cultures of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.[182] Nomadic musicians do not refer to *usul*, because drumming instruments were not popular in nomadic culture, however, rhythmic pulsations are expressed in the playing

[181] Yusupov 1987, 486 (my translation)

[182] "Usul (Arabic, literally - basic provisions, rules) - in the oriental professional music of the oral tradition, a rhythmic formula within a particular meter, repeated throughout the entire piece - song, dance melody, program instrumental piece, parts of the cycle. Performed on percussion. (Frayonova, 1978)

style of the musicians.[183] The nomads use the rhythms that describe the rhythms they hear in nature. As Levin noted: “Many rhythms in nomadic music are mimetic . . . imitate rhythmic patterns imported from the real world, some rhythmically symmetrical, like the gallop of a horse, and others irregular, like the lope of a camel.”[184]

II.5.9 Jazz in Soviet Central Asia

As part of the fifteen Soviet republics, Central Asia reflected all the processes that were going on in the Soviet Union. The growing interest among young musicians and a favorable environment created conditions for the development of jazz in Tashkent. In Sergey Gilev’s book most of the names of jazz musicians who worked in Tashkent from the 1920s are Russian. They were people who had moved to Central Asia especially from the 1920s and during WWII. Many of them were professional musicians which certainly contributed to the fast development of the genre in the region. For example, Dmitryi Shtern, who moved to Tashkent from Lviv, Russia, led the popular music orchestra (*estradnyi orkestr*) at the movie theatre “Iskra" from 1949 to 1968. It was one of the first popular music orchestras which played arrangements of Soviet songs, including Uzbek songs.[185] In the 1950s many Russian musicians returned from China and settled in Uzbekistan. Some of these musicians joined the orchestra and supported the jazz practices started by the orchestra.[186] In 1958-59 the orchestra collaborated with Iranian singer Leila Sharipova,[187] making several recordings at the Tashkent studio of Melodiya records.[188]

[183] Levin 2016, 35
[184] Ibid.
[185] Gilev 2005, 78 (my translation)
[186] Ibid.
[187] Leila Sharipova: https://youtu.be/MV71Kjah5bY
[188] Gilev 2005, 79 (my translation)

During the 1960s, Soviet restrictions were gradually relaxed and by the end of the decade there was an increase in the popularity of jazz in the Soviet republics, which spread through all the major cities and towns. Jazz festivals were organized in different Soviet cities. In Tashkent the first festival was held in 1968. Local musicians made great efforts to learn how to play jazz using every opportunity. Tashkent jazz lovers often met at the apartment of Y. Jivayev, a saxophonist, to listen to recordings and play jazz, and his apartment became an unofficial jazz club.[189] Many jazz ensembles were formed at that time, one of them being "Turkestan Stars" where Sergey Gilev, the author of the book, played on bass.[190] Three musicians from other Central Asian republics joined the ensemble in 1967: pianist and composer S. Mukhatov from Ashgabat (Turkmenistan), trumpetist Y. Parfenov from Frunze (Kyrgyzstan), and drummer A. Trazevsky also from Frunze.[191] These four musicians from "Turkestan Stars," together with the group's saxophonist, K. Dobrovoslky, took the idea of a festival to Mr. Umarov, first secretary of the Lenin Communist Youth League (LKSM) in Tashkent. He liked the idea and supported the organization of the festival.[192]

The 1968 Tashkent festival hosted seventeen jazz groups, but for the final round only seven groups were selected. Concerts were held at a high level and many good musicians were discovered. Members of the public were very enthusiastic about the 1968 festival which gave Uzbek musicians confidence to continue the popularization of jazz culture in their region.

Gilev reported that despite the public acclaim, after the festival top officials severely reprimanded the organizers, including Mr. Umarov.[193] Nonetheless, officials included the festival recording in radio programs for foreign countries. But soon the party leadership

[189] Ibid., 88
[190] Ibid., 90
[191] Gilev 2005, 91 (my translation)
[192] Ibid., 92
[193] Ibid. (my translation)

destroyed all the records concerning the festival. “All that was left from the festival were the memories of participation and a single article in the *Tashkent Pravda*.”[194] The party leadership had led a double game, displaying the best artistic achievements to the outside world, while at the same time destroying records of the festival to prevent the spread of “imperialistic influences” in the USSR. This was an echo from the second Soviet jazz ban, which was somehow still relevant in Central Asia.

In 1977 the jazz festival moved from Tashkent to Fergana, a small city in Uzbekistan. The Tashkent festival had made the first attempts to include national motifs in jazz compositions, by mandating that one of the improvisations played by each group should be based on an Uzbek theme. At the Fergana festival these experiments continued. In a review that was published in *Ferganskaya Pravda* Pereverzev noted that "the performance of these ensembles essentially set off a new program for the future: by combining and synthesizing those principles of jazz that have now become international, with expressive means and forms of national Uzbek music, and through it all the musical culture in Central Asia.”[195]

In 1958 the Uzbek State Orchestra *(estradno-simfonicheskyi orkestr)* had been established. It was a type of big band, similar to a big band created by Leonid Utesov,[196] a Russian actor and singer, who, as I mentioned above, contributed to the development of Soviet Jazz by creating a Soviet song-jazz genre. The orchestra did not play popular jazz standards but mainly performed popular songs, including songs from the Middle East, which were liked by the audience, although even in its early days the orchestra was in search of its own “national basis for creativity.”[197]

[194] Ibid. (my translation)
[195] Pereverzev 1978, cited in Gilev, 2005
[196] Yusupov 1987, 486 (my translation)
[197] Yusupov, 1987, 488 (my translation)

Although the orchestra used jazz techniques in the instrumentation of songs, the emphasis was on the rhythmic and coloristic features of Uzbek music, a kind of "oriental song jazz."[198] To strengthen Uzbek music even more, a rubab was added.[199] The orchestra was led by different musicians in the 1960s, mostly Russians (E. Jivayev, A. Kroll, A. Malahov) who continued to experiment with Uzbek music and jazz.[200] Uzbekistan, which was embracing jazz at this time, also saw the opening of a jazz club, active translation of jazz on radio and television and the opening of estrada departments at the Tashkent musical college, and at the studio of circus and variety art in Tashkent as well.[201] As Yusupov noted:

> Uzbek composers and performers, striving to preserve the peculiarities of folk musical thinking, are developing traditional genres of folk music in a new way. This approach to folklore determined the search for a new musical language of jazz, a new melody, rhythm, timbre, techniques of articulation and phrasing.[202]

In his article, Yusupov presents a musical analysis of a piece called "Eastern Suite"[203] ("*Vostochnaya suita")*, which was first performed at the jazz festival in Fergana in 1978 and which became a landmark in the history of Uzbek jazz.[204] He considered this piece to be one of the brightest works during Soviet jazz at the end of the 1970s.[205] The suite consists of parts with program names which are based on Uzbek music traditions such as, Alla (III)—lullaby, Lapar (VI)—a song of love-lyrical content, Marcia (VIII)—a mourning song.[206] Each part carries a certain semantic load in the dramaturgy of the whole piece; the parts are connected melodically and harmonically.[207] Yusupov noted the significant contribution made

[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid.
[200] Ibid.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Ibid.
[203] *Vostochnaya suita*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oi-KJIdeygA&ab_channel
[204] Ibid., 490
[205] Ibid., 495
[206] Ibid., 490
[207] Ibid.

by the performers of the suite: "An equally significant artistic merit of the 'Suite' is the folklore of the soloists' improvisations themselves. There is that degree of mastery, which speaks to the musical maturity of the performers, about their deep comprehension of the essence of national melodic thinking."[208] Yuri Parfenov, one of the performers of this suite; is the subject of the next section.

Yuri Parfenov

In his article "Pilgrim to the Country of the East" *("Piligrim v stranu Vostoka")*, Efim Barban, a Russian jazz critic, gives a portrait of a talented trumpeter, Yuri Parfenov. Parfenov was an ethnic Russian, who worked in different Central Asian countries and created his own style of mixing traditional music with jazz. In the next section I review these two articles to draw a picture of jazz in the region at that time.

Yuri Parfenov was an ethnic Russian who was born in 1946 in Bashkiria. He studied at the musical college in Frunze[209] and later, after graduating from the Tashkent conservatoire, he worked with the State Estrada Orchestra until 1979.[210] This talented trumpeter moved to Almaty where he worked with the jazz group Boomerang, led by the famous Kazakh jazz musicians Tagir Ibragimov. With Boomerang, Parfenov recorded one of his famous compositions—"Dervishes".[211] In 1979 Yuri Parfenov performed two of his pieces— "Dervishes" and "Silence"—with the Boomerang Ensemble at the "Jazz over the Volga" festival and received the recognition of the musicians and audience and "convincingly proved his right to jazz polystylistics."[212]

---

[208] Ibid., 493
[209] Frunze – a former name of Bishkek, a capital city of Kyrgyzstan
[210] http://www.letov.ru/parfenov.html
[211] *Dervishes* (0.40sec; 10.05 sec.), 2015: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqQlcnULrvI&ab_channel=MarkNakoykher
[212] Barban 1987, 298 (my translation)

These two pieces characterize two important features of Parfenov's music "a clearly pronounced orientality and the widespread use of pauses, as a way of form construction."[213] Russian jazz critique Efim Barban described these two compositions as follows:

> In both compositions . . . Parfenov proved the fruitfulness of the combination of oriental music and jazz, and practically outlined the way for such a synthesis. The national form of jazz is not just a mechanical introduction into music of two or three common oriental intonations or melodies ("superficial orientalism"), but the creation of rhythmic structures deeply rooted in the structure of the eastern canonical form . . . As for Parfenov's "musical silence", which has become a distinctive feature of both his phrasing and the structure of his compositions, this feature of his music most of all contributes to the creation of the sharpest rhythmic conflict of improvisation and its full content.[214]

While growing up in Central Asia, then studying and working in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan over the years, Parfenov absorbed the music of the region which allowed him to reflect the intonations of this music in his performances. He explains:

> The music of the East has always attracted Europeans. But this language is difficult to understand outside the context of the culture of which it is a part. In this music there are many performance details, nuances that cannot be notated. I was just lucky that I, together with jazz, absorbed the Eastern music. Now I would like to experiment more with it, try to develop a jazz language to express the essence of this music and express my individuality in it.[215]

Parfenov's deep understanding of Central Asian music, its rhythmic structure, modes, and philosophy helped him to express his Central Asian identity. His performance manner was a sensation and was called "a new word in jazz."[216] Barban identified Parfenov's uniqueness as follows:

> Parfenov's compositions are distinguished by something that is rare in our jazz, a balance of asymmetric rhythmic structures and traditional regular metric

[213] Ibid.
[214] Ibid., 299
[215] Parfenov, interview, 1981 (my translation)
[216] Yusupov 1987, 494 (my translation)

> constructions. In my opinion, the compositional sophistication of the author of "Silence" is largely due to his connection with the Eastern "rhythmic philosophy", which since ancient times has seen in the "unshaded space" a special expressiveness associated with the aesthetics of an artistic hint, an understatement.[217]

Figure II.5 presents notation done by Yusupov of Yuri Parfenov's solo at the 3rd part, Alla (Lullaby), of the "Eastern Suite". Parfenov uses different techniques to imitate Central Asian instruments, for instance he uses vibrato, which is shown in Figure II.5 as a special symbol drawn by Yusupov. These symbols can be seen in bars 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, and 18. Parfenov created a unique way of playing vibrato, he sustains the pitch normally, delaying the vibrato,[218] (bar 4);[219] then, after holding long notes, he plays the glissando to the next note (bar 11). Instrumental performance of Parfenov's lullaby is characterized by the wide use of melismas, syncopation, and the uneven structure of musical phrases. As Yusupov describes, "In soft, inspired music Y. Parfenov achieves tension, using subtle motivational work, timbre and dynamic contrasts, and unusual articulation."[220]

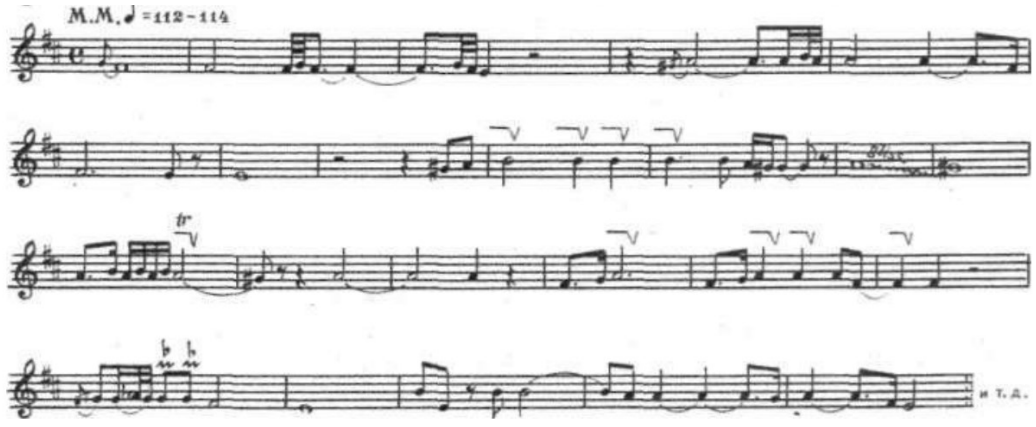

Figure II.5: Yuri Parfenov solo at part III of the "Eastern Suite."[221]

[217] Barban 1987, 299 (my translation)
[218] Yusupov 1987, 493 (my translation)
[219] You can see his vibrato in notation in bar 4; a special symbol to show his vibrato is used in bars 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, and 18.
[220] Ibid.
[221] Yusupov, 1987, 493

Rare publications about jazz in Soviet Central Asia suggest that jazz was developed in the region in the 1970s and 1980s thanks to personalities, such as Yuri Parfenov, Talgat Ibragimov, and others, who from the beginning of their career were in search of their individual language which is based on the Central Asian heritage. In Uzbekistan jazz music developed more intensively than in other Central Asian republics, because there were not only a number of talented jazz musicians but also state support in creating a jazz environment. In other Central Asian republics there were also bright individuals who experimented in synthesizing jazz with traditional music.

Thus the 1970s and 1980s saw a surge of interest in jazz in the Soviet Central Asian republics. A number of groups, "Boomerang" (Kazakhstan, 1983), "Medeo" (Kazakhstan, 1986), "Gunesh" (Turkmenistan, 1970), "Anor" (Uzbekistan, 1985), "Sato" (Uzbekistan, 1978)[222] and others, were able to create the unique sound of Central Asian fusion by synthesizing jazz, rock, electric, avant-garde, and traditional music. After winning at the national competitions and gaining popularity, these groups were awarded contracts to be recorded at "Melodiya," the Soviet monopolist record label, one branch of which was located in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

As these experiments in modal improvisation developed, they were also reflected in the works of various other Central Asian musicians, such as the Turkmen group *Gunesh.*[223] In Azerbaijani, however, a different version of jazz, jazz *mugham*, had started earlier, at the end of 1960s.[224]

[222] https://v1battle.ru/wall/218
[223] *Gunesh,* album 1980: https://open.spotify.com/artist/1N0jn0Lr4NM2YB8gNtzBnC?si=gUMw3Ug9Ram-AGhwRxMfmA&dl_branch=1
[224] Farkhadov and Babayeva 2010, 178 (my translation)

Figure II.6: Vinyl records of the Central Asian groups recorded on the Soviet monopolist record label "Melodiya" in the 1980s.[225]

II.5.10 Jazz *mugham*

The first experiment to incorporate *mugham* in a different genre was by Azerbaijani composer Uzeyir Hajibeyov in his first opera *Leyli and Majnun* in 1908, which influenced the compositions of subsequent Azerbaijani composers who continued synthesizing Eastern and Western traditions.[226] Experiments synthesizing traditional Azerbaijani music with jazz occurred in the 1960s thanks to the contributions of two prominent Azerbaijani jazz pianists: Rafig Babayev and Vagif Mustafazade. In their book *Rafig Babayev* two Azerbaijani

[225] Boomerang Ensemble (Kazakhstan)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sRs4Gnb1Pkk&ab_channel=FunkedUpEast
Gunesh Ensemble (Turkmenistan)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZGSei0Kll5M&ab_channel=MusicOcean
Grig Pushen's Contemporary Music Ensemble "*Vkus Granata*" [Taste of Pomegranate] (Uzbekistan)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxqzgbsxUVI&ab_channel=RipysRipys
Sato Jazz Ensemble (Uzbekistan) "Afsane" [Legend]
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfW_pf_SlTs&ab_channel=Big%C3%B3rniaMusical
[226] Ibid., 27 (my translation)

musicologists Rauf Farkhadov and Fariza Babayeva offer a definition of jazz *mugham,* which they describe as a: "fusion of the lyricism of mugham with the dynamics of jazz, the synthesis of the traditional melodic and modal contents of mugham with the harmonic and rhythmic variety of jazz."[227] Both Rafig Babayev and Vagif Mustafazade were pianists and composers, graduates of the Azerbaijan State Conservatoire. Their European classical piano training allowed them to become virtuoso jazz pianists. The tradition of improvised piano in Baku has a long history that began at the end of the nineteenth century.[228] Although the piano improvisation was not related to jazz at that time, Aida Huseynova connected the appearance of jazz mugham to it as the "very idea of piano improvisation with a strong ethnic component created a bridge, a springboard toward jazz *mugham.*"[229]

Rafig Babayev and Vagif Mustafazade approached the fusion of jazz and mugham differently. Batashev has noted that: "Unlike Babayev, Mustafazade did not process the popular songs of Transcaucasian composers, nor did he introduce national instruments into the ensemble. He limited himself to classical jazz attributes: the traditional form of improvisation, an attempt to reveal musical material 'from the inside,' avoiding external devices."[230] Babayev's jazz influences included Miles Davis, Joe Zawinul and Weather Report, Chick Corea and the Mahavishnu Orchestra.[231] His interest in jazz rock fusion could be explained by his active involvement in the popular music industry,[232] leading the jazz orchestra at the Azerbaijani State Philharmonic Hall in collaboration with well-known Azerbaijani singer Rashid Beibutov.[233] Indeed, they later turned their organization into a

[227] Ibid., 57 (my translation)
[228] Huseynova 2016, 219
[229] Ibid.
[230] Batashev 1987, 292 (my translation)
[231] Huseynova 2016, 226
[232] Ibid.
[233] Farkhadov and Babayeva 2010, 141 (my translation)

famous brand—The song theatre.[234] Babayev considered jazz *mugham* to be an essential element of Azerbaijani jazz, as he explained: "What is Azerbaijani jazz? It is an organic implantation of Azerbaijani intonations into the traditional jazz structure. Azerbaijani music is all built up on mugham; therefore it is necessary to know mugham, mugham intonations and jazz standards and to be able to organically use them in jazz compositions."[235]

Babayev's composition *In Bayati Kurd Harmony*[236] was first performed in Estonia in 1967 at the Tallinn jazz festival and could be considered as the birth of jazz *mugham*.[237] However, the origin of jazz *mugham* rightfully belongs to both Mustafazade and Babyev.[238] Mustafazade also performed at the Tallinn festival with his trio "Caucasus" from Tbilisi. Exactly at that time his collaboration with Rafig Babayev and his Baku ensemble was an attempt to present "jazz with an eastern accent".[239] As noted by Farkhadov and Babayeva, "the composition *In Bayati Kurd Harmony* differed in its intonation as it was written 'in the improvised way of a *mugham* recitation,' which is different from a normal jazz theme; the whole composition was developed based on this."[240] Using a *mugham* recitation with jazz showed that they combined well, and that "the *mugham* recitation interacts well with structural features and principles of jazz improvisation."[241]

Vagif Mustafazade had absorbed *mugham* from his early childhood growing up in a musical family; his mother was a professional pianist who taught Azerbaijani traditional music,[242] so Vagif Mustafazade was surrounded by European music and Azerbaijani music at the same time. He developed a unique language of improvisation on the piano, combining

---

[234] Ibid.
[235] Ibid., 23 (my translation)
[236] Rafig Babayev, *In Bayati Kurd Harmony*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hrvxq78MLTw
[237] Farkhadov and Babayeva 2010, 178 (my translation)
[238] Ibid., 180
[239] Batashev 1987, 292 (my translation)
[240] Farkhadov and Babayeva 2010, 180 (my translation)
[241] Ibid.
[242] Ibid., 290 (my translation)

Azerbaijani ornamentation with jazz language. His manner of improvisation has become instantly recognizable with reference to "*mugham* modes and melos, and direct appeal to *mugham* images and plots."[243] In 1978 Muzstafazade was awarded the first prize of the Academy of Music of Monaco at the eighth jazz theme competition for the composition *Waiting for Aziza,*[244] with a non-standard 20-bar period theme.[245] Being a professional pianist Mustafazade's playing is distinguished by a pianistic texture similar to that of Chopin. He masterfully played jazz standards, which is attested to by some of his recordings.[246]

In Mustafazade's composition *Bayati Shiraz*[247] while the left hand is playing the accompaniment in both C and C sharp, the latter related to E *Bayati Shiraz* mode, the right hand is filled with melismas in descending steps (Fig.II.8) The melodic development in descending steps is characteristic to Azerbaijani music.[248] In her analysis of this section of the piece, Aida Huseynova noted that both E minor and E Bayati Shiraz are presented.[249] This composition is a good example of jazz mugham, using modes of mugham, irregular meter, melismas and features of Azerbaijani song melody.

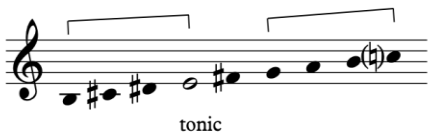

Figure II.7: E *Bayati shiraz*[250]

[243] Farkhadov and Babayeva 2010, 66 (my translation)
[244] *Waiting for Aziza* (*V ojidanii Azizy*), https://open.spotify.com/track/2neS9S7xjWh6qYsMX0OVp5?si=b885ccf55b944c2c
[245] Batashev 1987, 294 (my translation)
[246] *Jazz compositions* (*Dzajovye compositzii*), 1976, https://open.spotify.com/album/6NwLzkZ0EZdeAtCo31fwCC?si=9jYW3fJcR3mrzd2HWge9eA&dl_branch=1
[247] *Bayati Shiraz* – one of the modes in *mugham* music
[248] Huseynova 2016, 227
[249] Ibid.
[250] Ibid., 229

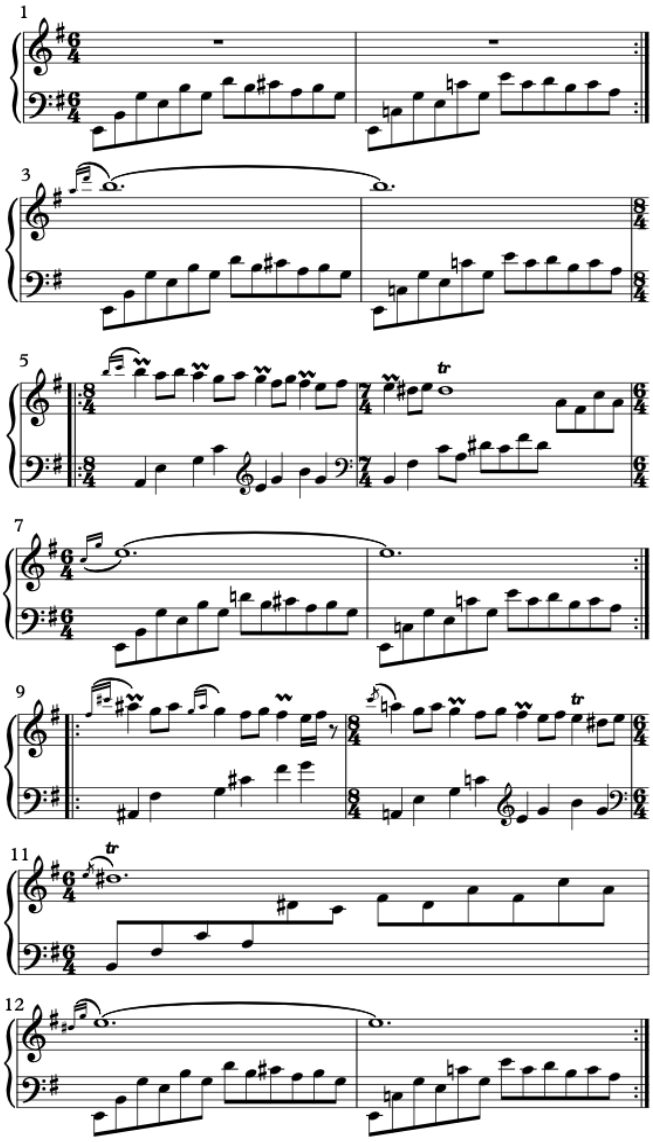

Figure II.8: Excerpt from Vagif Mustafazade's composition "Bayati Shiraz"[251]

Mustafazade's approach in fusing jazz with *mugham* later became the model for many Azerbaijani jazz musicians, including his daughter, Aziza Mustafazade, who became a famous jazz singer, pianist, and composer. As a professionally trained pianist, she started to play jazz influenced by Bill Evans, Keth Jarrett, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, McCoy Tyner, and Marcus Roberts.[252] William Minor who interviewed Aziza wrote in his book *Unzipped Souls: A Jazz Journey through the Soviet Union*: "Her rendition included 'negroid'

[251] Transcription by Parviz Guliyev, cited in Huseynova, 2016, 228

[252] Minor 1995, 84

slurs, a smooth scat with wide range and lovely high notes, then a fleet and feisty mostly single-note solo with fine attendant voicing underneath [. . .]"[253] Huseynova noted that Aziza uses three techniques, "opera, mugham, and scat singing," in various of her compositions including *Inspiration,*[254] which is a good example of Aziza's scat and *mugham*.[255] Vagif Mustafazade's experiments were also a model for Central Asian musicians trying their strength in ethnojazz, as was mentioned by some of those I interviewed.

II.6 Jazz diplomacy

II.6.1. The US Jazz Ambassadors program

The US State Department created its Jazz Ambassadors program during the Cold War to ease tension by promoting the positive and artistic side of the US. The first time that the idea of representing American culture abroad arose was in 1954, with President Eisenhower's request to the Senate for a special cultural program.[256] As a result, various musicians visited the USSR in the 1960s including Benny Goodman (1962), Earl Hines (1966) and Charles Lloyd (1967).[257] In 1971, as Cohen has noted, the Duke Ellington orchestra made what became a historical tour to the Soviet Union, which was organized by the Soviet state. The Americans collaborated in this use of jazz "as a form of cultural diplomacy" via these jazz ambassadors, popularizing American music for a whole new community. Ellington's tour, Cohen wrote, made a great impact on jazz development in the Soviet Union. It also furthered cultural exchange between the two countries, along with making positive changes in the political relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. A side effect of

[253] Ibid.
[254] Aziza Mustafa Zadeh, Inspiration: Colors and Reflections, 2000 https://open.spotify.com/track/0MrnTBbqQ6qxu923yEJi0j?si=de51be12a2b34046
[255] Huseynova 2016, 234
[256] Von Eschen 2004, 4
[257] Cohen 2011, 298

Ellington's US-sponsored Soviet tour was that it show-cased black musicians and the role they could achieve in both the US and the world.[258]

Cohen mentioned the success of *Porgy and Bess,* an opera by George Gershwin, and supported a four-year tour of *Porgy and Bess* presented by black artists, through the United States, Europe, South America, and the Middle East, to counteract Soviet charges that America was racist.[259] The President's Emergency Fund, which had supported the *Porgy and Bess* tour, was extended and in 1956 became the President's Special International Program. It supported jazz tours and soon "jazz became the pet project of the State Department, the ideological heart and soul of the tours."[260]

The jazz ambassadors had a political purpose: the first jazz ambassadors were sent to the Middle East and SouthEast Asia in 1956-1958, "straight into the middle of Cold War hotspots and global crises."[261] In her book *Satchmo Blows Up the World,* Penny Von Eschen wrote:

> With America in the throes of a political and cultural revolution that had put the black freedom struggle at the center of American and international politics, the prominence of African American jazz artists was critical to the music's potential as a Cold War weapon. In the high-profile tours by Gillespie, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and many others, U.S. officials pursued a self-conscious campaign against worldwide criticism of U.S. racism, striving to build cordial relations with new African and Asian states.[262]

The tours were the American government's response to Soviet tours of classical ballet, such as those by the Bolshoi theatre, while at the same time "shielding America's Achilles heel by demonstrating racial equality in action."[263]

---

[258] Ibid.
[259] Ibid.
[260] Ibid.
[261] Von Eschen 2004, 27
[262] Ibid., 3
[263] Ibid., 6

The Real Ambassadors[264]

The legendary American jazz trumpeter Louis Armstrong was among those black jazz artists appointed by the government to participate in the Jazz Ambassadors program, despite the fact that he expressed his disagreement with the government's policy towards black people in their own country. For the government officials it was a policy of double standards, sending jazz musicians to tour other countries, with the desire to represent America in the best possible light, while treating black people in their own country disrespectfully. Armstrong was in a strong position as a jazz ambassador and was "conscious of the irony inherent in a black man's representing a still-segregated America."[265]

By the early 1960s a thaw in relations with the West made it possible for Benny Goodman to tour the Soviet Union, including Tashkent in Central Asia. The new cultural convergence was important for the professional growth of Tashkent jazz musicians.

Gilev, an Uzbek jazz critic, reports how Goodman interacted with Uzbek musicians in 1962:

> The Americans offered to play a jam session. It was a great honour for our musicians to hear and see their jazz idols live. Much was then clarified about how to play, and how to build improvisation. At the end of the jam session, the Americans presented to our musicians some icons, booklets and, most importantly, music scores and records. But, as it turned out, it was too early to rejoice, because the next day all these gifts had to be handed over to the appropriate authorities, which thus eliminated this "ideological weapon."[266]

[264] *The Real Ambassadors* is the title of the musical which was written at the end of the 1950s by Dave and Iola Brubeck in collaboration with Louis Armstrong, where two musicians "set out to tackle the ironies of the program." Recently, in 2018, the documentary film by Hugo Berkeley *The Jazz Ambassadors* was released, where the author features the story of "the real ambassadors."
[265] Von Eschen 2004, 58
[266] Gilev 2005, 92 (my translation)

It was only years later that musicians found out about Benny Goodman's additional gift of jazz literature and musical scores which he had left with the Uzbek concert management (a State music organization), as the musicians never received it.[267]

The role of American jazz musicians and their belief in the power of the music carried more weight than the real reason for the American government position in launching the Jazz Ambassadors program. Outstanding musicians like Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie, Duke Ellington, and Dave Brubeck with their bands, were 'the real ambassadors' who through jazz raised awareness of civil rights and the freedom movement in many countries in the world. Despite the government's two-faced policy, jazz ambassadors had a great impact in the world and, as Von Eschen wrote, the audiences: "never confused or conflated their love of, including jazz and American popular culture with an acceptance of American foreign policy."[268]

Nearly three decades after the fall of the Soviet Union, the Jazz Ambassadors program continues to function and influence ideas about cultural collaboration, particularly in the Central Asian region. Since the first Bishkek International Jazz Festival in 2006, the American Embassy in Kyrgyzstan has frequently supported it through the program. Every year, the Bishkek audience expects to hear highly professional American musicians at the festival. The Jazz Ambassadors program created by the US State Department nearly six decades ago continues to achieve their goal of reaching far off regions but in a new political context.

II.6.2. The Jazz Ambassadors in the 2000s: *The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad*

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, the Jazz Ambassadors program that dated from 1956 was ended, but it was renewed in 2005 under a new name. The new program, *The*

[267] Ibid.
[268] Ibid.

Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad, is realized through Jazz at Lincoln Center, a not-for-profit arts organization in New York City, which sends ten bands to fifty-six countries yearly.[269] Both programs have been supported by the American embassies. Both programs had also appeared during a crisis in America, the Jazz Ambassadors program as a response to the Cold War, the Rhythm Road project after September 11, due to the "global image loss of the U.S. during the Bush Administration."[270] Even though political situations in the world are different than sixty years ago when the Jazz Ambassador program started, one can see the continuing political agenda of the American government with its funding of the Rhythm Road program. The Americans might have different motives now, but their cultural policy has certainly provided genuine cultural benefits in the Central Asian region. In the next section I present the program of one of the Rhythm Road groups, which has visited the region a number of times in the last fifteen years.

Ari Roland Jazz Quartet.

The New York based Ari Roland Jazz Quartet comprising Ari Roland (bass), Chris Byars (tenor sax), Zaid Nasser (alto saxophone), and Keith Balla (drums), toured the Central Asian region as participants of the "The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad" program, performing more than any other American jazz musicians. As Table II.1 shows, they performed in each of five Central Asian countries at least twice, visiting not only capital cities, but rural cities as well. Their first appearance was on the Bishkek stage in 2007, at the second Bishkek International Jazz Festival "Jazz-Bishkek-Spring"; the second visit to Kyrgyzstan was in 2012, when they performed at the "Jazz-Bishkek-Fall" festival.[271] In the Bishkek 2012 concert, the Ari Roland Quartet performed together with the Kyrgyz traditional

[269] Kaplan 2008
[270] Raussert 2018, 192
[271] "Jazz-Bishkek-Fall" was another project which I initiated in 2006 as a second festival, which was smaller than the spring festival and lasted for one day only, with the participation of local jazz groups and one or two foreign groups. The project did not continue after 2012, when I left the country to study in Canada.

ensemble *Ordo Sakhna*, a performance that was well received by the Bishkek audience. Adding a traditional song of the places the musicians visited became a special feature of the group, winning over the audiences and presenting America in a friendly, positive way, thus realizing their mission as jazz ambassadors. Ari Roland has described his attitude: "The idea of being able to have your own personality and being able to be who you are [while being] considerate of your community—people can relate to that when they see jazz, the music marries Western emphasis on the individual with Eastern notions of community."[272] Besides the Central Asian region the musicians have toured many other parts of the world.[273]

Year	Country visited	Cities
2007, April	Kyrgyzstan, Bishkek International Jazz Festival	Bishkek
2007, April	Turkmenistan	Turkmenbat, Dashoguz
2009, December	Uzbekistan	Urgench, Bukhara, Tashkent
2009, December	Tajikistan	Dushanbe
2010, June	Tajikistan	Dushanbe, Gharm
2010, June	Kazakhstan	Pavlodar
2012, October	Kyrgyzstan, Bishkek jazz festival	Bishkek
2012, Nov.	Kazakhstan	Karaganda
2015, April	Uzbekistan	Tashkent
2015, May	Kazakhstan	Almaty
2019, June	Turkmenistan	Mary, Turkmenabat, Ashgabat

Table II.1: Ari Roland tours in Central Asia within the "Jazz Ambassadors" program.

[272] Cited in Von Eschen, 2004 (*The Christian Science Monitor)*

[273] These included Bulgaria, Macedonia, Romania, Cyprus (2009), Karachi, Pakistan (2011),Vietnam (2011), Minsk, Belarusia (2012), Beirut (2012), Kolkata, India (2014), Samoa (2017), Benin (2018), Turkey (2018). I collected this information mostly from the websites of American embassies located in these countries, but also from the local media.

The Jazz Diplomacy program continues its journey, under its new name, although the American embassies in the region still continue the Jazz Ambassadors name, using jazz as a tool in their political interest. It is an example of what Joseph Nye described in his book, *Bound to Lead: the Changing Nature of American Power,* with the term he invented, American "soft power."[274] Interestingly, in our day, American jazz musicians not only present their tradition but interact with the local musical traditions, a new concept they use to win over the audiences. Moreover, Western organizations, while continuing to present their own musicians, have also started to fund jazz that is initiated in Central Asia. In the next section I examine the geopolitical implications of different types of funding organizations that support ethnojazz and jazz festivals.

II.7 New independent Central Asian countries: the search for identity

II.7.1 Inventing new traditions

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, newly emerged independent Central Asian countries began to write the history of their countries from the very beginning with a huge surge of "inventing new traditions."[275] This was expressed in the creation of state symbols, official ceremonies and a national anthem. Words and music to the national anthems were carefully selected to reflect the identity, history and culture of these countries. For example a new Kyrgyz national anthem, written in 1992 by Kyrgyz composers N. Davlesov and K. Moldobasanov, has motives from the main theme of the Kyrgyz opera "Manas," which was written in 1946 by V. Vlasov, V. Fere and A.Maldybayev (see section II.4.3). By adding these motives to the anthem N. Davlesov and K. Moldobasanov undoubtedly aimed to

[274] Nye 1990
[275] Hobsbawm 1988, 12

strengthen patriotic feelings, since the *Manas* epic is a cultural treasure of Kyrgyz people; it was born almost a millennium ago and has been preserved by oral transmission to this day.

Benedict Anderson identified the nation in his influential book *Imagined Communities* as "an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign."[276] He noted that people may not have met each other before but have in mind "the image of their communion."[277] The nation-building process started in Central Asia at the end of the nineteenth century in the Russian Empire and then continued during the Soviet years.[278] After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the countries of Central Asia each began to rewrite their national history, presenting the facts of the long existence of their titular nations. For instance, in 1997 Uzbekistan celebrated city anniversaries—2500 years of Bukhara and 2000 years of Khiva, followed by Samarkand's 2750 years in 2007, [279] and other ancient cities—presenting them as part of their national history. Even though historically these territories belong to both Uzbeks and Tajiks, as well as other Central Asian ethnicities. In addition to finding proof (and sometimes even without proof) about ancient cities and culture, new Central Asian leaders revived some ancient historical figures whose statues replaced statues of historical figures of the Soviet ideology. For instance, in Tashkent, a statute of Temirlan on horseback replaced a statue of Karl Marx,[280] and in Bishkek a statue of Manas on horseback replaced one of Lenin.

In some cases, the ideology of a country was written on the basis of the national literary heritage: aspirations by famous writers of these countries or epics, oral traditions,

---

[276] Anderson 1983, 15
[277] Ibid.
[278] The Central Asian portion of the Soviet Union was divided as follows: "The southern portion of the region [...] was divided between Ozbekistan and Tajikistan [...] The high mountains and the Upper Zarafshan Valley fell in the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, while the area westward including the foot of the Pamir-Alay Mountains was granted to Ozbekistan. The major city of Samarqand was also ceded to Ozbekistan, to become that republic's original capital (between 1924 and 1930)." (Schoeberlein-Engel 1994, 75)
[279] Ibid., 155
[280] Abashin 2012,155

transmitted from generation to generation. This was also true for Kyrgyzstan. In the search for identity references to the above-mentioned *Manas* epic have occurred repeatedly throughout the new history of the country. In 1995 Kyrgyzstan widely celebrated the one thousandth anniversary of the *Manas* epic and spent huge amounts of money entertaining important guests. At this major event, the first president of the newly independent Kyrgyzstan, Askar Akaev, announced the seven principles of *Manas* for the first time.[281] They were: "national unity; a generous and tolerant humanism; friendship and cooperation among nations; harmony with nature; patriotism; hard work and education; and 'strengthening and defense of the Kyrgyz state system.'"[282] These seven principles of *Manas,* which seem to have been created by Akaev himself, were added to school curricula and presented to the country as the main new ideology of Kyrgyzstan.[283] These seven principles did not take root in society and were forgotten after the end of Akaev's presidency when he withdrew after the 2005 Revolution. A similar fate has befallen other ideologies that each new president attempted to implement.

The new Kyrgyz republic has continued "inventing traditions" to bring international attention to the country and hopefully establish a political position and gain respect, first of all among Central Asian leaders and then the international community as well. The collective assembly, known as a *toi*, is a historically established Kyrgyz tradition of celebrating life-cycle events, which is also mentioned in the epic *Manas.*[284] The tradition of *toi,* also popular in other Central Asian countries, became a new tradition of mutual reciprocity among Central Asian leaders involving the exchange of elaborate hospitality accompanied by expensive gifts.

[281] Kinzer 2000
[282] Ibid.
[283] Ibid.
[284] Turdalieva and Provis 2017, 200

Almost all newly emerged Central Asian countries used such techniques to establish political positions and manipulate the population. For instance Laura Adams describes in her book *The Spectacular State*, about post-Soviet Uzbekistan how: "The producers of Uzbekistan's national holidays used Olympic-style mass spectacle to demonstrate regional folk dances and military bands, traditional classical music and contemporary fashion. The holiday extravaganzas were both a mirror and a medium of the spectacular state."[285]

In exactly the manner described by Adams, the government of Kyrgyzstan initiated and organized the World Nomad Games which took place in 2014, 2016, and 2018, with Olympic-style grand opening and closing ceremonies and visits by the presidents of various countries. The fundraising for the 2018 event for instance, was done by the government through a voluntary-compulsory order (*dobrobol'no-prinuditel'nom poryadke*), which collected money from businesses, international organizations and even from the salaries of people who worked in government organizations.[286] Some people in Kyrgyzstan criticized the huge expenditure[287] on the world games, while many people live in poverty. But for the government it was the concept of *namyz*[288] and the chance to gain the world's attention. All the efforts of the Kyrgyz government were geared towards doing something extraordinary and impressing the world, without thinking of the general public. Just like in the Soviet Union it was a *pokazukha* (show-off), a concept which Central Asian countries carried on well after the break up.

---

[285] Adams 2010, 7

[286] Radio Azattyk, https://rus.azattyk.org/a/kyrgyzstan-nomad-games/29429736.html

[287] For the 3rd World Nomad Games 466 million kgs was spent, which is equivalent to 6.8 million CAD. (https://www.vb.kg/doc/373315_iii_vsemirnye_igry_kochevnikov_oboshlis_v_466_mln_somov.html) In comparison, for the inauguration of presidents in 2010, 2011, 2017, and 2021 the government spent around 10 million som–146.4 thousand CAD.

[288] *Namyz*—Kyrgyz "philosophical-moral concept, [. . .] honor, dignity, moral obligation [. . .] motivation factor in staging toi." (Turdalieva and Provis 2017, 200)

II.7.2 Traditional music in new republics

Even before the fall of the Soviet Union, some musicians had been successful in returning to traditional instruments which were forgotten during the Soviet time. For example, in 1987 some Kyrgyz traditional instruments were restored and included in a newly created folk ensemble *Kambarkan*[289] at the Philharmonic Society. A founder of this unique ensemble was a well-known *komuzchu* Chalagyz Isabaev, who aimed to create a folk ensemble consisting only of authentic Kyrgyz instruments.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the newly independent countries tried to eliminate the consequences of Russification.[290] Central Asian conservatoires, as well as opera and ballet theatres and philharmonic halls, had been built during the Soviet era starting in the 1930s on orders from Stalin and based on his agenda "National in form, socialist in content."[291] Today, many of the current leaders of these organizations are trying to erase the history of the Soviet Union's contribution while appreciating the existence of the buildings and the structure of these organizations which were built by the Soviets. Paradoxically, the conservatoires, while continuing to promote Western European musical traditions, ignore or fail to understand the importance of reviving old regional musical traditions, which had been forced to change by the Soviets. As a result some of these traditions have been lost. Moreover, in Kyrgyzstan for instance, the music colleges and conservatories still carry a Soviet curriculum and train traditional instrumentalists to play folk music on modernized versions of traditional instruments.

---

[289] *Kambarkan*—ethnographic-folklore ensemble named after Chalagyz Isabaev was founded in 1987. It consisted of Kyrgyz traditional instruments such as *komuz, kyl-kiyak, surnai, kernei, jylaajyn, sybyzgy, temir and jygach ooz komuz, asa-tayak, zuuldak, dirildek, dobulbas, choor, chopo-choor, dool* and others. All instruments were made by master O. Kenchinbaev; the ensemble performed pieces by famous Kyrgyz musicians such as M. Kurenkeev, K. Orozov, Y. Tumanov and others. (Kyrgyz national encyclopedia, 2012, 832).

[290] Frolova-Walker, 1998, 1

[291] *Sovetskaya muzika* (January 1934): 3

Although Central Asian conservatoires now teach both the traditional instruments of the region and Western European instruments, traditional music is taught on authentic instruments mostly because of the initiatives of talented individuals. While training at the conservatoire, musicians learn to play either the traditional or the Western European instruments they have chosen, and after graduation, they remain in their community and work in traditional musical ensembles: the traditional instruments orchestra for the former group and symphony/chamber orchestras for the latter. They also teach their instruments in music schools, colleges or conservatoires. It is important to point out that the curricula at these conservatoires do not have any cross-faculty collaborative ensembles in which musicians from different faculties can meet each other and play together. This is because the conservatoires are still influenced by policy dating from the Soviet era. Central Asian regions were then seen mostly as exotic countries presenting national arts and music in Moscow and abroad[292] and the folklore departments in music institutions were separate from the other departments. European music traditions and traditional music were treated as separate entities and any synthesis of genres was discouraged. So if European music instrumentalists met in ensemble classes, they never met with traditional instrumentalists.

I think such an academic approach, which isolates students from different faculties, creates a barrier for each group and limits their ability to become universal musicians and be ready for new challenges. One great benefit of the ethnojazz laboratory project is that it provided a platform to bring together musicians from different faculties so that they could encounter new instruments and genres and play together for the first time.

[292] I remember that my parents, when touring abroad, would prepare folk songs in Russian or Kyrgyz or arias from Kyrgyz operas, and were accompanied mostly by traditional musicians.

II.7.3 Culture in Kyrgyzstan: The continuation of Soviet ideology

Although the newly emerged state of Kyrgyzstan, including its Ministry of Culture, criticized Soviet ideology, in reality the Ministry of Culture was carefully implementing the very same tools that the Soviet propaganda machine had used to reach its intended goals. In today's post-Soviet countries, various propaganda tools are used to regulate public attitudes and beliefs about the government, to blind people to economic or social problems, and turn the public's opinion in a direction that is desirable to the government. Big local and international cultural events, and calls for patriotism, are all echoes from the Soviet past.

Soviet values were not rejected but adapted by new Central Asian countries. For instance "Uzbek culture producers simply removed the socialist ideological content of Uzbek identity, leaving the Soviet constructions of place-centered heritage and 'universal' human values (such as peace, development, progress, international cooperation)."[293]

Perhaps the idea of implementing a hundred cultural projects arose from a desire to copy an initiative from Russia; indeed, the President's Fund has been supporting a hundred cultural projects every year since 1996.[294] The idea for the 100 projects[295] in 2005 came from the Minister of Culture, Sultan Raev, who had just returned from Paris where he visited the UNESCO 15th session of the General Assembly which announced the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.[296] Inspired by the UNESCO Convention, the minister was eager to do something special. Another reason was that the Ministry of Culture had just been separated from the Ministry of Education, and the

[293] Adams 2010, 7
[294] Competition for the award of 100 grants from the President of the Russian Federation to support creative projects in the field of culture and art: https://www.culture29.ru/official/contests
[295] *Kabar* 2006
[296] Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions: https://en.unesco.org/creativity/convention

Minister of Culture, along with the Secretary of State, was enthusiastic and willing to contribute to the spiritual development of the nation.

However, only some of the hundred projects were funded by the Ministry of Culture, while the majority had to raise their own funds. The objective was to awaken the enthusiasm and dedication of cultural workers in the country.

The 100 cultural projects of the Ministry of Culture were widely advertised through the media, emphasizing their work to the public and especially to the government leaders. The Ministry of Culture was happy to prepare an annual report to the government on the implemented cultural activities. There is a word in Russian, popular during Soviet time—*pokazukha* (empty show or window-dressing)—which can best be used to describe the method and motives of ministry workers. The announcement of the 100 cultural projects shows significant parallels with the so-called Five-Year Plan, implemented by the Soviet government in 1928, with a focus on industrialization and productivity.[297]

In 2005, I was working at the Ministry of Culture and my colleague and I were entrusted to write the plan for the 100 cultural projects initiative. When the Minister asked the staff to suggest projects for the initiative, I suggested holding an international jazz festival, an idea that I had had in mind since 2003 (see Chapter III.2). From the hundred or more projects that were organized, only three projects were sustainable long-term, including the jazz festival. Although the whole idea of the 100 cultural projects was a top-down *pokazukha* continuing the Soviet authorities approach, the birth of a jazz festival is associated with this initiative.

I did not expect that organizing jazz festivals would become one of my primary activities for the next 12 years. I also did not anticipate that it would become an opportunity to help artists from different Central Asian cultures to create music together and celebrate

[297] Schwarz 1983, 57

cultural diversity in a way different from either the Soviet cultural policy, or the new Kyrgyz cultural policy.

Chapter III: Genesis of Ethnojazz and the Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory

III.1 Introduction and overview

In this chapter I first outline the origins and development of the Bishkek Jazz festival, since this led to the genesis of ethnojazz in the region. There is also reference to the political instability that was experienced in the Central Asian region and was reflected in the festival. In this and the following chapter, I analyze how the Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory project helped musicians from the region overcome these tensions. In particular, I answer my research questions of how an ethnojazz laboratory and its musical processes may facilitate multicultural dialogue and express national identities, leading to new musical compositions that reflect the blending of cultures in the region. This started with the ethnojazz development project (2010-2014) and then evolved through the five ethnojazz laboratories (2014-2017). Three factors contributed to multicultural dialogue among different groups and helped them to overcome differences: (1) bringing together musicians with a shared and unshared heritage and background, including experience with improvisation; (2) requiring active participation in a creative and collaborative process that generates an atmosphere of mutual engagement; and (3) inviting participants to explore other cultures and discover commonalities among traditions.

In this chapter I trace the musicians' backgrounds and their musical influences and describe how they synthesized different genres to create a new sound which helped them to express not only their national identity, but also a new regional musical identity which they created through ethnojazz. I describe all five laboratories, to show their impact and the overall effect on the participants in the dialogue. I review the musical results of the labs, including my assessment of the workshops' musical success and musical collegiality.

III.2 Bishkek International Jazz Festival – "Jazz-Bishkek-Spring"

III.2.1 The origins of the festival

The idea of holding a jazz festival in Kyrgyzstan came about by chance. In 2003 friends invited me to Almaty, the former capital of Kazakhstan, for a weekend to attend their local jazz festival. I had just returned from the US where I had studied Arts Management at Indiana University and completed an internship at the Smithsonian Institute, where I volunteered at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival on the National Mall. I was open to innovative ideas.

I grew up in a classical academic musical environment and was not particularly curious about jazz. But in Almaty I was impressed by the jazz festival's atmosphere and had an "aha" moment: I wanted to launch a jazz festival in the Kyrgyz capital of Bishkek. The festival organizers and international donors I met liked the idea of having two jazz festivals in two cities one after the other. The close geographic location of two Central Asian cities—Almaty and Bishkek are only 250 km apart—and the interest of foreign embassies and donor organizations in working together played an important role in launching the festival in Bishkek. It took three years to realize my idea. In 2004 and 2005 I continued to visit the Almaty jazz festival as a manager of the Kyrgyz participants but I had already started to prepare a festival in Bishkek with my companions. In 2005, when the Kyrgyz Ministry of Culture announced "100 cultural projects," I seized the opportunity to apply and was fortunate to get my proposal accepted as one of the 100 cultural projects recognized by the Ministry of Culture. Adding the Ministry of Culture as a partner to the jazz festival meant we had state patronage which eased some of the organizational burdens.

The first Bishkek International Jazz Festival was held in April 2006. It was organized by four people: my late brother, Daniyar, my husband, Arstan, my friend, Steffen Laas (who was the cultural attaché of the German Embassy in Kyrgyzstan), and myself. Sitting until

early morning at Steffen's house, having large quantities of coffee and chocolate, we brainstormed the concept of creating a unique festival (Fig. III.1). Each of us performed several roles to make up for the lack of people. Arstan, being a professional sound engineer, was responsible for the sound and all the technical requirements, one of the important components when having a live concert. Three of us covered the rest, including the program, fundraising, musicians, marketing, venues, logistics and much more. Close to the beginning of the festival we realized that we needed a Master of Ceremonies, but the budget was limited so Steffen and I decided to cover this role ourselves, even though we had no prior experience. After appearing once at the first festival I continued to greet the audience, musicians, and officials for the next eleven festivals, speaking in three languages, Kyrgyz, Russian, and English, to outline the mission of the festival, explain the distinctive features of ethnojazz, and thank the donors.

Figure III.1: Preparation for the first festival: my late brother Daniyar (right), my husband Arstan, and me at Steffen's house. Bishkek, April, 2006. Photo by Steffen Laas.

Family involvement. The passion I had in the last two decades for organizing the festival spread to my family as well. Besides my late brother and my husband, who helped me to establish the festival, my children were also involved. They started to volunteer for the festival from a young age; for example, my youngest daughter, Janiya, volunteered from age 6 by distributing festival booklets. When my older children grew up they were able to join the organizational committee as knowledgeable and experienced members. My son Katagan, worked as an artistic director of the festival in 2016, and my daughter Aike worked as public relations manager in 2017 and 2018. While artistic director, Katagan initiated and realized an open air concert, as the opening of the festival, which was an extremely hard task taking into account burdens with state permission, involvement of vendors, extra discussion with embassies about the stage plan and security, and preparation for weather changes. The open air event went very well but remains as the only major open air event in the history of the festival, as it required tremendous efforts and funds.[298]

Figure III.2: At the open air concert: (from left to right) Keneshbek Almakuchukov (Director of PF CAAM), Steffen Laas, Kanykei Mukhtarova, and Katagan Zhumagulov (Artistic Director), 2016. Photo by Ermek Jaenisch

[298] I organized the first open air concert at Jazz-Bishkek-Fall festival in 2006, but it was a mini event, without a big stage.

“Jazz-Bishkek-Spring”

The Bishkek International Jazz Festival, “Jazz-Bishkek-Spring,” was designed to be a project uniting cultures of different countries and nationalities. We strove to make this festival a traditional annual event that gathered creative people to develop jazz and enrich the cultural environment in Central Asia. “Music without borders,” became the festival motto, with the mission to help build bridges between peoples through cultural cooperation, in the name of friendship and understanding among nations. At our request a talented designer created an image of three figures playing jazz instruments, wearing a Kyrgyz hat, *kalpak*. At that time we didn't know that ethnojazz would become a unique feature of the festival, but these men on the logo anticipated this, while in addition, the three colors, green, red and blue, express diversity.

Figure III.3: Logo of the Bishkek International Jazz Festival

Figure III.4: Kanykei Mukhtarova and Steffen Laas at the opening of the first Bishkek International Jazz Festival, 2006. Photo by Arthur Boljurov.

I managed the festival as Director from 2006 to 2018 and am still tied to the festival as a founder and one of the main organizers. The annual festival which lasted three days, was full of events: three concerts, master classes, and jam sessions. Moreover, we developed the “Festival debut” category that annually presented young Kyrgyz jazz musicians. The festival became a major cultural event in the country and region. The Bishkek festival also provided opportunities for other musical ventures. I initiated and realized the “Ethnojazz Development in Central Asia " project from 2009 to 2013, and the “Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory" project, from 2014 to 2017, both implemented within the framework of the Bishkek jazz festival. In the former project, besides an ethnojazz contest among Central Asian musicians, we organized roundtable discussions on the development of ethnojazz in Central Asia. The first ethnojazz conference, “Jazz in Central Asia and National Identity,” took place during the 10th anniversary of the Bishkek jazz festival. The conference materials, as well as articles collected during the roundtables, were published in an essay collection, which became a valuable source for my research.

III.2.2 The emergence of the ethnojazz concept at the Bishkek Jazz Festival

The idea of an ethnojazz component in the festival arose gradually. The first joint performance by Kyrgyz and American musicians happened spontaneously. Without even thinking about the possibility of involving the Kyrgyz musicians in jazz performance, I introduced the Kyrgyz musician Asylbek Nasirdinov to American musicians with the idea of introducing Kyrgyz music to the foreign participants at the festival. The American musicians, William Cepeda and band listened to Asylbek, who played almost all traditional Kyrgyz instruments, and were fascinated by the unusual sounds; they not only listened with great interest but examined, handled and tried the unfamiliar instruments. William Cepeda, the band leader, suddenly asked me if Asylbek could join him that evening to perform one song

together. I translated his request to Asylbek, who enthusiastically accepted the offer and suggested inviting another musician, a virtuoso *komuz* performer, saying that he would play wind instruments himself, to present two Kyrgyz instruments at the same time.

This sudden change to the program was unexpected for the organizers and for the American embassy staff who accompanied the group. It was our first festival, and we were not prepared for last minute changes. Certainly, as a classically trained pianist, I was a little worried about this unplanned request. However, I knew that the main feature of jazz is improvisation, and that the Kyrgyz musical heritage is based on improvisation too. It was at that very moment that I connected these two elements and became excited.

In the evening, after a short rehearsal right before the concert, when William together with Asylbek and virtuoso *komuzchu*[299] Rakhat Köchörbaev determined the tonality and order of the instrumentation they were ready to perform. William Cepeda was accompanied by a band of six highly professional musicians. It was impressive how the traditional musicians playing Kyrgyz instruments such as *komuz, chopo-choor, jygach ooz-komuz,* and *temir-komuz* interacted with trombone, ocean shells (played by William), and saxophone; how the rhythm section of the band picked up the rhythm of *komuz,* and how the whole band united in an apotheosis.

This first joint performance by American and Kyrgyz musicians, which took place at the inaugural jazz festival in 2006, was a sensation. The Ambassador of the United States and the Minister of Culture of Kyrgyzstan, who sat next to each other, both jumped from their seats together with the whole audience, giving a standing ovation that lasted for a long time. It was a triumph of the unification of two cultures and of friendship between the two peoples. Jazz diplomacy? Yes, but not only that. For me it was something very important, something

[299] *Komuzchu – komuz* player

like the birth of a new genre, which I didn't realize at that time, but which gave me food for further thought.

During my thesis writing, I read about William Cepeda, who is a Puerto Rican musician and a creator of "Afro-Rican Jazz." From his website I learned that, "In 1992, he revolutionized Latin music with the introduction of Afro-Rican Jazz, an innovative blend of traditional Puerto Rican roots, folk, dance, progressive jazz, and world music. He is widely credited with innovating and creating the jazz sub-genre: Afro-Rican Jazz."[300] Therefore, William Cepeda, who synthesized Puerto Rican traditional music with jazz, knew that any traditional music can go well with jazz and that explains his openness and willingness to explore Kyrgyz traditional music. However, unintentionally, he lit the first spark that grew into Central Asian Ethnojazz.

The next episode that contributed to the emergence of ethnojazz happened at the second festival. Due to a last-minute cancellation we had to fill the whole second part of a concert. After I explained the situation, musicians from Tajikistan, Germany and Kyrgyzstan agreed to play a session to fill the time slot. It was interesting to witness musicians at work, when they came to the rehearsal only a couple of hours before the concert without knowing whom they needed to play with and what instruments were available. After figuring out which instruments they had, the musicians started to discuss a stage plan and group the instruments: percussion, string and piano.

Musicians from three groups created an unforgettable jam session in which all the diversity of people, cultures and instruments came together into one whole. I again witnessed how non-jazz musicians performing on instruments such as the Pamiri *setar*, Chinese *guzheng*, *daf*, and *tablas* could play organically with drums, piano, and bass; we saw how different musical traditions can blend harmoniously with each other. Again, skill in

[300] https://www.williamcepeda.com/bio

improvisation, which is a fundamental characteristic both of the traditional music of Central Asia and of jazz, enabled them to create music together, leaving out all the stresses and bringing joy and excitement to the audience and themselves.

III.2.3 Development of the festival as an indicator of growth in the region

It is possible to trace the development of Kyrgyzstan and of the region as a whole, including political, economic and cultural spheres, in parallel with the fifteen-year history of our jazz festival in Bishkek. The first festival took place in 2006, a year after independent Kyrgyzstan's first revolution, during which the first president Askar Akaev was overthrown.[301] Since the time of the first revolution, political unrest has not subsided. Ironically, political events began to intensify in the spring, during our first festival. On the second day of the festival, just a year after the revolution, another big demonstration took place in the main square. American musicians were at that time in Almaty, Kazakhstan, waiting for permission from the US embassy to go to Bishkek, which they received late at night after the demonstration ended. Consequently, musicians were late for the jam session and we were not sure if the political instability would disrupt the festival.

Just two days before the start of the 5th jazz festival, on April 7th 2010, there was a second revolution,[302] much more violent than the previous one, killing 87 innocent people in

[301] "Mr Akaev, a respected physicist, won a tough fight for the presidency in 1990 against a communist party boss. After a popular election victory in 1991 he introduced multi-party democracy and signed up to an economic reform plan backed by the International Monetary Fund. But over the 1990s, his government became increasingly intolerant of dissent. Presidential and parliamentary elections, each held in both 1995 and 2000, were criticised by international monitors as less than free and fair. Following unrest in 2002 (after an opposition member of parliament was arrested on petty charges), Mr Akaev promised reforms. But the result was a dodgy referendum that strengthened the presidency and replaced the party-list system with single-member districts for parliamentary polls. This weakened the parties and handed more power to powerful individuals." (*The Economist* 2005)

[302] "Kurmanbek Bakiyev promised to curtail presidential powers and eradicate corruption and nepotism. But once in office Bakiyev reneged. The long-running tug-of-war between the parliament and president on the division of power resumed. By introducing a new electoral law and founding his own party, Ak Zhol (bright path), he gained control of the legislature in the 2007 parliamentary poll." (Dilip Hiro 2010)

the capital. We had to cancel the festival. Coincidentally, on the same day, my brother, my faithful companion for the festival, passed away. It was a challenging time for me, but after recovering from grief, I wanted to move on, realizing the festival project was something I could continue to do to help my country and the region. We held the 5th festival in the autumn of the same year, continuing the tradition and perhaps raising the depressed spirits of the nation.

In June of 2010, an ethnic conflict occurred between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks living in the south of the country, in the city of Osh, where ethnic Uzbeks make up the majority of the population.[303] The ethnic conflict became a dangerous signal of political instability in the country and in the region as a whole. This conflict repeated the events of 1990, during the Soviet era, when the official Soviet ideology of friendship between different nationalities was in force. That conflict, which occurred one year before the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, had been quickly suppressed, so as not to compromise Soviet policy of *Druzhba narodov* and to show that there was no tension between different nationalities of the Union.

After the 2010 revolution, Roza Otunbayeva, an opposition leader, led the country during the transition until the presidential election[304] and then became the third president and the first woman president in the new history of Kyrgyzstan. Her initiative to transition the country from presidential to parliamentary rule was supported by a referendum in 2011 and Kyrgyzstan became the first parliamentary republic in post-Soviet Central Asia.[305] The fourth

[303] *The Economist* 2010

[304] "Human-rights watchdogs had pleaded with Ms Otunbayeva to postpone the vote, fearing a low turnout and violence.[...] Despite a few blatant irregularities, voters decisively endorsed the new constitution, which establishes a parliamentary republic and takes power away from the presidency. Ms Otunbayeva will stay on as president for 18 months, but then be ineligible to stand for election next year. 'The people have put a full stop to the epoch of authoritarian, nepotistic management,' she declared." (*The Economist,* 2010)

[305] *The Economist,* 2010

president, Almazbek Atambayev, served from 2011-2017, but after peacefully transferring power , his successor, Sooronbay Jeyenbekov, put him in jail."[306]

Most recently, in October 2020, a third revolution took place, after which president Sooronbay Jeyenbekov resigned and the acting president Sadyr Japarov, who was freed from prison by his supporters, came in with an attempt to change the constitution and extend the presidential term from one to two terms. This again caused discontent among the people and protests began once more. However, Sadyr Japarov won the election, becoming the sixth president of Kyrgyzstan in January 2021, as well as returning the country to presidential rule.[307] The former president, Sooronbay Jeyenbekov, recently was summoned for questioning in court, so stories about former presidents continue.[308]

Despite the political instability and recurring ethnic tensions and mistrust, two special projects at the Bishkek festival, Ethnojazz Development in Central Asia and the Central Asia Ethnojazz Laboratory, offered an alternative model for dealing with cultural and ethnic diversity, in contrast to the general political context where differences were ignored or pitted against each other. After the breakup of the Soviet Union, neither the new Kyrgyz Republic nor other Central Asian countries offered any policy to ease ethnic tension between countries or within the countries themselves. However, the two festival projects showed that people

---

[306] "In 2017 Mr Atambayev strongly endorsed Mr Jeyenbekov's presidential bid, expecting to act as the power behind the throne. However, the would-be partnership degenerated into a feud that Mr Jeyenbekov has won—for now. Mr Atambayev is in detention charged with corruption in connection with the crime boss's release. Investigators have suggested he could also be charged with corruption and murder. Officials verbally accuse him of planning a coup attempt." (*The Economist* 2019)

[307] "Yet Mr Japarov participated in one of those discredited governments, toppled in 2010. Moreover, his recent rise involved all manner of legal contortions. He was serving a prison sentence for kidnapping—a conviction he says was politically motivated—when protests first broke out over a tainted election presided over by his predecessor, Sooronbay Jeyenbekov, in October. A mob freed Mr Japarov, and helped propel him first to the prime ministership and then to the job of acting president, when Mr Jeyenbekov resigned. (An ally briefly took over that role while Mr Japarov campaigned, as the constitution requires.)" (*The Economist* 2021)

[308] *24 kg* 2021

from different countries are ready to collaborate in music and are ready to cooperate if there are opportunities for such communication.

"Ethnojazz in Central Asia" which had started in 2009 as a pilot project, became a strong musical form of expression for Central Asian musicians, because of the requirement to prepare an ethnojazz composition in advance of the festival. Saidmurat, an Uzbek musician noted:

> It influenced us a lot. We always had to prepare something before coming to the festival. It was hard and at the same time very interesting. Once we won a Grand Prix for the composition based on a Kyrgyz song. We listened to the original song, where the time signature changed from five to four and again to five, which we liked. The song was beautiful and we enjoyed working with it. I remember when we finished playing, the whole audience in the theatre stood up and applauded for a long time. We were surprised and very pleased.[309]

Except for the Turkmen and Kazakh bands who participated once, all the other musicians from Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan participated in all four competitions. Their understanding of ethnojazz grew as they worked together over the four-year period. Many had gained valuable experience by the time we started the subsequent Central Asia Ethnojazz Laboratory.

Although the ethnojazz contest had been a successful project, to develop ethnojazz further we needed a new approach to allow musicians from each country to leave their comfort zone of creating compositions at home and to immerse them in a new music-making environment with musicians from other countries. My idea was to bring different musicians together and give them the opportunity to work cooperatively and intensively, while at the same time contributing to the multicultural dialogue between different ethnic groups. This is how the Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory project originated, starting a new stage in the ethnojazz development in the region.

[309] Saidmurat Muratov, interview with author, 2016

III.3 Musicians' background

III.3.1 Western European education: Soviet and post-Soviet conservatoires

Almost all the laboratory musicians had Western European training and many of them were graduates of the musical colleges, arts institutions and conservatories which were built during the Soviet time; in addition to the Moscow conservatoire (founded in 1866), they were located in Tashkent, Bishkek, Dushanbe and Baku. The conservatoire was the pinnacle of the strong music education system built by the Soviets.[310] Before the conservatoire, from age seven, most of the musicians studied at a special music school for gifted children. I personally followed the same path to become a professional pianist.[311] Each central musical school was usually affiliated with a conservatoire. Although the Soviet conservatoires had different music disciplines, "the main effort is geared towards the training of outstanding performers."[312] The fact that all the laboratory musicians, including traditional musicians, had serious musical training and also that some of them had participated in various experimental projects, enabled them to create complex musical language.

III.3.2 Selected musicians

All traditional musicians who participated in the five laboratories had some kind of previous experience of playing in different experimental projects which allowed them to feel confident during the laboratory project. Below I summarize the background of four traditional musicians: Jusup Aisaev, a multi-instrumentalist from Kyrgyzstan, participant in

---

[310] "Soviet music derives its strength from the elementary and secondary musical education given to a child between the age of seven and seventeen. The whole system is comparable to a broad-based pyramid, with the conservatoire at the top." (Schwarz, 1983)

[311] I studied piano at the Kyrgyz special musical school named after a Kyrgyz composer Mukash Abdrayev from grade 1 to 9; after that I went to Moscow to study at the Moscow conservatoire musical college (1985-1990), and then graduated from the Kyrgyz National Conservatoire (1991-1995).

[312] Schwarz, 1983, 380

the first three labs, who had also performed with Swiss jazz musicians in Karakol, the main city in eastern Kyrgyzstan; Askhat Jetigen, another Kyrgyz musician who plays different instruments, who was a member for the fourth and fifth labs; Khushbakht Niyozov, a *rubab* player from Tajikistan, who played in the last two labs; and Ilchin Nagiev, a *mugham* player from Azerbaijan, who was a participant in the last lab.

Then I provide some examples of non-traditional musicians, also showing their musical influences. Since I gathered my data during the fourth and fifth labs in Tashkent the majority of the interviewees were with the Omnibus Ensemble including Alibek Gabdurakhmanov, Artyom Kim, Sanjar Nafikov, Jakhongir Shukurov, and Sukhrob Nazimov. I also summarize the background of the Omnibus Ensemble. Besides these musicians I describe the background of Ignat Matukhov, a Belarusian drummer.

III.3.3 Traditional musicians

Jusup Aisaev **(Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan;** ***kyl-kyak, komuz, jygach-komuz, temir-komuz, chopo choor, jetigen)*** was born in 1969 in Naryn, a city in southeastern Kyrgyzstan. He is a Kyrgyz traditional multi-instrumentalist who has also learned a recently renovated *jetigen,* an ancient Turkish instrument which had vanished from Kyrgyz culture. He participated in the first three laboratories, but before the ethnojazz project in 2008, I had invited Jusup to play with Swiss musicians during the festivals in Bishkek and Karakol. From early childhood, Jusup was surrounded by traditional music. His grandfather played *ooz komuz* and his father played *komuz*. Jusup's grandfather, who was from Uyghur, died in Stalin's repressions and his father, who was only 16 years old at that time, was exiled for ten years to Siberia. From a young age, Jusup liked to quietly sit in the yurt listening while his talented uncle played the *komuz*. Later, Jusup went to study *komuz* at the M. Kurenkeev Music College in Bishkek but, noticing his beautiful natural vibrato, the faculty persuaded him to study prima *kyl kyak*, a

traditional Kyrgyz string instrument that was modified in the Soviet Era. (With the addition of two strings a prima *kyl kyak* resembles a violin and can be used in larger ensembles.) During his studies, Jusup played standard violin repertoire. After graduation, he continued his studies at the Arts Institute of Bishkek, where he performed Mozart's 5th violin concerto on his prima *kyl kyak* at his 5th-year graduation recital.

Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, the newly gained independence from the Soviet State contributed to the awakening of patriotic feelings in the hearts of Kyrgyzstanis. Thus, in 1993, Jusup decided to shift from the classical prima *kyl kyak* to the original, authentic two-string form of *kyl kyak*. He then began to deepen his knowledge of Kyrgyz traditional folk music. His interest in *kyl kyak*, however, started much earlier. Without access to the Internet conservatoire students would go to the main State library, which was then named after Lenin[313] (*Leninka*), where they could listen to recordings in the music department.[314] Jusup, therefore, went to *Leninka* to listen to the European classical violin repertoire, which he was playing on his prima *kyl kyak.* At the same time he was curious about old recordings of *kyl kyakchi*,[315] such as those by Said Bekmuratov, and was impressed with the sound. Without having a mentor he taught himself to play *kyl kyak*, first by listening to the recording and then by visiting the newly created folk ensemble *Kambarkan*[316] at the Philharmonic Society.

Sometime later Jusup joined the A. Omuraliev Music and Drama Theatre in Bishkek and became part of a *Saamal* ensemble. He often had to improvise to reflect the actors on

---

[313] Later renamed after a Kyrgyz poet, Alykul Osmonov

[314] I often spent time in *Leninka* listening to vinyl recordings during my conservatoire years to prepare for music literature courses and also to listen to the great pianists to master my pianism.

[315] *kyl kyakchi – kyl kyak* player

[316] *Kambarkan* – the ethnographic-folklore ensemble named after Chalagyz Isabaev was founded in 1987. The musicians played Kyrgyz traditional instruments such as *komuz, kyl-kyak, surnai, kernei, jylaajyn, sybyzgy, temir and jygach ooz komuz, asa-tayak, zuuldak, dirildek, dobulbas, choor, chopo-choor, dool* and others. All instruments were made by master O. Kenchinbaev. The ensemble performed pieces by famous Kyrgyz musicians such as M. Kurenkeev, K. Orozov and Y. Tumanov. (Kyrgyz national encyclopedia, 2012, 832).

stage. After a quarrel with the management, Jusup and some of his bandmates left the theatre and decided to seek rehearsal space at the local conservatoire, where they were allocated an abandoned men's toilet for rehearsals. Together they managed to transform this space into a rehearsal room.

Later, he returned to the theatre and took part in international projects, one of which presented an opportunity for composing. Jusup composed his first music for the "Golden Fleece" and travelled to Paris to present it. In the same year (2001), he met a Swiss jazz musician, Martin Schumacher, at the international festival “In the Name of Peace” in Osh (Kyrgyzstan) and the next year they began a Kyrgyz-Swiss collaboration under the name "Duo-Intercontinental," which traveled across Europe. Later a Tajik drummer, Abduvali Ikramov, joined them, making it the "Trio-Intercontinental."[317] They toured Europe and Central Asia with concerts. Jusup's international experience in collaborative projects prepared him for joining other interesting projects.

At the same time (2003) Jusup was invited to lead a 3-musician Kyrgyz group and collaborate with American jazz musicians, Adam Klippl’s trio, during their tour of Kyrgyzstan. Jusup said he realized that for the other two Kyrgyz musicians, improvising and playing with jazz musicians was something like “putting an ordinary person into the ring with a professional boxer.”[318] He introduced them to improvisation based on his own experience.

Askhat Jetigen **(Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan;** ***komuz, temir-komuz, chopo choor, chogoyno choor, sybyzgy***) participated in the last two laboratories. He was born in 1993, in Kochkor, a village in the northern Naryn region of Kyrgyzstan. Traditional music surrounded Askhat from his early days. His parents frequently played *komuz* at home and his

[317] Trio-Intercontinental performance in Switzerland in 2017 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWXsCs-N98U&ab_channel=Andr%C3%A9Maerz
[318] Jusup, interview with author, 2018 (my translation)

grandmother was a *koshokchu*.[319]At a young age Askhat joined a cultural project organized by the Aga Khan Music Initiative in Kyrgyzstan. As part of the Ustatshakirt project, for the next five years he underwent rigorous performance training with his uncle, the famous *komuz* player, Zainidin Imanaliev.

In 2009 Askhat began his formal studies at Kurenkeev College of Music but after only two years he was expelled for poor attendance in his psychology class, which was conducted in Russian. Askhat's Russian proficiency was not very strong at the time, so he had skipped classes. He later joined the Ustatshakirt Ensemble where he met Nurlanbek Nyshanov, a famous Kyrgyz traditional musician, and learned to play other Kyrgyz traditional instruments. In his early twenties Askhat led the Ordo Sakhna Ensemble. Together they participated in experimental music projects in Kyrgyzstan. In 2017 he attempted to continue his formal studies at the conservatoire but decided to leave after just one year, after "not finding what he was looking for."[320]

In 2014 Askhat went to the US for a month to participate in "One Beat." His colleagues from other countries highly praised Askhat's musicianship and ingenuity. Today Askhat Jetigen is a well-known versatile musician in Kyrgyzstan who participates in various projects, playing many traditional instruments and exploring new genres of music.

***Elchin Nagiev* (Baku, Azerbaijan; *tar*)** was a participant of the fifth laboratory. He was born in 1966 in the Neftchala district in Azerbaijan. He first studied the *tar*[321] at the Baku Music College (1982-1986) and later at the Azerbaijan State Conservatoire (1986-1993),[322] which was renamed as the Baku Academy of Music in 1991. After graduating from the Academy he worked there as a teacher until 2002 when he moved to the newly

[319] *koshokchu* – female improviser, mourner. (Yudakhin,1957, my translation)
[320] Askhat, interview with author, 2018 (my translation)
[321] *tar* – A fretted, long-necked lute with a double-pear-shaped body
[322] Azerbaijani State Conservatoire, was initiated by Uzeri Gadjibekov, a national composer of Azerbaijan, in 1920.

established Azerbaijani National Conservatoire where he works to this day. At the conservatoire Elchin works in two departments, teaching *mugham* to instrumentalists and how to accompany *khanende, mugham* singers.

Elchin originally started to play in the class of a famous Azerbaijani *khanende,* Arif Babayev, who became his mentor. Elchin is an acclaimed *mugham* performer both in the roles of soloist and accompanist. He collaborates with Elshan Mansurov, a *kamancha*[323] player, so together with a *khanande* they form a trio. Elchin participates in different musical projects, and for the last fourteen years he has been a member of the Atlas Ensemble under the guidance of its founder, the Dutch composer, Joël Bons. Despite being new to the ethnojazz project, he quickly adapted to it due to his previous experience, both playing in the Atlas Ensemble and working with Artyom Kim.

Khushbakht Niyozov **(Dushanbe, Tajikistan; *Afghan rubab,*[324] *tabla*[325])**, was a participant in the fourth and fifth laboratories. He was born in 1986 in the Pamir Mountains region of Tajikistan which is known as the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region of Tajikistan. He grew up in a musical family, as his father and brother were musicians. He first learned to play musical instruments from his father who played on *tanbur,*[326] *daf,*[327] and *rubab.* After music school he went to the Tajik State Institute of the Arts where he studied *Kashgari rubab* and later *Afghan rubab,* which he learned to play himself. He not only plays various Badakhshani musical instruments such as *daf, rubab, setar,* and *tanbur*, but also the Indian *tabla.* Khushbakht plays with several traditional music ensembles, including the Pamir Traditional Music Ensemble, funded by the Tajik Ministry of Culture. He teaches *rubab* at

[323] *kamancha* - a bowed fiddle with a spherical body, and nine strings passing down a long, unfretted neck.
[324] *Rubab* - a lute with skin-covered deck, bowed and plucked.
[325] *Tabla* - pair of hand-played drums.
[326] *Tanbur* - a long-necked fretted plucked lute.
[327] *Daf* - a frame drum.

the State Institute of Arts. He tours abroad with ensembles and also participates in various cultural projects. He had played with the Omnibus Ensemble before our laboratory project and was recommended to the project by Artyom.

In an interview, Khushbaht mentioned Indian and Afghan music which had influenced him. He liked to listen to Afghan *rubab* played by a famous Afghan-born player, Homayoun Sakhi. He recalls that "One day, to my great joy, I met Homayoun Sakhi when he came to Dushanbe. He showed me some techniques and I fell in love with the instrument even more."[328]

III.3.4 Non-traditional musicians

***Alibek Gabdurakhmanov* (Tashkent, Uzbekistan; percussion)** participated in all five labs and led the third lab; he had also performed in all four competitions of the Ethnojazz Development Project. Alibek is an ethnic Kazakh, born in 1984 in Tashkent. He decided to study music when he was about 12 and went to a music school to learn drums. He continued to study percussion instruments at the Tashkent conservatoire (2002-2006), and after graduating he studied for two more years at the Masters level. From 2005 he worked as concertmaster of the percussion section of the National Symphony Orchestra of Uzbekistan and since 2015 has worked there as a conductor.

Alibek is actively involved in many local and international cultural projects. With the National Symphony Orchestra he gives a lot of concerts in Tashkent and also tours the regions of Uzbekistan. The repertoire of the orchestra is wide: together with the European classical repertoire the orchestra plays popular music, including Uzbek hits. Alibek has also been a member of the Omnibus Ensemble since 2005 and has participated in many of its

[328] Kushbaht, interview with author, 2016 (my translation)

projects. In 2019 Alibek continued his studies at the Tashkent conservatoire where he is taking the Masters program in conducting.

Alibek was influenced by the experimental work he did in the Omnibus Ensemble and the contemporary repertoire that they performed. In an interview during the fourth laboratory he said, "Although my permanent work is with the conservatoire orchestra, my soul belongs to this place."[329]

Ignat Matukhov **(Minsk, Belarus; drums)** was born in 1988 in Minsk into a family of musicians. He started to study drums when he was seven; he graduated from Minsk State Music College in 2007. He then moved to Moscow to study at the conservatoire in the Faculty of Historical and Contemporary Performing Arts with Mark Pekarsky, studies which he successfully completed in 2012. Additionally, he studied for a year in Amsterdam, where he was introduced to jazz for the first time (2012-2013). He returned to Moscow where he became a sought-after musician.

Ignat won the first prize at the young percussionists competition in Vilnius (Lithuania, 2005); and later was awarded a Percussive Arts Society (PAS) scholarship which was established in the US (2007). He played in the Mark Pekarsky Percussion Ensemble and performed various pieces written for solo drums. For a period he worked with Vladimir Pankov and Artyom Kim in their Moscow studio SounDrama and has performed with them at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and the Theatre de la Ville in Paris.

After an intensive musical career in Moscow, Ignat decided to move to Minsk where he now works at the Minsk State Music College teaching an experimental course on developing auditory coordination for performers. He continues to engage in various experimental projects and he participated in the fourth and fifth ethnojazz laboratories.

[329] Alibek, interview with author, 2016

***Sanjar Nafikov* (Tashkent, Uzbekistan; piano)** is a young Uzbek pianist, who participated in all five laboratories and had already presented ethnojazz compositions for all five competitions that preceded the laboratory project. He is a bright example of a thoughtful musician who has developed his own ethnojazz style. It is interesting to observe his transformation as a musician. Sanjar mainly played traditional jazz standards when he first appeared at the Bishkek jazz festival in 2009 with the Uzbek jazz band Arzakh, where he replaced the well-known elderly jazz pianist and band-leader Vladimir Safarov. He has developed into one of the most sought-after musicians in Central Asia, as he is someone who has a deep understanding of the nature of Uzbek music and has searched for a unique sound. The Bishkek jazz festival played a role in stimulating Sanjar to develop this sound. "At the Bishkek jazz festival in 2009 together with our program we had to perform an ethnojazz composition, a compulsory piece, as part of the competition among Central Asian participants. This inspired me to seek and experiment and I started to get interested in ethnojazz."[330]

He was born in Tashkent in 1990 and also raised there. His musical biography is similar to many others in the post-Soviet countries of Central Asia who later chose a professional music career. At the age of seven he went to the Uspensky School of Music[331] followed by four years at the musical college, and then graduated from the conservatoire. He was trained as a classical pianist both at the music school and at the conservatoire, but he became acquainted with jazz piano during his years at college.

Sanjar's interest in traditional Uzbek music came through rock and pop music. He lists the Beatles, Led Zeppelin, and Deep Purple as his greatest musical influences. This is

[330] Sanjar, interview with author, 2016

[331] One of the special schools for musically gifted children built during the Soviet times.(author's remark)

not surprising because rock had a tremendous impact on the Soviet youth,[332] and although Sanjar's youth fell in the 21st century, the echo from the seventies reached him too.

> In the compositions of my favorite pop and rock bands such as the Beatles, Led Zeppelin and Deep Purple I liked to hear eastern motifs, particularly Indian. I was never interested in the traditional music of our region before, but after hearing eastern tunes in rock music I started to get interested in traditional music. Almost at the same time I started to get interested in jazz.[333]

Sukhrob Nazimov **(Tashkent, Uzbekistan; oboe)** participated in the fourth and fifth laboratories. Sukhrob is an ethnic Tajik, who was born in 1979 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. Like many professional Uzbek musicians, he graduated from the Uspensky School of Music in Tashkent; he then studied oboe and English horn at the Tashkent conservatoire (2001). After graduating from the conservatoire, he worked in the orchestra of the Uzbek Opera and Ballet Theatre until he took up his own independent projects.

Sukhrob is a co-founder of the Omnibus Ensemble (2004) where he works to this day as a musician and executive director. Along with music, he developed another passion, video art. He established "Black Box," an international festival of music and visual arts (2006). In 2008 Sukhrob studied at the Media Laboratory for young directors in Tashkent, organized by the Swiss Cooperation Office in Uzbekistan. In 2009 he studied art management at the Competence Centre for Cultural Managers in Berlin, a month-long intensive program supported by the Goethe Institute for young art managers from Central Asia and Eastern Europe, followed by a four-week internship at Art House Tacheles, in Berlin, as part of the program.

Sukhrob is a director of short films in the style of video art, which have been shown at various festivals and concerts. Among his films are: *Sun Blow* (2008), *Immersion* (2008),

---

[332] "Western rock and roll had a phenomenal appeal to the Soviet youth coming of age in the 1970s. This music became such an ubiquitous and vibrant part of Soviet youth culture that the party sought a more nuanced understanding of its effects on ideological convictions." (Yurchak, 2006, 207)

[333] Sanjar, interview with author, 2016 (my translation)

the_cold_barren_way (2009), *Die Wände* (2009), and *Ceremony* (2009).[334] He has also organized various festivals: Ilkhom-XX (2000-2004), Internationales Musikinstitut Darmstadt 45 (2010), Omnibus Laboratorium for young composers (2007-2014) and many others.

Sukhrob was influenced by the festival of contemporary music Ilkhom-XX. The festival featured well known world ensembles such as the Bang On A Can All Stars (2001), Yo-Yo-Ma and the Silk Road (2003), the Kronos Quartet (2004), and many others.[335] Along with musical performances, there were master classes, discussions, film screenings and visual art exhibitions, which probably also influenced his interest in combining music and visual arts in his later career.

Jakhongir Shukurov **(Tashkent, Uzbekistan; composer, *tanbur)*** a participant in the last two laboratories, was born in 1981 in Bukhara, an ancient Persian city which is now located in Uzbekistan. He studied at the Uspensky School of Music in Tashkent (1994-1998). His first instrument was piano but later he switched to music theory and also composition. He continued studying composition at the Tashkent conservatoire (1998-2001), with Felix Yanov-Yanovsky, and studied conducting with Eldar Azimov. His chamber and vocal music is played by the Omnibus Ensemble and also in other countries. He teaches composition at the Tashkent conservatoire.

Jakhongir was one of the founders of the Omnibus Ensemble and actively participates in various cultural projects in Uzbekistan. He led the Omnibus laboratories for young composers (2005-2010), and also participated in the Ilkhom-XX and Black Box festivals in Tashkent.

[334]Ilkhom Theatre: http://ilkhom.com
[335] http://cultureuz.net/index.php/music/ilkhom-xx/109-programs-ilkhom-xx

In his youth Jakhongir listened to *tanbur* played by Turgun Alimatov, but being trained in European musical tradition he did not show much interest in traditional Uzbek music. Things changed when he started working with the Omnibus Ensemble and played contemporary music: "Through playing contemporary music with the Omnibus Ensemble I discovered the beauty of traditional Uzbek music and since then have fallen in love with this music."[336]

He continues to play with the Omnibus Ensemble but Jakhongir's main work is at the Tashkent conservatoire where he teaches composition and reading the orchestra score. He told me that the conservatoire management and his colleagues only appreciate European musical traditions so do not support his attempts to introduce contemporary music repertoire to students: "I don't blame them, as they were born in the Soviet time when only European musical traditions were taught in all our conservatoires."[337] Despite his colleagues' attitude, he tried to introduce contemporary music to his own students and invited them to visit rehearsals of the Omnibus Ensemble, whose rehearsal room is at the conservatoire. He said, "Interestingly, they never came to our rehearsals: as soon as they leave my class, they immediately fall under the influence of the conservatoire atmosphere where European musical traditions dominate."[338]

***Artyom Kim* (Tashkent, Uzbekistan; composer, conductor)** Artyom assisted with the third laboratory and was musical coordinator for the fourth and fifth laboratories. Artyom is ethnic Korean; he was born in 1976 in Bekabad, a city in eastern Uzbekistan. His first musical instrument was accordion which he studied at the Khamza State Music College in Tashkent (1991-1995). After college he pursued composition at the Tashkent conservatoire

[336] Jakhongir, interview with author, 2016 (my translation)
[337] Ibid.
[338] Ibid.

where he studied composition with Mirsadik Tadjiev[339] and later with Dmitri Yanov-Yanovsky[340] (1996-2001).

During his student life Artyom actively participated in various cultural projects as a conductor, composer, and event organizer. He was involved in the organization of the Ilkhom-XX, an annual festival of music and theatre in Tashkent (1997-2006), which was put on by the Ilkhom theatre[341] founded by Mark Weil.[342] Soon after he started his involvement with the festival, Artyom started to work at the Ilkhom theatre as music director (1999), where he conducted theatre musicians to accompany plays. Artyom was invited to Amsterdam where he worked together with the Atlas Ensemble[343] and the Nieuw Ensemble,[344] with whom he established a long-time collaboration. In 2004 together with his conservatoire friends he established the Omnibus Ensemble with the idea of performing contemporary music, which the Ensemble does to this day. As a musical director, Artyom actively works with theatres: he has staged performances in Moscow and Bishkek with

---

[339] Mirsadik Tadjiev – an Ubek composer (1944 -1996), who included maqom to his works with the aim "to build a bridge between symphony and maqom in order to expand the tradition of monody in new conditions." (Yanov-Yanovskaya, 1979)

[340] Dmitri Yanov-Yanovsky – "He has produced a distinguished and culturally unique body of work characterised by a merging of musical influences from his native Central Asia with postmodernist compositional styles of Russia and Eastern Europe." (https://www.akdn.org/akmp/artists/dmitri-yanov-yanovsky)
Qyrk qyz – "86 minutes, live music performance, accompanied by film
Directed by Saodat Ismailova, Music by Dmitri Yanov Yanovsky."
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y5c0GogSGqo&ab_channel=AgaKhanMusicProgramme)

[341] The Ilkhom theatre – a non-state professional theatre based in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, which was founded in 1976 by its director Mark Weil; it was the first independent theatre in the Soviet Union. (http://ilkhom.com/en/teatr/o-teatre/)

[342] Mark Weil – an iconic figure in the Central Asian theatre world, a founder and art director of the Ilkhom theatre, which featured original productions in Russian of plays on various social topics that the Uzbek government did not like. Mark Weil was killed in 2007, an action which critics thought was politically motivated.
(https://www.bbc.com/russian/international/2010/02/100217_mark_weil_killers)

[343] "The Atlas Ensemble is a unique chamber orchestra uniting brilliant musicians from China, Central Asia, the Near East and Europe. The ensemble presents an unheard sound world of instruments from different cultures. The repertoire consists entirely of specially commissioned works." (https://www.atlasensemble.nl/ensemble.html)

[344] Nieuw Ensemble – a contemporary music ensemble which was based in Amsterdam and founded by Joël Bons. (https://www.nieuw-ensemble.nl/home.html)

Russian director Vladimir Pankov. Artyom also started a new project "Theatre and Music" in collaboration with the Ilkhom theatre (2016), working with actors and musicians on "plasticity, rhythm, and improvisation."[345] He has composed vocal and chamber music that has been performed by the Omnibus Ensemble, as well as by other musicians in Europe and Asia.

Besides his two conservatoire teachers, M. Tadjiev and D. Yanov-Yanovsky, who helped him to find his profession, Artyom mentioned the influence of Brian Ferneyhough, the English composer whom he met during his art residency in Royaumont Abbey in France.[346] Brian Ferneyhough is known for his complexity in music.[347] Complexity is what distinguishes Artyom's style both in composing his own music and in collective compositions with musicians in various projects. I think his collaboration with the Atlas Ensemble and Joël Bons, who also studied with Brian Ferneyhough, influenced his understanding of how to synthesize traditional instruments with Western instruments to find new sounds.

Omnibus Ensemble. The Omnibus Ensemble, a contemporary music ensemble, was created in 2004 by a group of young musicians with the idea of playing contemporary music which had never been performed in Central Asia before. Conservatoire friends Artyom Kim, Sukhrob Nazimov, and Jakhongir Shukurov decided to form the ensemble with others. During their student years all three were involved in the organization of Ilkhom-XX (2001-2004), which had a huge impact on many people in Uzbekistan, especially the youth. Sukhrob mentioned that "The Ilkhom-XX had influenced us deeply, it was then a breath of

[345] http://ilkhom.com
[346] Artyom Kim, http://www.omnibus-ensemble.asia/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=87:artyomkim&catid=39&Itemid=289
[347] Brian Ferneyhough, https://www.theguardian.com/music/tomserviceblog/2012/sep/10/contemporary-music-guide-brian-ferneyhough

fresh air, it is then we decided to create our own ensemble and play contemporary music."[348] The ensemble performed a varied contemporary music repertoire, which included giving first performances in Central Asia of Les Noces by Stravinsky, Kammerkonzert by Berg, Kammerkonzert by Ligeti, Requiem by Schnittke, and many others.[349]

Together with renowned Uzbek musicologist Otanazar Matyakubov, Artyom founded the *Maqomat* centre to study Uzbek traditional music in 2008 with the aim to "preserve and develop scientific knowledge about the Uzbek traditional music through optimized translations of Central Asian musical treatises of the tenth to the nineteenth centuries. . ."[350] They also wanted "to explore ways to bring the microtonal pitch system and affective language of *maqom*, [. . .] into relationship with contemporary music."[351] For their work on the Maqomat project the Ensemble received an Aga Khan Music Award in 2019.[352]

III.4 The method of collective composing

In the fourth and fifth laboratories, which I studied in detail, the musicians followed the collective composition methodology, which had been developed by the Omnibus Ensemble over the last several years. The main idea of this method is to compose music together by sharing ideas, testing them in the group, intensively listening to the others and contributing to a unique, common sound. The collective composition method also may include other arts—dance, drama, cinematography and other art forms—where all the performers also become creators of the piece. As Artyom Kim describes it,[353] the four stages of this process include: (1) "engagement in practical techniques, which teach *the performers* to generate, feel, and

[348] Sukhrob, interview with author, 2016 (my translation)
[349] Omnibus Ensemble (https://icm2018.wordpress.com/omnibus-ensemble/)
[350] Omnibus – http://ilkhom.com/en/omnibus-3/
[351] Omnibus Ensemble – https://www.akdn.org/akma/project/omnibus-ensemble
[352] Aga Khan Music Award – in the category of Education https://www.akdn.org/press-release/aga-khan-music-award-laureates-receive-us-500000-prize
[353] Omnibus Ensemble – https://icm2018.wordpress.com/omnibus-ensemble/

control fine creative energies not only as individuals, but more importantly as a collective," (2) generation of the "collective information field" to get "connected to it and use it as a source of creative ideas," (3) the "selection and fixating (with the use of different ways of notation) the creative ideas," (4) the performance of the piece "to widen the 'collective informational field' and to involve the audience into this, thus, making the process of sharing fine creative energies more intense with a bigger number of people."[354]

Artyom said that they had discovered an approach that helped them to fuse everything: styles, genres, and forms. He continued by saying that in this context the individual composer is not relevant anymore; the collective composition, based on shared ideas, traditions and forms, is the heart of the musical language.[355]

Artyom was definitely at the centre of the fourth and fifth laboratories. He led the process, facilitated discussions, chose ideas and organized the structure of the composition. Although he followed his method of collective composition, he was the key person who made the final decisions and put everything together. However, even though Artyom directed the process with a clear concept in his mind, the authorship of the unique composition belonged to all laboratory participants. By mixing genres, styles, traditions, instruments, they managed to create a unique and complex musical language, which I describe in Chapters IV and V.

Although the Omnibus Ensemble is well known in the region, since it regularly performs in different halls, officially this ensemble does not have the status of a state ensemble or a non-governmental organization. It does not exist as a musical group according to the list of the Ministry of Culture in Uzbekistan. Therefore, musicians work on a voluntary basis and do not receive a salary. Moreover, they do not officially have a rehearsal room, although unofficially they have a room in the Tashkent conservatoire. This is because some

[354] Ibid.
[355] Artyom, interview with author, 2016

members of this ensemble work at the conservatoire, and they managed to agree with the administration and some teachers to have this room.

Not having an official status as a State musical ensemble, however, may be an advantage. The musicians are not obligated to play a certain repertoire as other State orchestras are. The ensemble chooses its repertoire together. Although they play contemporary music by various composers, they mainly focus on their own creations, sometimes in collaboration with visiting musicians from abroad. Although the musicians do not get paid locally they received honoraria from international donors by participating in various projects. From time to time the group tours other countries with their own compositions and receive international recognition for their work.[356]

Rehearsal room at the Tashkent conservatoire. Although the exterior of the conservatoire building and the marble lobby look beautiful, the room in which the musicians were rehearsing when I visited was in a terrible state: dilapidated walls, cracked paint on the floor, old chairs. The only attractive part of the room was one wall covered by many posters of the Omnibus Ensemble's projects. Even worse than the condition of the room, where for a long time no repairs had been made, there was no heating. When I saw the room it was March, and it was still cool outside. The room was the same temperature as outdoors, and the musicians wore many layers to stay warm. Although the room was quite large, they occupied only one part of it. In the far corner, the room was covered with plastic, so when it became very cold, the musicians turned on a small electric heater that created a microclimate, enabling them to continue rehearsing. All these inventions were necessary because they could not use a powerful heater that would reduce the electricity for the rest of the floor. Frequent breaks were necessary so that musicians could warm themselves with hot coffee and tea in

[356] The Ensemble was awarded by the Aga Khan Music Award in 2019 (https://www.akdn.org/press-release/aga-khan-music-award-laureates-receive-us-500000-prize)

order to warm their fingers and enable them to continue their rehearsal. But the conditions in the rehearsal room did not seem to prevent the musicians from going there, despite the fact that the only pay they received was during projects funded by international donors, and they were busy with their other work. As Artyom noted: "Random people do not come to us, but those who find something of their own here are drawn in and stay here for a long time."[357]

Figure III.5: Uzbek National Conservatoire, Tashkent, 2017. Photo by author.

This next section's overview of the five laboratories with its assessment of their success and musical collegiality, and the background of traditional and non-traditional Central Asian musicians, provides the background for the following chapter. It will show how musicians from within and outside the region overcame their differences and built a dialogue.

[357] Artyom, interview with author, 2016 (my translation)

III.5 Overview of the laboratories (2014-2017)

Ethnojazz in Central Asia has become a strong musical form of expression for Central Asian musicians, encouraged by the pilot project, Ethnojazz Development in Central Asia. Against a backdrop of continuing ethnic tensions and mistrust, the Public Fund Central Asia Arts Management next organized the Central Asia Ethnojazz Laboratory project, a series of five laboratories in four years, which I describe below.

III.5.1

LAB 1: Manas

Date/Place: April 2014, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Participant countries: Kyrgyzstan (4), Uzbekistan (3), Tajikistan (3), US (1)
Number of participants: 11
Duration: 3 days
Instruments and genres: Kyrgyzstan: *komuz, kyl-kyak, chopo-choor*, and *manaschi*;
Tajikistan: saxophone, bass- guitar, voice; Uzbekistan: piano, saxophone, percussions;
US: drums.
Length of the composition: 27 min.
Producer: Kanykei Mukhtarova
Music coordinator: Vimbayi Kaziboni (US)
Funding organization: The Christensen Fund
Implementation organization: PF CAAM
Performance venue: Bishkek Philharmonic Hall:
Event: the 9th Bishkek International Jazz Festival

The first laboratory, "*Manas,*" with eleven musicians from three Central Asian countries, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and the US, focused on the Kyrgyz musical heritage.

Musicians and instruments. The *manaschi,* as the reciter of the *Manas* epic is called, was chosen as the main figure and all other participants had to reflect on his lead. The representatives of the other three countries led the band playing the usual jazz instruments, such as drums, guitar, keyboard, saxophone, percussion, with voice added by a singer from Tajikistan, who sang acapella in *falak* style.

Laboratory development. Vimbayi Kaziboni, the musical coordinator of this laboratory, suggested the following instruments for the project: 2 wind instruments, vibraphone, *chang* (or an instrument similar to it), piano, bass, and drums. When I asked if we could perhaps add more musicians to represent all three Central Asian countries, he said that it might create a "huge cacophony musically" and so just seven musicians would be enough. Since most of the instruments were typical for jazz bands, I found it difficult deciding whom to choose from each Central Asian group that was participating in the Bishkek jazz festival.

Following negotiation with Mr. Kaziboni, we increased the number of instruments to eleven from the proposed seven. Saidmurat Muratov, an Uzbek saxophonist, had not been chosen, but he wanted to participate and collaborate with the *manaschi*, so he was added to the project. I suggested that we include Kyrgyz traditional musicians to support the *manaschi*, since the *Manas* epic is a Kyrgyz heritage, so Ruslan Jumabaev, a *komuz* player, Jusup Aisaev, a *kyl-kayak* player, and Azamat Otunchiev, a *chopo-choor* player also joined the group. These three musicians played at the beginning and at the end to reinforce the Kyrgyz heritage.

Takhmina Ramazanova, a female singer from a Tajik group, was not originally chosen for the project. When she heard which episode the *manaschi* was going to recite she expressed her eagerness to participate and represent the character of Kanykei,[358] a daughter of Khivin Khan and the wife of Kyrgyz Khan. As the lab group had already formed, I talked to the musicians and included her in the project. On this occasion the *manaschi*, Samat Köchörbaev, chose an episode that takes place in Bukhara (a city formerly in Tajik territory, which now belongs to Uzbekistan). Takhmina vocalized to the accompaniment of the

[358] This episode reflects the historical connections of Central Asian nations because Kanykei grew up in Tajik territory and moved to Kyrgyz territory when she married Manas. (I was named Kanykei after the heroine of the Manas epic.)

narration being chanted, and her voice added a strong sound effect that recreated Kanykei's character. I analyze this particular episode in Chapter V, as support for my hypothesis.

Assessment of success. This first laboratory project was approved by the Christensen Fund in March of 2014 giving me a very short time to organize it before the April jazz festival. I started intensive communication with Central Asian jazz musicians and searched for a musical coordinator. Based on the feedback from the Uzbek musicians I had invited Vimbayi Kaziboni, an American conductor, jazz musician and a Fulbright scholar, who was doing research in Tashkent, to lead the first laboratory. Unfortunately, I had not realized that Mr. Kaziboni was not familiar with the Central Asian heritage. As musical coordinator, the American musician couldn't organize the process in three days, but with the support of the Uzbek musicians he was able to implement his role formally.

Besides not having a suitable coordinator, the given time was too short for musicians to reflect on the epic reciter, whom they heard for the first time. The Kyrgyz traditional instruments, which were only used at the beginning and at the end of composition played a decorative role, framing the composition; they had not been directly involved in the composition process, as is explained below. The integration between traditional and jazz musicians and the epic reciter, which had been the main idea of the laboratory, didn't happen. In the coda, when all the musicians were playing together, the *manaschi's* voice was barely audible and after a short continuation, he stopped singing. For the Kyrgyz audience, it is important to hear the words of the *manaschi* and be able to follow the story.

The project, however, was positively received by the audience and the media. The Jazz.ru online magazine wrote: "The culmination of the *Jazz Bishkek Spring 2014* festival was the final set—the presentation of the project *Central Asian Ethno-jazz Laboratory."*[359]

[359] Karim Maxsutov, 2014 (my translation)

The Christensen Fund that sponsored the project was pleased with the result of the laboratory and wrote on their website:

> The incredible improvisational skills of Kyrgyz Manaschi were on full display at the 9th annual Bishkek Jazz Festival held in the capital city of Kyrgyzstan from April 17 to 19, 2014. The festival showcased an exciting segment of the robust global jazz scene and highlighted the cross-cultural influences driving this musical art form into the new century.[360]

Despite all the above-mentioned drawbacks, there were two sections of the performance which I found successful: the way in which the pianist complemented the *manaschi* and the collaboration of the *manaschi* with a Tajik singer, both of which I describe in Chapter V.

Assessment of musical collegiality. During the discussion before the project started there was a disagreement in the musical approach to the project between Uzbek and Tajik musicians. The former favoured the spontaneous creation of a composition while the latter thought that any idea needed to be thoroughly developed and perhaps precomposed. It could be perceived as a dispute between different musicians during the artistic discussion, however the two national groups held two different positions. For me it seemed to be a national dislike, but it also reflected a difference in their training and experience. The Uzbek musicians had been working with Mr. Kaziboni in Tashkent during his research residency and would have heard and played with other European and American musicians who had visited Tashkent in recent years. For Tajik musicians the situation would have been quite different; as a result of a civil war in Tajikistan, the cultural life in the country was not as rich as in Tashkent. As the Tajik musicians mentioned, the opportunity to visit the Bishkek jazz festival opened up a "gate" for a new network and experience after long isolation, which was true for other Central Asian musicians as well.

[360] The Christensen Fund, 2014

The Kyrgyz traditional musicians did not participate in the collaboration, so they did not even join in all three days of rehearsal, as because of their mastery of musical improvisation and confidence they could play anything, perhaps by just identifying the measure and the key, so they did not need to take part in intensive rehearsals. This is something they had become used to doing, when combining their main job—work at the conservatoire or folk ensembles—and any occasional projects which gave extra earnings.

The Kyrgyz musicians could have been involved if they had been given a specific task to do. However the involvement of the three Kyrgyz musicians in addition to the *manaschi* was something beyond a manageable task, taking into account the short time available and the coordinator's unfamiliarity with the regional traditions.

In addition to differences in the musical experiences of the musicians, there was no common language. Russian was mainly used but the Uzbek musicians had to translate for Mr. Kaziboni and I helped by translating for some of the Kyrgyz musicians, including the *manaschi*. The *manaschi* was also a communication challenge for the musicians as he usually puts himself in a trance and cannot fully collaborate with the others. Despite all the difficulties, as I mentioned above, the manner in which both the pianist and the singer echoed what the *manaschi* was saying were examples of true collaboration between musicians of different ethnicities and cultures, which I present in my analysis of these episodes in Chapter V.

III.5.2 LAB 2: "Central Asian Musical Heritage"

Date/Place: April 2015, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Participant countries: Kyrgyzstan (4), Uzbekistan (4), Tajikistan (4), Kazakhstan (2), Russia (1)
Number of participants: 15
Duration: 2 days
Instruments and genres: Kazakhstan: *kobyz, choor*; Kyrgyzstan: *komuz, kyl-kyak, manaschi* (*Manas* epic reciter), actor (literature reciter); Tajikistan: saxophone, bass-guitar, voice, percussion; Uzbekistan: piano, saxophone, drums, voice (*maqom*);

Russia: saxophone, literature reciter.
Length of the composition: 23
Producer: Kanykei Mukhtarova
Music coordinator: Alexey Kruglov (Russia)
Funding organization: The Christensen Fund
Implementation organization: PF CAAM
Performance venue: Kyrgyz Opera and Ballet Theatre
Event: the 10th Bishkek International Jazz Festival

Musicians and instruments. The second laboratory, "Central Asian Musical Heritage," gathered fifteen musicians from four Central Asian countries and Russia. The new composition they created for the laboratory was structured in a suite form consisting of four parts; each part presented a particular country: Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan, where representatives of these countries led the composition with their traditional instruments and tunes while the rest of the ensemble supported them. Moreover, excerpts from Chinghiz Aitmatov (1928-2008), a Kyrgyz author and Alykul Osmonov (1915-1950), a famous Kyrgyz poet, which were recited in Russian and Kyrgyz, were added to the composition, expanding the fusion of music with literature. An interesting episode happened with the Kyrgyz actor, whom we found to read the poetry of Alykul Osmonov. The actor has a distinct resemblance to the poet, so he offered not just to read the poems but perform them on behalf of the poet by dressing like him. When he appeared on the stage, he was immediately recognized and warmly received by the audience.

Laboratory development. Alexey Kruglov, a successful Russian jazz musician, had experience bringing different musical projects to fruition. We started a discussion about the project months before it took place. He had a vision of the project—to present various musical traditions in combination with literature; the whole composition should carry a philosophical concept of universal truth. Alexey sent me a musical plan which he also shared with the musicians. He became familiar with the musicians prior to the laboratory by listening to their recordings on YouTube. He chose a rhythmical episode played by the Uzbek group on a YouTube video and used it as a refrain in the composition. Alexey offered to add

a literary text to the composition and, when we couldn't find an actor to read the selected excerpts from Chinghiz Aitmatov in Russian between the musical parts of the suite, he read them himself. Despite the good pre-planning, due to Alexey's overloaded schedule, this lab was rehearsed in an even shorter period than the first lab, in two days, or to be precise in 6-8 hours.

Assessment of success. Even though the actual rehearsal time was too short, the lab was well organized. Nevertheless, it showed how important preparatory work is in the realization of such complex projects. There had been a lot of interest in the performance as we could determine by the full house (around a thousand seats at the philharmonic hall) and the performance was well received by the nature of the long ovation that the audience gave the lab performers. These results meant that the donors, who were among the audience, were also well satisfied, as shown by the letter of congratulations they sent after the concert. Alexey, who was required to submit a report as a musical coordinator, wrote:

> Undoubtedly, such unique projects as the one that we managed to implement are worthy of further continuation and recording for the release of a CD, since they represent the idea of goodness, peace, a friendship between peoples, appeal to the most important issues of life and human existence and have important artistic and aesthetic value.[361]

It was evident that Alexey had succeeded with his vision. As I wrote in my report: "The laboratory contributed to the idea of friendship, respect, kindness, and peace; this was achieved by the efforts of fifteen musicians, who brought all composition to the culmination at the end by the means of the celebration of unity and diversity."[362]

Although the laboratory was well implemented, the integration of traditional Central Asian music and jazz didn't happen. I appreciated all the work done and was impressed with

[361] Alexey Kruglov, project report, May 2015
[362] K. Mukhtarova, Final narrative report (PF CAAM, CF, Jan. 2016)

how such a complex work with fifteen musicians, different instruments and various genres was realized in such a short time. I also agreed that PF CAAM had met its objectives which were stated on the project proposal as being to "support an experimental program on cultural diversity in Central Asia, including modern ethnojazz expressions."[363] However, I asked myself why in the first two laboratories the musicians could not easily integrate into the music of another culture and preferred to stay in their own "comfort zone". What I wanted to investigate further was what factors enabled the type of integration seen when musicians get so close to other cultures that they meet together at some points and continue as a whole.

Assessment of musical collegiality. This laboratory was similar to a good orchestra with an experienced conductor when musicians follow the directions and contribute to the overall success of the performance. Since Alexey started his discussion with the group leaders by email, he had built a relationship with them before the project began. As the musicians had received a musical plan of the project, they could possibly have prepared their part of the composition in advance. However, cooperation between the rest of the musicians could hardly have happened due to the limited time together; it was too short for creative work, and there was no time for discussions either. Alexey was at the centre and communicated with everyone.

Again, the communication language was Russian, which was the common language for the majority of participants, but some Kyrgyz participants, for instance the *manaschi,* the actor and some of the musicians, probably had difficulties understanding Alexey, as their main everyday language was Kyrgyz.[364]

[363] PF CAAM, CF Final narrative report, Jan. 31, 2016

[364] Even though Russian is the official language in Kyrgyzstan so people hear this language everyday. The younger generations, especially those from rural areas may not speak Russian fluently but they would probably understand it. Therefore translating between these two languages is not a common practice.

Following this laboratory, I realized that the short time period had been a serious limitation and that extended periods are important for fruitful laboratory work and possibly for a successful musical result. I applied to the Christensen Fund for a supplementary project to hold the next ethnojazz laboratory in the summer of the same year, in a different Central Asian country. This is how the third laboratory was initiated and implemented in Tashkent with an extended timeframe and better results, which I discuss next.

III.5.3 LAB 3: "Ordo"

Date/Place: June 2015, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
Participant countries: Kyrgyzstan (1), Uzbekistan (6)
Number of musicians: 7
Duration: 5 days
Instruments and genres: Kyrgyzstan: *komuz, kyl-kyak, jygach ooz komuz, chopo-choor, jetigen;* Uzbekistan: piano, saxophone, drums, bass guitar, percussion, *nai*, *bulaman*, voice (*maqom*).
Length of the five compositions: 35 min.
Producer: Kanykei Mukhtarova
Music coordinators: Alibek Gabdurakhmanov and Sanjar Nafikov with the support of Artyom Kim
Funding organization: The Christensen Fund (supplementary project)
Implementation organization: PF CAAM
Performance venue: The Ilkhom Theatre, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Musicians and instruments. The third laboratory, which took place in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, was a collaboration of a Kyrgyz traditional musician with Uzbek jazz and traditional musicians. Jusup Aisaev, the Kyrgyz traditional musician who plays almost all Kyrgyz musical instruments, such as *komuz, chopo-choor, temir ooz komuz, jygach ooz komuz, kyl-kyak and jetigen,* collaborated with four Uzbek jazz musicians playing drums, percussion, piano, and saxophone and an Uzbek traditional musician, Shavkat Matiyakubov, who plays different Uzbek traditional wind instruments such as *surnai,*[365] *balaban,*[366] and

[365] *surnai* - a double-reed wooden shawm.
[366] *balaban* - a double-reed instrument with nine holes.

koshnai,[367] and sings *maqom*. During five full days of rehearsals, four new compositions were created. The result of the laboratory was presented at a concert in the Ilkhom Theatre, Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Laboratory development. As already noted, this supplementary project funded by the Christensen Fund, was an addition to the main project. After the positive feedback from the second jazz laboratory, Central Asian musicians were interested in carrying out the project in their own countries. I asked Sanjar Nafikov, a young Uzbek pianist, who regularly participated in the Bishkek jazz festival, to organize this third laboratory in Tashkent in the summer of 2015. He wanted to do it together with Alibek Gabdurakhmanov, an Uzbek percussionist, who had also participated in the previous ethnojazz contests and two laboratories in Bishkek. The two of them found a rehearsal venue—the famous Ilkhom Theatre—and agreed with the management of the theatre to hold a concert.

I was planning to invite Alexey Kruglov, who led the second lab, but after discussing it with the musicians, we decided to realize this lab without an official coordinator, and to leave it to the group. Alibek informally led the lab, since he works as a conductor and was used to leading musicians. However, as I had half-expected, it was sometimes difficult for the musicians to negotiate, as they were all young and charismatic and would have liked to lead the workflow. The atmosphere changed when Artyom Kim came for the first time, as I describe below.

Rehearsals took place in the main hall of the theatre. Since Jusup uses various traditional instruments, the musicians decided to focus on one instrument in each composition. Alibek took the leadership role, managing the rehearsal time and process, and usually being the first to say something. However, I noticed that Sanjar's rare comments and

[367] *koshnai* - a wind instrument, consisting of two connected reed pipes with single reeds and seven holes found in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

suggestions were more valuable in terms of musical contribution. Alibek would immediately take over comments by Sanjar and continue as if they were his ideas. The other musicians would mostly stay neutral by contributing to their part of improvisation without offering something new to the overall structure of the compositions. So the two leaders were initially Sanjar and Alibek, but their leadership would change once Artyom appeared.

The musicians needed to fill the time for the evening concerts so they had to play for at least 50 minutes. Therefore, five Kyrgyz instruments were chosen as the leading instruments for five compositions: *Jetigen, komuz, kyl-kyak, jygach ooz komuz,* and *chopo-choor,* together with Uzbek instruments *nai* and *bulaman*, and *maqom* singing, which also played a leading role in some of the compositions.[368] The Kyrgyz *jetigen* was a newly renovated ancient instrument that Jusup had brought with him.[369] On the first day of the rehearsal, the Uzbek musicians approached Jusup when he pulled out his *jetigen* from its case and studied it with great interest, since it was an instrument that they had never seen or heard. The *jetigen* was the first instrument with which the musicians began to work when creating the first composition.

On the third day, the experienced musician, composer and conductor of the "Omnibus Ensemble," Artyom Kim came to listen to the musicians' rehearsal, probably invited by Alibek and Sanjar. After the musicians had played him their draft composition, which they had been preparing for the last two days, they quietly and curiously waited to hear his feedback. I immediately noticed that the musicians greatly appreciated Artyom's suggestions and that they highly respected him; they were clearly relieved to be led by their talented colleague.

---

[368] 3rd Lab: Youtube

[369] *Jetigen* – a Kyrgyz and Kazakh zither. In another project I initiated and realized on behalf of PF CAAM with the support of the Christensen Fund, we had sent Jusup to Khakassia, a Russian republic, located in the south of Eastern Siberia, to learn how to play the *chatkan,* the Khakas zither, which is known as the *jetigen* in Kyrgyz and Kazakh cultures, but had been lost from their traditions.

Artyom became engaged with the working process and stayed for a couple of hours. He returned the next day and continued working with the musicians and gave directions for all five compositions. This is how I met Artyom for the first time. I liked the way he led the musicians and we discussed with him possibilities for future projects.

Assessment of success. This third laboratory, when young Uzbek jazz musicians concentrated on Kyrgyz and Uzbek traditional music, was a turning point. As I expected, the project's extended time brought positive results; five full days of rehearsals enabled the musicians to get to know each other and created an artistic atmosphere for creativity. The professional advice of Artyom Kim was a valuable contribution to the success. The concert received a lot of positive feedback from the public and scholars. The renowned ethnomusicologist Theodore Levin described the project in these words:

> Video recordings of the Ethnojazz Laboratory project in Tashkent that I viewed showed evidence of a highly talented group of musicians who achieved exactly the goals one would have hoped for during the short laboratory period: exploring the potential for integrating different musical instruments and idioms to forge hybrid musical languages that underscore the protean nature of both jazz and 'traditional music.' In doing so, the project framed so-called 'traditional' instruments, like the Kyrgyz komuz, as radically contemporary. The Ethnojazz Laboratory went well beyond the tired clichés of 'fusion music' to sketch an entirely new musical terrain that is fresh, exciting, and rich with creative possibilities.[370]

I was satisfied with the results, as for the first time since the start of the project I heard how jazz and traditional musicians integrated each other's material. The result of the third laboratory inspired me to apply for the continuation of the project for the next two years.

Assessment of musical collegiality. Jusup, who was the only guest musician among local Uzbek musicians, was treated with great respect. Musicians communicated in Russian even though two traditional musicians, Jusup and Shavkat don't speak Russian fluently. However, the other musicians were patient when either of them needed to explain anything

[370] Theodore Levin, interview with author, 2015

verbally. I witnessed an episode when both Jusup and Shavkat went to another part of the hall to rehearse their duet part. They returned, discussing something and laughing merrily.

Musicians were happy with the results of the laboratory. Sanjar pointed out: "This time we have a very interesting impulse that occurred thanks to Jusup. In all groups, sooner or later a certain creative crisis brews when ideas are exhausted, so it is very important to find these new sounds, new ideas."[371]

Jusup noted: "I was playing and giving signs to the musicians where they could pick up and develop further the melodies I had started and they reacted very sensitively to my signs and played sensually, something I was immensely happy about; despite their youth, they are highly skilled and talented musicians."[372]

III.5.4 LAB 4

Date/Place: March 2016, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
Participant countries: Belarus (1),Kyrgyzstan (1), Tajikistan (1), Uzbekistan (10)
Number of musicians:13
Duration: 10 days
Instruments: Belarus – drums; Kyrgyzstan – *komuz, temir komuz, chopo-choor, chogoino-choor*; Tajikistan – *Afghan rubab*; *tabla*; Uzbekistan – piano, oboe, bass, cello, violin (3), *uud*, percussion.
Length of the composition: 50 min.
Producer: Kanykei Mukhtarova
Music coordinator: Artyom Kim
Funding organization: The Christensen Fund
Implementation organization: PF CAAM
Performance venue: Bishkek Philharmonic Hall
Event: the 11th Bishkek International Jazz Festival

Musicians and instruments. In March of 2016, twelve musicians from three Central Asian countries, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, and a musician from Belarus gathered in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, for the fourth ethnojazz laboratory. Over ten days, they

[371] Sanjar, interview with author, 2015 (my translation)
[372] Jusup, interview with author, 2015 (my translation)

created a 50-minute composition, a joint collaborative work synthesizing the traditional music of Central Asia, jazz and, for the first time, contemporary music. This time they played a blend of European instruments (oboe, bass, violin, cello, piano) with traditional instruments *(komuz, chogoino-choor, temir-komuz, afghan rubab, tabla, uud)*. Artyom Kim, the director of the Omnibus Ensemble, a contemporary music ensemble from Tashkent, who had assisted at the third laboratory, brought in musicians from his ensemble. Belarusian musician Ignat Matukhov, an experienced drummer, joined the laboratory, expanding the regional representation of the participants. Together with Alibek, an ethnic Kazakh, who played on percussion, they formed the lab's percussion group.

Laboratory development. In 2015, I had to apply for a new Christensen Fund grant to continue the Central Asia Ethnojazz Laboratory project for a two-year period: 2016-2017. By that time I had chosen my thesis topic as Central Asian ethnojazz and decided to combine my research with my role as a coordinator of the Central Asia Ethnojazz Laboratory project.

Before I could apply for the Christensen Fund, I had to elaborate on the project. First, I talked to Artyom Kim, whom I hoped would direct the project. During two months of intensive communication with Artyom we discussed the project's outline, including concepts, structure, instruments, and musicians. Choosing the musicians for the project this time was different; it was not an open call like we had at the beginning of the previous projects. Artyom was adamant we should invite musicians who had experience playing in such projects, including the Omnibus Ensemble, ten musicians who play classical instruments: violin, cello, bass, oboe, piano, in addition to traditional instruments and percussion. This addition was somewhat contrary to my original idea of bringing together musicians of different nationalities (and potentially different ethnicities) as a way to break down barriers and overcome tension, as the Ensemble musicians were already connected and knew each other well. However, it still contributed to my concept of a multicultural dialogue.

It is true that Artyom and I had different approaches to the project. I had proposed involving musicians from various Central Asian countries, to represent the region and fulfill the objective of the project to build multicultural dialogue. Instead, the Omnibus Ensemble became a basis for the project with the addition of traditional musicians from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and a drummer from Belarus, who were all selected and invited at Artyom's request. Thus, it still remained a multicultural project, but since it now involved musicians with European musical training I changed the name from "Central Asia Ethnojazz Laboratory" to "New Music from Central Asia."

Assessment of success. The new approach in blending European and traditional instruments which started in Lab 3 continued in Lab 4 and brought even better results in fusing traditional Central Asian musical material with jazz and contemporary music. One of the reasons was that the majority of the musicians were from the Omnibus Ensemble including its leader Artyom Kim. They used their methodology of collective composition, which they had created and tested in other projects and introduced it to new musicians in this lab. They were already used to working in collaboration with the other musicians in different genres but this was their first experience working with ethnojazz. The other reason for this laboratory's success was that it extended for ten days, which was even longer than the third Lab. The fifty-minute composition was first presented in Tashkent at an informal concert to which the musicians' friends and colleagues were invited. Then, in April, the musicians played their composition at the 11 th Bishkek International Jazz Festival, where it was well received by the audience.

Assessment of musical collegiality. During this laboratory, musicians worked collaboratively through discussion and musical improvisation to develop their initial ideas for creating a composition which would reflect the cultural heritages represented by the group. The musicians worked intensively together, rehearsing for approximately six hours a day. In

addition, they had to work individually to develop their ideas based on their own musical experience and the instruments they play. The musicians then brought their ideas back to the group, where they could obtain feedback and test their ideas together. In this way, each musician functioned as both performer and composer while co-creating the new composition.

Since the musicians had more time, they could get to know each other better during informal time as well. There were two informal gatherings in the middle and at the end of our time in Tashkent. Uzbek participants organized a dinner in a musician's house and cooked a pilaf, which is traditional Uzbek food. At the second gathering, we all went to a restaurant. The day before the musicians' departure for the Bishkek festival, we went to a famous Tashkent *bazaar* accompanied by two Uzbek musicians, who guided us through the market and helped us to negotiate with local farmers. These informal meetings were very important for bringing people closer and building relationships. There was a kind of cyclical communication built on the adaptation of people to each other as they responded to feedback, which is the basis for a conversation, as well as for musical collaboration. This early stage of engagement with each other would help in the next laboratory, when these musicians would meet again and begin to work without "warming up," and their energy enveloped the new participants in the laboratory.

III.5.5 LAB 5

Date/Place: March 2017, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
Participant countries: Kyrgyzstan (1), Uzbekistan (7), Tajikistan (1), Belarus (1), Azerbaijan (1);
Number of musicians: 11
Duration: 6 days
Instruments and genres: Azerbaijan – tar and *mugham*, vocal and instrumental; Belarus – drums; Kyrgyzstan – *aqyn* improvisator, Tajikistan – *Afghan rubab, tabla*; Uzbekistan – piano, oboe, violin (1), *uud*, percussion.
Length of the composition:32 min.
Producer: Kanykei Mukhtarova
Music coordinator: Artyom Kim
Funding organization: The Christensen Fund
Implementation organization: PF CAAM
Performance venue: Bishkek Philharmonic Hall

Event: the 12th Bishkek International Jazz Festival

Musicians and instruments. The fifth laboratory met again in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, in March 2017, only moving to Bishkek in time to perform at the 12 th Bishkek jazz festival. This time the project involved eleven musicians from Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Belarus, and Azerbaijan. Ten musicians were from the fourth laboratory; the majority were from the Omnibus Ensemble, with three guest musicians from Tajikistan, Belarus and Azerbaijan, the musician from Azerbaijan being a *mugham* player who joined the laboratory for the first time. Kyrgyz musician, Askhat Jetigen, who replaced another Kyrgyz musician, this time joined the lab in Bishkek for the last day of the rehearsal and the soundcheck. Led by Artyom Kim, the fifth laboratory continued the work of synthesizing traditional, contemporary, and jazz music. Over a six-day period the musicians had created a fifty-minute composition for their performance in Bishkek.

Laboratory development. I was hoping to have the same number of musicians and the same length of project as previously; however, the director of PF CAAM said that our organization had overused the fund last year so we had to reduce our budget for this year's project. This is why I discussed with Artyom how we could change the number of musicians and he reduced the number of string group musicians keeping only one violin out of three and not involving the bass player this time. However, as indicated above, we were able to include a new musician from Azerbaijan and to expand traditional music genres with his *mugham.*

The musicians began preparing for the project two months before the start of the laboratory. Through online communication, musicians discussed different musical issues and assigned responsibilities. For example, a musician from Tajikistan needed to find a record of *falak*,[373] a traditional Tajik style of singing, to send out to all participants for familiarization.

[373] *Falak* – The Tajik musical-poetic tradition, *falak* refers to "vault of the sky", "destiny", and "designates a number of musical forms whose lyrics (popular quatrains) and musical features are traditional expressive of sorrow, separation and despair." (Spinetti, 2005, 205)

The drummer from Belarus, a member of the previous laboratory, transferred the rhythmic features of the traditional vocal melodies to the musical staff.

Artyom introduced the musicians to the morphology of the folktale as expounded by Vladimir Propp, and explained that Propp's concept was based on his premise that the folktales of different peoples are similar.[374] He proposed to work with this concept in their composition process. Following Artyom's suggestion, the musicians began to freely develop the direction of their composition, keeping in mind the structural elements in Propp's fairy tales. In this fifth laboratory, vocal elements were also added and were performed by all participants. For example, all participants learned and performed a piece in *falak*, as well as vocalizing in different styles. This lab helped me to form my hypothesis, which I further discuss in Chapter IV, showing how musicians can stimulate their creativity by collaborating and referring to traditional literary culture.

Assessment of success. Artyom continued to implement his collective composition methodology in this lab. Although the time spent for this lab was shorter than for the fourth lab, the fact that the musicians started their preparatory work two months in advance made a significant contribution to the success of the project. The music was well received by the Bishkek audience and its great success at the festival was really pleasing, as it was also the successful completion of the entire project.

Assessment of musical collegiality. I had seen that the musicians worked more productively in this lab time and were able to create a very complex composition in a relatively short time. The musicians knew each other from the previous laboratory, and the work seemed like a continuation of their earlier work with a deeper approach. They were all

[374] "[Propp] believes that in order to establish what constitutes a genre, one has to demonstrate that there is a constant repetition of functions in a large body of tales. The purpose of his *Morphology of the Folktale* was to establish the thirty-one functions of the wonder tale and then later in *The Historical Root of the Wonder Tale* to trace the origins of the functions and the genre to rituals and customs of primitive people." (Propp 2012, xi)

well prepared as a result of the earlier online discussion and were ready to immediately take on any new task without the need for a long "warm up." From my perspective, it looked like a gathering of old friends, passionate and creative, even though they were from five nations.

III.6 In summary

Over the course of five laboratories,[375] musicians increasingly synthesized indigenious and European instruments and worked with the oral traditions and rhythm of the region, thus fusing traditional music with jazz and contemporary music. In the first project, "Manas," jazz musicians cautiously approached the *manaschi,* but although Kyrgyz traditional musicians framed the beginning and the end of the piece, their work was not integrated into the composition as a whole. The second laboratory, "Central Asian Musical Heritage," demonstrated a synthesis of different genres, including ideas taken from literature; however, the integration between jazz and traditional music was still missing. The third laboratory, when all jazz musicians were concentrated on Kyrgyz and Uzbek music, was a turning point. The last two laboratories attained a high musical standard, where musicians integrated each other's material in their synthesis of various Central Asian musical traditions with jazz and contemporary music.

The last three laboratories not only met the conditions set out in the three hypotheses in Chapter I, there were additional factors that contributed to their success and the successful conclusion to the project. The conditions for the first two laboratories, which required the creation of a work in just three days and then its performance on the big stage at the festival, caused a certain tension and negatively affected the creative process. In the following three laboratories, we were fortunate to be able to attain sufficient funding to extend the duration of

[375] Table 2 below represents five Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratories including participant countries, list of instruments used, number of participants, date and place.

the project to 5-10 days which gave time for musicians from different communities to build a musical conversation. Such an approach could free the musicians from the tension of working with tight timelines and help them to enjoy the process of music-making. As Ignat noted: "We had a good project, we spent the whole day together without running away to work or to other rehearsals, knowing that this is our main occupation for these two weeks."[376] Conducting a laboratory in a different city from the festival also helped create an artistic atmosphere and liberate the musicians. These additional factors—adequate time and a location away from distractions—helped the creativity to flow. Moreover, the bond between Omnibus Ensemble musicians in the last two laboratories captivated and inspired other musicians from outside of their circle. It was evident that an additional factor—pre-existing relationships—also contributed to a cooperative working environment, which in turn helped new musicians quickly grasp the essence of the project.

Another critical condition for a successful laboratory is to have a true leader. This person must be an accomplished, intelligent musician who has earned respect in the region, especially outside his own country, a person who can lead a group of musicians of different nationalities, origins, ages, and gender. Almost all the musicians in the labs wanted to be led by a coordinator, so that they could just focus on their part. Ignat continued, "I am not a supporter of democracy [in such projects]. I am a supporter of the fact that we all agree that someone has the last yes or no; we all trust this person, who will look at our idea from the outside and can accept it or reject it."[377] Therefore having a strong leader was yet another important factor in the success of the project.

In the labs four and five Artyom was following his collective composing method which I described above, however, just like Alexey in lab two, Artyom was the one who

[376] Ignat, interview with author, 2017 (my translation)
[377] Ignat, interview with author, 2017 (my translation)

decided the whole construction of the composition and had the structure in his mind, giving a task to each musician to elaborate their part, then putting it all together. The role of the lab musicians might appear similar to that in a jazz band, where they could freely improvise in their solos, but there were some new elements not seen in jazz: adapting the sound of European instruments to traditional instruments, keeping in mind a complex structure and rhythm, both jazz and Central Asian, and reflecting literary images.

Artyom's approach, therefore, combined different roles: he was the architect of the whole process being a composer, accepting or refusing ideas, leading the rehearsal process, and conducting the ensemble. He was a conductor of a new type, with knowledge of the European musical system, the Central Asian musical systems, such as *maqomat*, as well as the skill to combine all available resources to create a unique sound.

All the above-mentioned factors contributed to answering my second research question: How do Central Asian musicians of different nationalities overcome ethnic, national, cultural and professional differences and build a dialogue while expressing their identities during collective music-making? My hypothesis stated that: Active participation in a creative process which involves attentive listening and adapting one's own cultural heritage and musical background to the common sound of the collective composition leads to constructive dialogue which overcomes differences. It is clear that constructive dialogue is greatly facilitated if a majority of the musicians already know each other and have a musically accomplished leader to guide the composition process. Even then, the creative process takes time, so a laboratory needs to be long enough to enable the musicians to fully engage in the back-and-forth involved in a constructive dialogue. I will continue reviewing my second hypothesis in the next chapter to track the unique sound that the musicians developed as a result of their collective music-making, and will also examine my first and third hypotheses in Chapters IV and V, respectively.

Labs	Place	Year	Countries	Instruments/other genres	#of part
Lab 1	Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan	2014, April	Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, US	piano, saxophone (2), bass guitar, drums, percussions, voice, Kyrgyz traditional instruments: *komuz, kyl-kyak, chopo-choor*; Manas epic reciter-*manaschi*	11
Lab 2	Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan	2015, April	Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Russia	piano, saxophone (3), bass guitar, drums, percussions, voice, *komuz, kyl-kyak, kobyz, choor;* Manas epic reciter-*manaschi;* Kyrgyz literature reciters	15
Lab 3	Tashkent, Uzbekistan	2015, June	Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan	piano, saxophone, bass guitar, drums, percussions, *komuz, kyl-kyak, jetigen, jygach ooz komuz, chopo-choor; nai* Other genres: *maqom*	7
Lab 4	Tashkent, Uzbekistan	2016, March	Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Belarus	piano, oboe, bass, violin (3), cello, drums, percussions, *komuz, temir-komuz, Afghan rubab,* Uzbek *uud*	13
Lab 5	Tashkent, Uzbekistan	2017, March	Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Belarus, Azerbaijan	Instruments: piano, oboe, violin, cello, drums, percussions, *komuz, Arubab,* Uzbek *uud,* Azerbaijani *mugham, tar*	11

Table III.1: The five Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratories (2014-2017).

Chapter IV: Central Asian Laboratory: Overcoming Differences and Creating a Multicultural Dialogue

In this chapter, I discuss various factors that helped musicians to overcome differences and create a musical dialogue. Working with my data, I show how the laboratory project helped musicians express their multiple identities and satisfy their creative aspirations, thus contributing to the multicultural musical dialogue, as well as mutual understanding between different nationalities. In each theme I describe various episodes from rehearsals to support my arguments.

IV.1 Theme I: Bringing together musicians with both shared and diverse backgrounds

The musicians did not come together by chance. There was a project and there was a fund that helped them come together, but this was only the external aspect. It seems to me that each of these musicians had an inner need to realize their potential through such a project. To understand Central Asian ethnojazz and how the musicians came to a single spirit that united them all I here trace the educational and cultural setting in which their music developed.

IV.1.1 Crisis in creative expression and lack of creative opportunities

In addition to education and shared musical traditions, which I mentioned in Chapter III, the musicians shared a need for creative expression, which is why they were interested in joining the laboratory project. This was highlighted by the fact that some of the musicians had previously experienced a crisis of creativity: the crisis when music no longer brings joy and the profession becomes no more than a way to earn a living. How many years of tremendous effort have been spent in the hope of achieving musical perfection, when suddenly disappointment comes in the profession? Was music the cause of such

disappointment? It appears not. In fact, the causes were varied and complex, as the musicians' stories reveal.

A Belarusian drummer, Ignat, after having a successful career in Moscow suddenly realized that this was not what he wanted, and his disillusionment led him to decide to leave Moscow and return to Minsk, where he was born.

> After a year spent in Amsterdam, I returned to Moscow and realized that what I had learned for fifteen years I had learned to do well and I knew how to do it well. I could make money with it and live my life like that. But I did not want to, because I realized that I did not enjoy it. I need a lot of conditions to be met: I need good musicians, I need to ensure that a performance is not second-rate, and also that I can get paid for it.[378]

It was not surprising to find out that freelance musicians, especially in big cities, often have to work multiple jobs to make a living. When they are students musicians seek to learn the depths of music and are completely devoted to their studies. The big contrast comes after graduation, when musicians find themselves in another world, where there is no time left for creativity and the profession turns into a trade.

> There was endless hack-work when, for instance, you only have two rehearsals before a concert. It is an illusion of creativity, and it is clear why all this is being done, it is a facade, a window dressing. But I did not want to be part of it. I am glad that I understood that at the age of twenty-five, while many people live in this situation their whole lives.[379]

For a similar reason, another musician gave up his profession for a while. Sukhrob recalled that one day, during his work at an opera performance at the Uzbek Opera and Ballet Theatre, he caught himself sitting on a chair lounging at ease, holding an oboe on his stomach. "At that moment I realized something was wrong. I think most of the people in the orchestra were unhappy with their job, they just performed this function because they

[378] Ignat, interview with author, 2016 (my translation)
[379] Ibid.

couldn't do anything else. I did not want to accept this situation and decided to quit the profession."[380]

Sukhrob's hiatus from music lasted for about three years, during which time he did various things; like many people at the time, he went into sales. He told me that "Being in the structure of commerce, I also realized that this was not my structure at all, not the one in which I would like to live. It was very difficult; it was a constant emotional stress that did not have any release."[381] After trying to find himself in a completely different field, Sukhrob returned to music with a different approach. "My attitude to music has changed, I started to relate differently to the instrument and started to learn other wind instruments, and it was then that my experiments in music began."[382]

In addition to disillusionment with the music scene, the reason for the crisis in creativity is that in the 1990s, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, musicians, like many other people, could hardly survive economically, and experienced tremendous changes. They had to earn a living as best they could but the circumstances allowed them no time for true musical creativity. Sukhrob's story reminded me of my own experience.

In 1994, when my son was just three months old, I had to return to the Kyrgyz National Opera and Ballet Theatre where, working part-time as an accompanist, I made only ten dollars a month. In 1997, when my daughter was seven months old, I started to teach piano at the newly opened American University in Kyrgyzstan (later, American University in Central Asia). There for the first time I was introduced to computers and started taking English lessons organized for the teachers. I had hoped that I would be able to continue working at the National Opera and Ballet Theatre, where my parents were famous opera singers, but realized in the 1990s that I could not realistically earn a living there as a pianist.

---

[380] Sukhrob, interview with author, 2016 (my translation)
[381] Ibid.
[382] Ibid.

Work at the American University provided some financial relief, but it meant I could not have a full-time creative life as a pianist. I continued to work at the theatre part-time until 2001, the year my father died. Then, for personal reasons, I left the theatre and started working full time at the University, combining piano teaching with organizing extracurricular events which enabled me to obtain the position of artistic manager.

This was the time when many young people experienced a "stunning shock" and a "break of consciousness"[383] which somehow helped them to find a new way to realize themselves. I had learned to adapt my career path to the political and economic realities of life, as well as personal ones. The younger musicians in the 1990s all had in common that we were "the last Soviet generation,"[384] as Yurchak called us, the people who were born between 1950 and the early 1970s.

Reflecting on the phenomenon of ethnojazz, I tried to connect the relationship between the "break of consciousness" that occurred after the end of the Soviet era and the creative surge of Central Asian musicians, musicians of a new type who received a European musical education and so have a new perspective on their inherited musical heritage. Referencing jazz was not just a coincidence of finding something which allowed them to connect these two traditions and helped them to express their identities, but it also gave them a sense of freedom, perhaps an unfamiliar feeling—or something which was difficult to achieve—for everyone living under the Soviet system. Thus, the dramatic transformations that took place after the collapse of the Soviet Union helped create the necessary environment for the rise of creativity and the birth of a new type of musician.

To conclude theme one, there were many commonalities between laboratory musicians whether they had shared or diverse backgrounds. All of them had serious training

[383] Yurchak, 2006, 2
[384] Ibid, 31

in the Soviet and post-Soviet conservatoires; Central Asian and Azerbaijani musicians shared musical traditions, including oral traditions. The Russian language helped in communication, as all of the musicians spoke fluent or good Russian. During my interviews, I discovered that some of the musicians did not want to put up with dilettantism in music and preferred to live in accord with their professionalism and conscience. These musicians were ripe for establishing new kinds of musical connection with others, and the ethnojazz laboratory provided that opportunity. Of course, the musicians' experience of playing in different experimental projects, which I discussed in Chapter III, also contributed to the success of the overall project, as did the fact that all those taking part in the laboratories were highly professional, talented and thoughtful musicians from diverse backgrounds. Their skills can be seen in the next two themes where I present their experiments with the instruments and genres, in their search for the desired sounds, as part of the process of creating the music.

IV.2 Theme II: Active participation in a creative and collaborative process

Regardless of the success of each individual laboratory, in all five laboratories the musicians were involved in the process of making music and showed a genuine interest. For musicians, both academic and traditional, working on such a project was very different from their usual work in a chamber/symphony orchestra or in folklore ensembles. The main difference was the lack of a written music score, or the opportunity to play a precomposed composition. It is true that the last two laboratories had a score, but the musicians created it during rehearsals. Moreover, it mostly reflected the structure and rhythm of the composition and some notes, rather than being a whole written score. These new conditions required active listening and participation throughout the process; the musicians did not have the opportunity to relax, as they would in a classical orchestra, when they cannot be tense all the time. Another big difference is that musicians got paid fairly well for this experimental work, which allowed them to postpone other part-time jobs and focus on the project. While the

opportunity for artistic creation is the most attractive part of a project, especially for those musicians who seek to express their individuality, the financial side is also very important. It is also important to note that all funds for such special projects come from outside the region, and donor organizations representing the interests of their countries mainly have political or economic interests in supporting various initiatives of the region, including cultural ones, a dimension which I discuss in Chapter VI.

IV.2.1 Active listening

In the first lab, the musicians met the *manaschi* for the first time during a round table. They were impressed by the art of *manaschi* and had to try to decode the rhythm, modes, and intonations of the *manaschi*. In the third lab Uzbek musicians listened to Kyrgyz traditional instruments, including *jetigen*, which they had never heard before. Alibek described the difference: "Unlike the previous two laboratories where we met only at rehearsals and at a concert, in the third laboratory we spent time together after rehearsals as well. We could touch unfamiliar instruments, listen to the sound of those instruments, and have a conversation with Jusup about how they work."[385] Below are descriptions of some video episodes of laboratory rehearsals demonstrating the musicians' active listening and their laboratory work.

Episode one: The third lab — Search for a sound

In one of the compositions, musicians focused on the *jygach ooz komuz,* a wooden jaw harp, played by Jusup. The grand piano's lid had been removed. Sanjar and Alibek were trying to play in unison with the *jygach ooz komuz,* imitating its sound on a prepared piano. Alibek played chords with both hands, Sanjar played with his right hand while pressing the piano

[385] Alibek, interview with author, 2016 (my translation)

strings with his left hand. Meanwhile, Saidmurat was playing on the saxophone, directing his instrument towards the piano deck to get a responding sound from the piano strings. Jusup joined them and played his *jygach ooz komuz* into the piano deck as well, so all musicians were focused and carefully listening to get a satisfactory sound. Later, the other three instrumentalists joined the group with drum, guitar and *balaban*, to carefully accompany the group with background support.

Fig.IV.1: Rehearsal of the third Ethnojazz Laboratory in a hall at the Ilkhom theatre, Tashkent. Jusup Aisaev on *temir ooz komuz,* Saidmurat Muratov on saxophone, Sanjar Nafikov and Alibek Gabdurakhmanov on prepared piano. 2015. Photo by the author.

Episode two: The fourth lab. — Search for a sound

Non-musical instruments. In the fourth laboratory musicians used non-musical instruments to enrich the sound of the composition. They were in constant search and shared their findings and ideas at the rehearsals, where they were immediately tested. One morning, someone brought a doorbell to the rehearsal, found at a Tashkent bazaar, which, when pressed, made a very sharp, loud sound. It was entrusted to Sofia, a violinist with the Omnibus Ensemble, who tied the doorbell to her leg and squeezed her knees to ring the bell while playing on the violin. The sound of the doorbell appeared close to the end of the

composition on certain beats, first rare, and later more often. Another musician in the ensemble, Alibek, brought a piece of cardboard which he used as a percussion instrument, also experimenting with different drum sticks.

A new sound from the *temir ooz komuz*.

With encouragement from the ensemble director Artyom, Askhat, a Kyrgyz musician, playing the traditional *temir ooz komuz,* was able to produce a more rapid-pulse sound which punctuated the music in a manner which enhanced its intensity. As a listener, I felt I was hearing, in addition to the more rapid-fire pulse, a changed timbre. My Kyrgyz self was a bit disoriented because normally this instrument brings a melodic evocation of the natural environment of my homeland (mountains, lakes, and pastures), whereas suddenly I was hearing a sound that was more purely abrupt and percussive. Besides playing traditional instruments, Askhat was given a wood block which he played in the part of the composition where his own instruments were not involved.

Fig.IV.2: Rehearsal of the fourth Ethnojazz Laboratory in a room at the Uzbek National Conservatoire. Artyom Kim (in the centre) and musicians from the fourth lab. 2016. Photo by the author.

Episode three: The fourth lab. — Matching the sound of European and traditional instruments

Musicians in the Omnibus Ensemble who played Western European instruments tuned their instruments differently taking into account the micro chromatic scale of Uzbek music which they had been studying based on ancient music treatises. Moreover, they used playing techniques which differed from those taught in the academic school, which allowed them to create the sound they were searching for. To my ear, the string group as well as the oboe sounded different from Western European instruments and matched well with the traditional instruments.

An oboe sounded like a *shehnai*. Sukhrob, an oboist, told me that he had become acquainted with the modern oboe school, which differs from the academic school in fingering and playing technique; this, together with his invention of a special reed and his own playing technique, helped him find a sound similar to traditional Uzbek music. Sukhrob explained:

> I searched for a sound similar to our music; I started using a reed that I sharpened on purpose to change the timbre of the instrument. With the help of a pointed reed, modern fingering and a certain mouth technique that I developed, I was able to create a sound similar to that of the Indian *shehnai,*[386] which is similar to the Uzbek *surnai*, but much softer. [387]

Search for a micro chromatic tone on piano. During seminars at the Ethnojazz Development Project in Bishkek, Sanjar, an Uzbek pianist, had started to share his concerns about the inappropriateness of tempered pitch for Uzbek music. This pitch had been introduced to Central Asian music during the Soviet time.

> With the wrong concept of the nature of traditional oriental music formed over centuries, they [the Soviets] introduced overall musical education close to academic music. Musical instruments have been modernized so that now some of them have lost the ability of microtonal chromaticism and have been tuned according to tempered European pitch.[388]

[386] *shehnai* – a loud oboe.
[387] Sukhrob, interview with author, 2016 (my translation)
[388] Sanjar Nafikov, 2012, 55-59

During our interview Sanjar showed me how he was trying to find a non-existent sound which is something between a major and minor third (or between E and E flat). Since on the piano the sound cannot be changed after playing it, he tried to find the required sound by playing embellishments around those notes. This approach still did not give the sound he wanted on the piano, so together with the piano Sanjar used a synthesizer, which was placed on the top of the piano. He moved the lever with his left hand while playing E flat with his right hand, which gave the slightly transitional sound he was trying to find. The other approach is to retune the piano,[389] which he did for his performances during the ethnojazz contests, part of the Ethnojazz Development Project.

IV.2.2 Creative preparation through discussions

The process of creating music together was facilitated by the fact that all laboratory musicians had an opportunity to have theoretical discussions during seminars, round tables and online communications before the start of the practical part of a laboratory. In the first laboratory musicians were able to discuss the laboratory setting during the round table on the first day of the laboratory. Moreover, they met the *manacshi* and Kyrgyz traditional musicians who came to meet them and introduced them to the *Manas* epic and Kyrgyz musical instruments, such as *komuz* and *kyl kayak*. The meeting and discussion were a good start in advance of the laboratory itself, so the musicians, after familiarizing themselves with the material with which they would be working, could have time to think about it.

In the second laboratory, Alexey sent the musicians the musical plan of a composition so that each group knew what they needed to prepare for their part of the composition, but

[389] This caused me problems with the philharmonic administration. After the show, some of the audience asked me why we hadn't invited a piano tuner, because the instrument was really out of tune.

did not know what to expect from other groups, since the composition was built in the form of a suite, in which groups from each country performed separately with their material. In addition to their parts, there was background support and a coda where all the musicians had to play together. The musicians only found out about that at the first rehearsal. While in the third and fourth labs the discussion took place during the rehearsals, in the fifth laboratory musicians intensively communicated via email two months prior to the start of the project. They shared responsibilities among themselves, which made this preparation even more effective. Musicians who lived in Tashkent met regularly at the rehearsal room for discussions where they could also test their ideas in practice.

I tried to compare this kind of work by the lab musicians with the work in academic symphony or chamber orchestras. In academic orchestras there is also group work, usually defined by the type of instruments and the group they form. However, there is no need for musicians from different groups to meet without a conductor and discuss a piece. In an ethnojazz laboratory, the creative aspect inspired and motivated musicians to work for a longer period of time and triggered their thought processes in advance, not only when the musicians got together to play in a real rehearsal where they could wait for the conductor to lead them. I also noticed that discussions between different musicians continued during breaks or after rehearsals, which, in my opinion, helped to overcome any barriers between different personalities and united them in collaborative work.

IV.3 Theme III: Music and its process: invitation to explore others' cultures and discover commonalities among traditions

The process of co-creating music brings musicians closer together and helps to overcome alienation faster than any other action between strangers. Music benefits everyone and helps to express feelings. However, for professional musicians it is also a language of communication. For versatile musicians like those gathered in these laboratories, who have

experience playing in different genres with musicians from different fields, this language becomes even more complex.

For musicians from outside the region, the laboratory made it possible to get acquainted with a different musical culture, to hear new instruments; for those who came from this region, there was an opportunity to get to know each other's culture better and find differences and similarities. In this section I show how the musicians explored others' cultures and discovered commonalities among their traditions.

IV.3.1 Invitation to explore others' cultures

The funding organizations that supported our project hoped to bring together musicians from Central Asia, but in the course of five laboratories there were five participants from outside the region. The funders expected that the music coordinator would be someone from abroad, but they wanted all the participants to be musicians from the region. Vimbayi Kaziboni and Alexey Kruglov were coordinators of the first and second laboratories, respectively, so their participation did not raise any questions. I was able to justify the participation of Azerbaijani *tar* player Elchin, as Azerbaijan has similar musical traditions to Central Asia. However, it was not easy for me to justify the participation of a Belarusian musician, Ignat Matukhov, to get authority to use money from the project budget for his travel. Nevertheless, I had to do it, since Artyom Kim, the musical coordinator for the last two laboratories, was adamant that he wanted to see certain musicians with whom he had worked previously and who he thought would contribute to the project.

Episode four: A Belarusian participant among Central Asian musicians (fourth and fifth labs).

Ignat, who clearly appreciated the opportunity to experience new cultures, visited Central Asia for the first time during the fourth laboratory and returned for the fifth. As

already mentioned, his participation in the project was initiated by Artyom Kim, who had met Ignat at experimental theatre projects in Moscow. A very versatile musician, Ignat made a huge contribution to the project and valued becoming acquainted with traditional Central Asian music.

> I have never had such close contact with Central Asian music before, with the analysis of modes, structures, etc., in such quantity and with such immersion. I had expected that in such a rich historically cultural space, musical traditions would not be identical. There are parallels, of course, according to the types of instruments, but all these minor differences, for example, in *rubab*, *komuz*, *tar*, are all very interesting to observe.[390]

When he returned to the project in 2017 he continued to develop his interest in Central Asian music: "I was formed in a tempered pitch environment, for me the sound that I hear in this project is still exotic, and this is understandable, since I am not familiar with traditional modes and rhythms and it is impossible to learn it in one or two visits, while other people have spent their whole lives studying it."[391] Even though he felt himself an outsider among Central Asian musicians, he had become familiar with the material through collaboration with the percussion group. He shared his experience of playing together with Khushbakht, who played the *tabla,* an Indian percussion instrument: "If Khushbakht plays on tabla on nineteen, for instance, and I play on four after a while we will meet, as each of us can play his own rhythm but we all can meet on beats."[392]

Episode five: The second lab. — Blending musical and literary genres

Besides the many different Central Asian traditional instruments presented at the laboratories, musicians were introduced to Central Asian oral traditions as well. In the first and second laboratory musicians worked with the *manaschi* and learned about the *Manas* epic; in the third laboratory *maqam* traditions were presented, in the fifth lab, *falak* and

[390] Ignat, interview with author, 2016 (my translation)
[391] Ignat, interview with author, 2017 (my translation)
[392] Ibid.

mugham. Not just listening to, but working with these genres enriched the musicians, brought them closer together and allowed them to better understand each other's cultural heritage.

In the second laboratory in addition to the *Manas* recitation Kyrgyz literature was included, represented by excerpts from two twentieth century writers, Chinghiz Aitmatov and Alykul Osmonov, thus synthesizing music, oral tradition and literature. The composition started with the excerpt from Chingiz Aitmatov's *Plakha*:

> Life, death, love, compassion and inspiration, everything will be said in music, because in it, in music, we were able to achieve the highest freedom, for which we fought throughout history, starting from the first glimpses of consciousness in a person…[393]

This and subsequent literary parts were interspersed with the musical improvisation of different Central Asian groups.

The outline of the 2nd lab's composition was:

- Literary introduction
- Music-Uzbek part of the composition
- Literary part
- Music-Tajik part of the composition
- Transition to Kazakh part of the composition
- Literary part
- Music-Uzbek part of the composition
- Literary part
- Kyrgyz part of the composition
- Literary part
- Uzbek part of the composition
- Literary part
- *Manas*
- Coda

Aitmatov's excerpts were read in Russian, which is still a common language for Central Asian people. Alykul Osmonov's poems were read in Kyrgyz and were understood only by Kyrgyz speakers. *Manas* at the end, in the Kyrgyz language as well, contributed to the composition with the emotional power of the epic recitation. In such a complex performance, anyone can be touched, be it by word or music, and this can find its way to the heart of the listener.

[393] Chinghiz Aitmatov, *Plakha* (my translation)

Despite the fact that it was the shortest laboratory, the musicians still benefited from the project. Alexey summed up the creative atmosphere:

> The team, consisting of sixteen people, was united in terms of interaction and implementation of a common idea and showed an extraordinary artistic, imaginative depth and maximum penetration into the general concept. Of particular importance in the penultimate part of the composition was *Manas* with an appeal to the theme of verity and life, after which the finale was performed by all participants, signifying the unity of the musicians.[394]

Fig.IV.3: Rehearsal of the second Ethnojazz Laboratory in a room at the Kyrgyz Musical College, 2015. Photo by author.

IV.3.2 Discovering commonalities among traditions

The laboratory's rehearsals created a friendly atmosphere in which the musicians felt free and comfortable. There was no sense of competition between them or assessment of each other's level. If a musician did not understand the request of the conductor, the musicians sitting next to him would immediately try to explain or even demonstrate something on their instruments. After the breaks musicians would quickly return to the room and continue communication with each other. On one occasion, Sanjar, who had started to discover

[394] Alexey Kruglov, interview with author, 2015 (my translation)

traditional modes of *maqams* and apply them to the piano, was interested to hear about modes of Azerbaijani *mugham*.

Episode six: The fifth lab.— Elchin's demonstration of *mugham* modes to Sanjar

During a rehearsal break Elchin and Sanjar stayed near the piano, Elchin was holding the *tar* and playing a tune in the *Rast* mode for Sanjar, who was listening attentively. When Elchin stopped he said it was one *shoba.*[395] Sanjar asked him how the *mugham* is structured and how it starts, to which Elchin replied that to warm up they should start from *Deramed.*[396] He started to play *Deramed* then after a while, he started to sing at the moment when the *khanende* is supposed to sing. Elchin explained that it was *Bardasht,* which was then followed by *Maye*, all modes of *mugham.*

Fig.IV.4: Elchin Nagiev (*tar*, Azerbaijan) and Sanjar Nafikov (piano, Uzbekistan) during a break in the fifth Ethnojazz Laboratory in a room at the Uzbek National Conservatoire, 2017. Photo by author.

[395] *Shoba* - section of *Mugham*
[396] *Deramed* - instrumental introduction in *Mugham*

IV.4 In summary

Bringing musicians together allowed them to get to know each other better, to appreciate each other's culture, to discover the differences as well as to find similarities. The willingness to listen gave seeds for their own thoughts and future reflections. During all five laboratories there was not even a minute of boredom. Regardless of other aspects of a successful laboratory, such as a good leader, an extended period of time, and adequate preparatory work, the musicians were fully engaged in the process of making music together.

While Chapter III mostly related to my second research question and hypothesis, the current chapter particularly contributes to the first research question and hypothesis. As I stated in Chapter I, I was eager to find out how Central Asian musicians synthesize their traditional musical forms with jazz and European contemporary music, and how musicians engage in multicultural musical dialogue in their collaborative work.

Fig.IV.5: Second Central Asian Ethnojazz laboratory at the Bishkek Jazz Festival 2015, photo by author

In the next chapter I will test my third research question and hypothesis to show how musicians can stimulate their creativity, not only via musical collaboration, but also via

explicit reference to traditional—and to a degree shared—literary culture. In particular, I will demonstrate how reference to the *Manas* epic (Lab 1), and Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* (Lab 5), transform the musicians' perceptions and their response to the given task.

Chapter V: Musical Analysis of Lab 1 and Lab 5

In this chapter, I present a musical and literary analysis of six episodes from Labs 1 and 5 in greater depth, in order to examine my third hypothesis. In Lab 1, I notate a recitation by a *manaschi* and the vocalization of a Tajik singer to compare the melodic lines and pitches of these two different episodes which were performed together. In addition, I introduce the episode recited by the *manaschi*, transcribe the words and translate from Kyrgyz into English, to introduce the context of the recited episode which helps to understand the involvement of the singer in this episode. To verify my arguments, I use SPAX software, created by a Russian scholar, Alexander Kharuto. To clarify some moments, I also interviewed a *manaschi*. In Lab 5, I discuss the *Morphology of the Folktale* by Vladimir Propp, the concept that musicians worked with throughout the composition, as well as with a Bushmen ritual song. I show how various musical traditions such as *mugham*, *falak* and *maqom* were presented and helped to express the diverse backgrounds of lab participants.

As I stated in the hypothesis in Chapter I, I was eager to find out how traditional literary culture, such as myths, epics and fairy tales, influences musicians' creative thinking and facilitates their involvement in the creative process. I also continue to examine in this chapter how musicians engage in multicultural musical dialogue in their collaborative work, in particular observing how the reference to the *Manas* epic (Lab 1), and Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* (Lab 5), transformed the musicians' perception and their response to the given task.

V.1 Lab I

V.1.1 Four types of *Manas* recitation

Russian musicologist V. Vinogradov, who studied the musical heritage of Central Asia in the first half of the 20th century, identified four types of recitation in the performing

technique of *manaschi*. The first type is characterized by the *manaschi*'s "rapid agitated streams of speech," and was used in dynamic scenes, like battle scenes. Because of high emotional intensity the *manaschi* utters slurred words, his speech sometimes interrupted by shouts. Therefore, in this type of recitation, which has almost disappeared, it is hard to identify musical parameters, such as the mode, intonation or tessitura.[397] The second recitation, which is calmer, is pronounced by syllables in the form of a "tirade;" the musical construction is formed based on the length of these tirades.[398] The interval range is from the second to a perfect fourth or fifth; the intonation is more stable; each musical construction ends with a cadence.[399] The third type usually coincides with the stanzaic articulation of the verse, often in two strofic beit[400] couplets, sometimes in four. The musical structure of this type is shorter; the intonation and rhythm can be identified and could be easily notated; each of the musical constructions ends with a cadence.[401] The fourth recitation type is melodious chanting of a verse using the main leitmotif of *Manas* consisting of seven or eight lines, with four or five lines forming the first part, and always with three lines in the second part, so "the verse acquires a pronounced trochaic structure."[402]

V.1.2 Analysis of the episode chosen by the *manaschi*: The Encounter of Semetey with Sary Taz

The *Manas* epic is a trilogy, which consists of three parts: (1) Manas; (2) Semetey, Manas's son; (3) Seytek, Manas's grandson.[403] For the first laboratory *manaschi* Samat

[397] Vinogradov, 1979, 16 (my translation)
[398] Ibid.
[399] Ibid.
[400] Beit—the minimal stanzaic unit of Turkic and Persian poetry
[401] Vinogradov, 1979, 16 (my translation)
[402] Ibid.
[403] "There are . . . versions in which the cycle comprises further generations. The fullest version, which was recorded from Jüsüp Mamay, continues into the eighth generation with the additional epics *Keninim*, *Seyt*, *Asylbacha and Bekbacha*, *Sombilek*, and *Chigitey*." (Reichl, 2016, 330)

Köchörbaev chose an episode from the second part—Semetey. After the death of *Manas*, his wife Kanykei, took their son, Semetey, to her home in Bukhara, where Temirkhan, her father, adopted Semetey. One day the twelve-year-old Semetey was hunting a pheasant in the forest with his falcon which flew into someone's tent. This is how Semetey encountered Sary Taz, a Kyrgyz coal miner. Semetey followed his falcon and rudely demanded that the stranger return the bird. Sary Taz got angry with Semetey's behaviour and, knowing who he was, told Semetey the story of his life, that he was the son of Manas and his people are Kyrgyz.[404]

A German scholar Karl Reichl noted that formulaic lines in *Manas* are not regular because the metre of Kyrgyz epics and poetry is syllabic.[405] In *Manas* he identifies seven-syllable lines which create "irregular groups by vertical alliteration and by rhyme." In the following example I translate an episode from Samat's recitation, from the Lab.1 videorecording, where these irregular groups are seen:

1	*Berbeisingbi Sary Taz,*	Give it to me [my falcon] Sary Taz
	Sary Taz seni soyomun,	Otherwise I am going to kill you
	Seksen janyng bolso da,	Even though you may have eighty lives
	Jerge tengep koyomun.	I will level you to the ground
5	*Dep oshondo bereging,*	At that moment
	Jölötüp kirdi Semetey,	Said boldly Semetey
	Erbeng erbeng bolgonsup,	Bravely stepped forward
	Emi küchkö tolgonsup,	As if flaunting his strength
	Dep oshondo bereging	At that moment
10	*Sary Taz turup kep aitat*	*Sary Taz* stands up and speaks
	Kep aitkanda dep aitat,	In other words
	Kuday algan jetim kul	God-given orphan slave
	Atangdyn körü dünüyö	Oh, damn this world!
	Tokoyung talaa jer emes	This forest is not a field for you to play
15	*Aa, ushul eldin bereging*	And for this people
	Kök oiguttun alchysy	You are a servant
	Ysmayldyn üyündö	In Ishmael's house
	Kush saluuchu jalchysy	The bird feeder
	Kalaada eldin akchasy	You are a servant of this people
20	*Ysmayldyn üyündö*	In Ishmael's house
	Kush saluuchu bakmasy.	If the bird feeder does not feed

[404] Sary Taz knew the story of Semetey, as he was older and came from the Kyrgyz land
[405] Reichl, 2016, 336

	Shang, atangdyn körü dünüyö.	Oh, damn this world!
	Shamal jokto temingen	There is no other thing than a breeze
	Mendei baikush bar beken?	There is no unfortunate person like myself,
25	*Atangdyn körü dünüyö.*	Oh, damn this world!

The rhymes in these passages are: *soyomun–koyomun* (lines 2 and 4); *tolgonsop–tolgonsop* (lines 7–8); *kep aitat–dep aitat* (lines 10–11); *alchysy–jalchysy* (lines 16, 18); *temingen–bar beken* (lines 23–24). It is typical to use these kinds of rhymes in *Manas* recitation and it can be kept going, depending on the reciter's skill.[406] I notated this episode (Fig. V.1), which shows that in this particular episode Samat mostly sings in one key which I identified as A flat major. Among four recitation types identified by Vinogradov, this episode lies in the second type: sound syllables follow one another evenly; intonations, mode and rhythm are more stable and definite.[407] Since the melodic line is similar, consisting of two measures which are repeated throughout the episode, the eight syllable lines help to identify one part from the other. For instance, measures 1–8; 9–16; and 17–23 consist of eight syllables. Irregular meter is a typical characteristic of Kyrgyz music. In this episode the metre changes from 4/4 to 5/4 in measures 15 and 22–24.

[406] Reichl, 2016, 337
[407] Vinogradov, 1979, 16 (my translation)

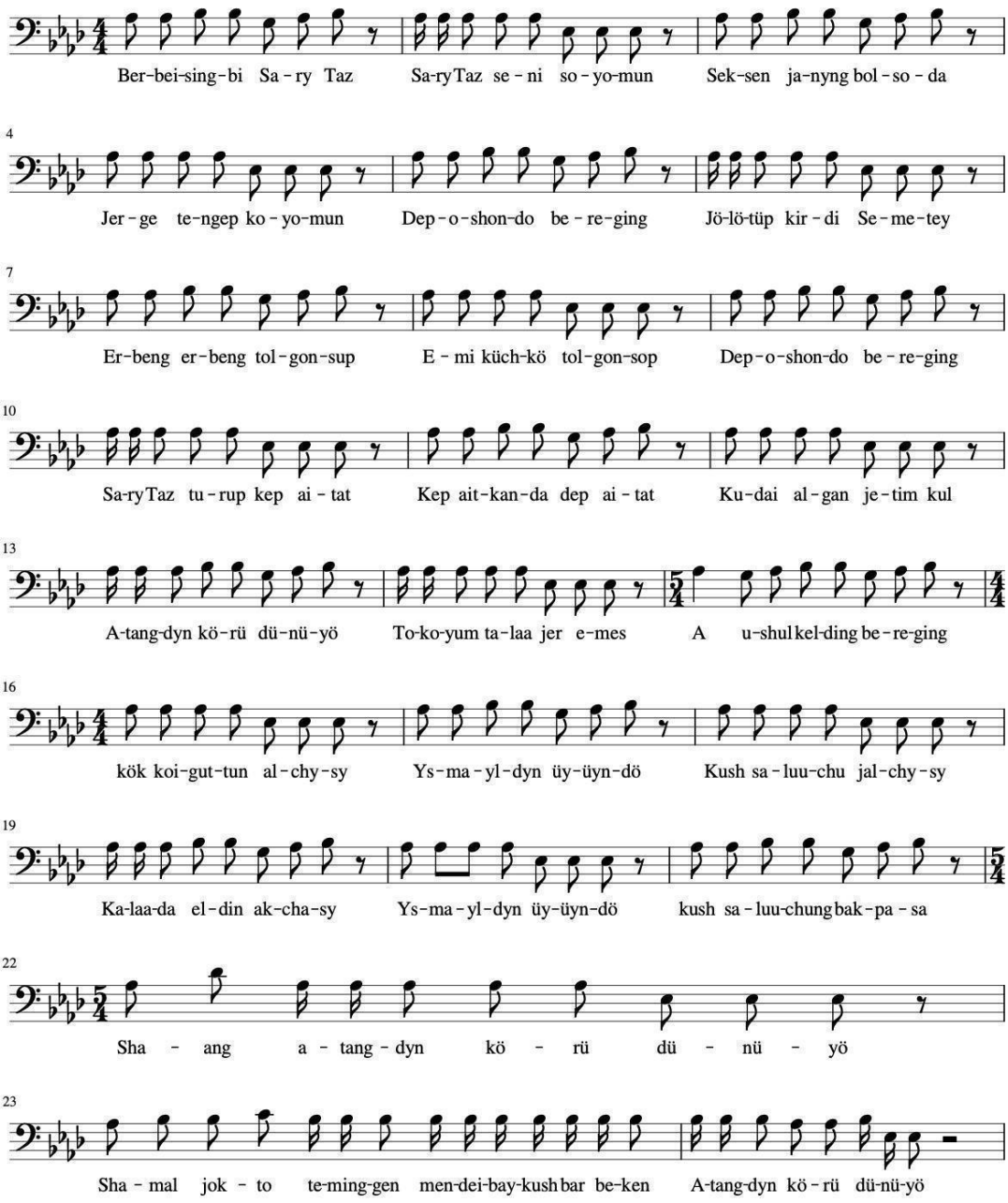

Figure V.1: Notation of an episode of *Manas* recitation by Samat Köchörbaev at the BIJF, 2014.[408] Prepared by the author.

[408] Timing: 0.28 sec. – 1.20 sec.

V.1.4 *Manaschi*

The Manas epic is mostly recited by men, more rarely by women and occasionally even by children. The *manaschi* sings his/her recitation by using certain melodic lines. *Manas* is traditionally recited without accompaniment, unlike other Kyrgyz epics which are sung with the accompaniment of *komuz*.[409] The *manaschi* uses hand gestures, facial expression and, most important, intonation, to illustrate the story. As Vinogradov noted: "The art of the *manaschi* can be likened to the theatrical performance of one actor."[410]

Every *manaschi* before starting to recite the epic said that they had a dream in which they met a personage from the epic (Manas, Kanykei or one of the others) who encouraged them to sing the epic. They refer to their visions to explain "why and how they became manaschys (or *semeteychis*)."[411] Even though people believe in the *manaschi*'s story about how they woke up in the morning and began telling the epic, the German scholar Reichl, who studied the Manas epic, said: "there can be no doubt that Kyrgyz *manaschys* have to go through a process of training before they are able to perform the epic freely."[412] I agree with this statement, but also want to add that potential *manaschi* learn the Manas epic from childhood through the fairy tales they hear from their grandparents and parents. However, most of the Kyrgyz people like the idea of an immediate miracle that the next morning a person who had a dream about Manas immediately starts telling the epic. Samat Köchörbaev noted that: "if any person who had a dream were to start reciting an epic the next morning, then its value would be lost. In the past, all Kyrgyz people knew the main plot of the Manas epic and passed this from generation to generation. The dream for manaschi is a sign that a

[409] Köchümkulova, 2016, 50
[410] Vinogradov, 1979, 16 (my translation)
[411] Reichl, 2016, 334
[412] Ibid.

person has a special ability to tell the Manas epic, in addition to his interest in Manas which he already had and will now develop further."[413]

The main talent a *manaschi* possesses is improvisatory skill. Moreover, as Reichl observed in this citation from Radloff, the collector of Kyrgyz oral poetry in the mid-nineteenth century, besides the improvisation, reciters have "ready-made narrative motifs."[414]

> Every singer with some ability always improvises his songs according to the inspiration of the moment, so that he is incapable of reciting his poem twice in an absolutely identical manner. One should not believe, however, that this improvising means a new process of composition every time. . . . Because of his extensive experience in performing he has, if I may say so, a number of narrative units (*Vortragstheile*) at his disposal, ones that he puts together in a manner appropriate to the course of the narrative.[415]

This fact explains two identical ten syllable lines recited by Samat Köchörbaev in two different periods of time, one in 2011 and the second one during Lab I in 2014:[416]

Tokoyung talaa jer emes,	This forest is not a field for you to play
Atang Manas kok jaldyn	I'm not Kongurbay Kalcha who killed
Opkosun jaryp olturgon,	Your grey-maned father Manas
Kongurbay Kalcha men emes.	By smashing his lung.
Belingdi bekem buup al,	Tie your waist tight [be strong and ready]
Beren bolsong sen jetim,	If you are brave, you, the orphan,
Atangdyn moysop tashtagan	Take the revenge of your father's blood
Kara kytay kan Kongur	From Kongurbay of the Kara Kytay [Chinese]
Oshondon kunung kuup al.	Who killed your father.
O, atangdyn koru dunuyo,	Oh, damn this world!

V.1.5 Vocalisation by a Tajik singer: "*Falak-i Badakhshani*"[417]

A Tajik scholar, Faroghat Azizi, has highlighted two of the best-known styles of

[413] Köchörbaev, interview with author, 2021 (my translation)
[414] Reichl, 2016, 334
[415] Radloff, 1885: xvi. (quoted in Reichl, 2016)
[416] Samat Köchörbaev's recitation of "Semetey's Encounter with Sary Taz" from the epic *Semetey* in the trilogy *Manas*, referenced by E. Köchümkulova in *The Music of Central Asia,* 2016
[417] I chose the name *Falak-i Badakhshani*, after listening to the recordings of a well-known *falak* singer Soheba Davlatshoeva who named her a cappella song, with an unknown author, *Falak-i Badakhshani.* (On Azizi, 2016, 506)

falak: *falak-i kulob* and *falak-i pamiri*, which take their names from the area where they appeared, Kulyob, in the southwest of Tajikistan, and the Pamir Mountains of Badakhshan, in southeastern Tajikistan and northeastern Afghanistan.[418] As she noted:

> Falak means "heaven," "fortune," "fate," or "universe." A musical genre that takes its name from these metaphysically laden words might be expected to express spiritual sentiments or ideas, and this is indeed the case. In music, falak describes sober, lament-like songs that many singers and listeners believe to possess healing qualities, and whose texts typically address philosophical themes. The poems set to music in falak often speak of the vicissitudes of fate and the limitations of human agency. More broadly, the lyrics of a falak can evoke the full range of human emotional and spiritual experience: love, pain, separation, suffering, and hope.[419]

For Laboratory I, Takhmina Ramazanova, a Tajik singer, chose to sing a capella *falak* in the style of the Pamir Mountains of Badakhshan. As the episode chosen by *manaschi* Samat reveals the story of young Semetey who found out about his late father Manas, Takhmina chose to vocalise in a lament style, which could be identified as *falak-i motami* (mourning *falak*),[420] one of the many contexts in which *falak* is sung. She chose a lament which well-expressed the longing of *Kanykei* for her late husband *Manas.*

An unusual rhythm, the irregular groups of lines, as well as the constantly changing metre and tempo of the *Manas* recitation created certain challenges for the laboratory participants. When the musicians simply couldn't figure out where to join in, how to count, or how to identify the mode, they had to rely on their musical sense and their talent. To "interrupt" the *manaschi* wasn't an easy task, since he continuously recites without any breaks. Jafar, a Tajik bass guitar player, who is also Takhmina's husband, started the section by playing background notes in a certain mode to give a sign to Takhmina to start singing. "At the rehearsal we discussed the introduction of Takhmina and identified the mode. After

[418] Azizi, 2016, 504
[419] Ibid.
[420] Ibid, 505

listening to the episode with the *manaschi*, Takhmina decided to sing *Badakhshani falak* as she said it was the closest style to express the emotional state of the episode."[421]

Takhmina's vocalisation illustrates a melody line in chromatic scale, with a vibrato kind of ornamentation (which I marked as a trill) which is typical for *falak* (Fig.V.2). The interval range is a minor third, with the melody going by semitones (d-e flat-e natural). It is in a free rhythm, which is also typical for *falak*.

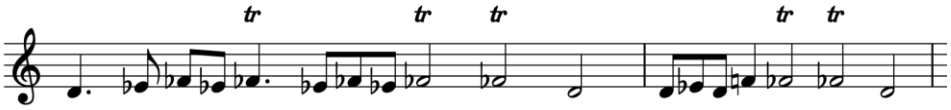

Figure V.2: Vocalisation by Takhmina Ramazanova, Bishkek International Jazz Festival, 2014[422]

V.1.6 Episode one, Lab 1: Collaboration of a *manaschi* and a Tajik singer

For analysis of this episode I used the computer software SPAX created and developed by Alexander Kharuto, head of the Department of Musical Information of the Moscow P.I.Tchaikovsky Conservatoire, between 1993-2005.[423] After reading an article where Yunusova, a Russian scholar, and Kharuto presented this software on examples of traditional Central Asian music, I was curious to try the software for my analysis. As they noted in their article, the SPAX program helps with the "extraction of the melodic line with its associated pitches and intervals."[424] In the beginning I thought that the program would help me to identify both the *manaschi* and the singer so I could visually see the picture of their collaboration. However, the SPAX program can fix only monodic musical samples, as many other computer based programs do. When there are complex samples, as in my case,

[421] Jafar, interview with author, 2018 (my translation)
[422] Timing: 1.20-1.34; prepared by the author.
[423] Yunusova and Kharuto, 2016, 136
[424] Yunusova and Kharuto, 2016, 136

the program catches the loudest voice only, which means the result is not a complete representation of the sound.

The SPAX software I used for analysing *Manas* recitation helped me to understand that various computing programs, developed by various research groups actively researching on music information retrieval and analysis, were found to be of little use while analyzing oral music traditions like *Manas*. I therefore relied predominantly on my aural training and experience to understand and analyze the various musical attributes such as pitch, notes, rhythm, dynamics etc. The *manaschi* combines both music and speech to lay emphasis on the story and music would be subsumed under the syllabic lyrical utterances. For example in the episode with the singer it was difficult for the ear to determine whether the note was either A flat or A or G. I used the SPAX tool to cross verify and the results were as expected. The software classified the musical notes accurately except when the recitation got mixed with speech, when even the software could not identify a note accurately. Although it helped me to validate the accuracy of my ear in notating the musical sections, it also convinced me that the software tools would be of little use while analyzing the *Manas* recitation. I still used the program for my analysis of the episode of the *manachi* and singer because it is possible to identify the pitch and intervals, as well as the melodic line.[425]

There were three main participants, the *manaschi,* singer, and bass guitarist, with the pianist playing just a few notes at the beginning, which is the ending of the previous episode of the *manaschi* and pianist which I will present separately later in this chapter.

Alexander Kharuto provided me with several tables and figures for this episode. In Figure V.3 the red graph at the top is a dynamic profile which shows the melody line. The numbers on the left are decibels where the zero dB is related to the highest sound. The green

[425] "Ethnojazz: Central Asian ethnojazz laboratory - MANAS" 2014, https://youtu.be/ZmaR-IgjQ_Q

vertical lines are the time marks for 0.5 second intervals, with the notes located on the y axis. Figure V.3 captures the *manaschi* at the beginning of the episode where he sings alone (27 sec.). In the beginning it matches with my notation (Fig. V.1): the first four notes in "A flat" and "B flat" in the notation (28.50 – 29.00 sec.) are exactly on the line "gis" (G sharp) and "ais" (A sharp) in the graph. However, "G" in my notation doesn't exactly match with the line on the grid which is between "G" and "G sharp" (29.50 sec.).

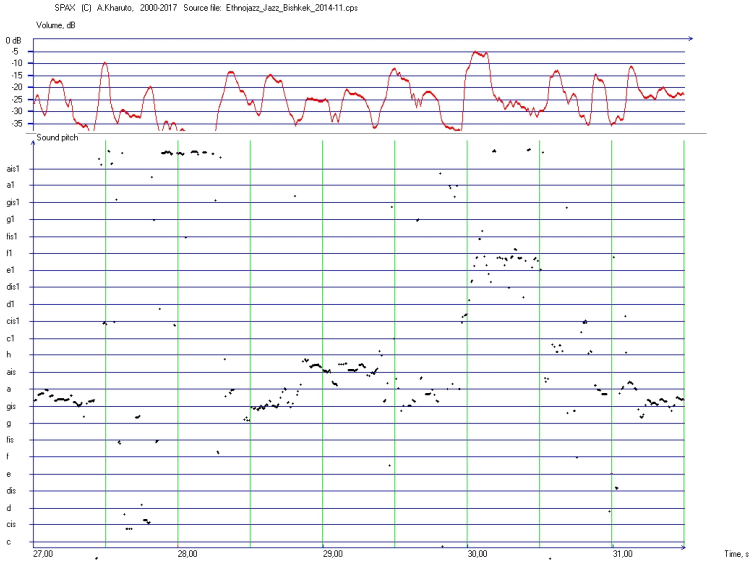

Figure V.3: Pitch decoding from 27 sec. - 31.5 sec., from Episode 1, Lab I[426]

The SPAX program also identifies the intervals; in this episode twenty-two intervals were detected. In Figure V.5, the pillars show the detected interval average is forty cents which is very different from the European interval, where one semitone equals one hundred cents. In Figure V.5 there are many intervals of around 25 cents (#1, #2, #4, #5, #6, #7, #10, #11); 40 cents (#9, #12, #14, #15, #16, #17, #20, #22); 25x2=50 cents (#18); and 25x3=75 cents (#8, #13). There are only three intervals which are close to European intervals, two of them are about 100 cents (#19, #21) and one more than 400 (#3). The intervals are also written in numbers in Table V.2.

[426] Kharuto, SPAX analysis of episode from Ethnojazz Lab 1, 2020

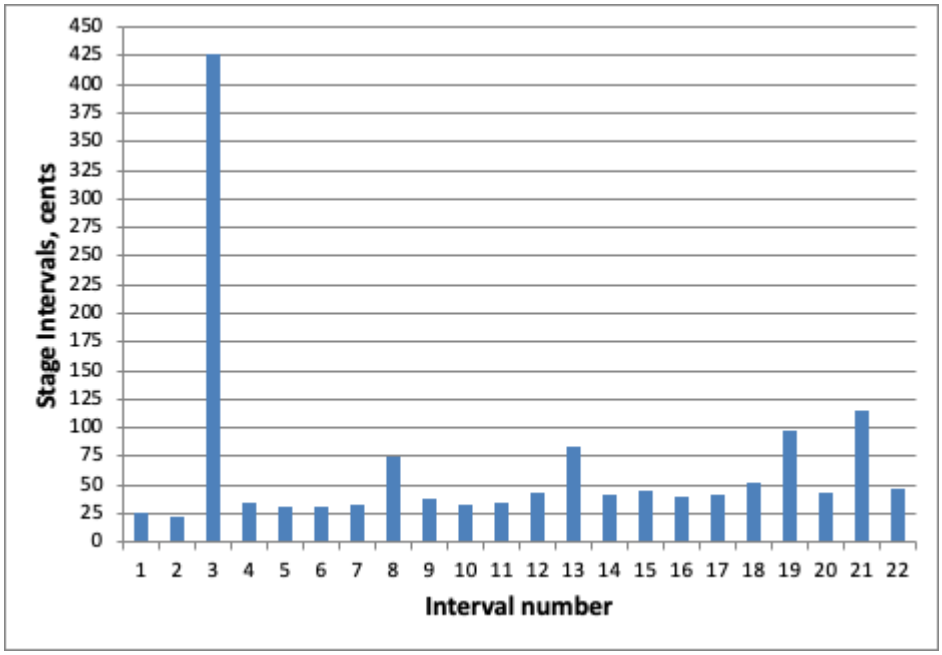

Figure V.4: Intervals in Episode 1, Lab I[427]

This notation (Fig. V.1) clearly shows that the *manaschi* is not singing in tempered pitch. As Yunusova and Kharuto noted: "...we studied changes in the system of modes in musicians' hearing between different generations of performers . . . microtones were more prevalent in the performances of older-generation traditional musicians trained in the oral tradition than in those of musicians trained in conservatoires."[428] Since I was trained at a conservatoire my ear hears differently from what the *manaschi* actually sings, which could be seen with this software. Those three European-like intervals in Figure V.5 I assume were performed by the singer, and even though she sings in a chromatic scale she may stay within the tempered pitch if one does not count the vibrato. Takhmina had training as a pianist at musical college and that may explain her tempered-pitch trained ear.

In Chapter III, I mentioned how Takhmina, who had not been chosen for the project, after hearing which episode the *manaschi* was going to recite in this laboratory, expressed her desire to participate and was added to the project. Her vocalisation in this episode became the

[427] Ibid.
[428] Yunusova and Kharuto 2016, 138

most dramatic part of the whole composition. By using the lamentation type of *falak*, she was able to express the suffering of a wife and a mother, who had to hide the truth from her son Semetey. If the listeners could focus only on the *manaschi's* recitation they would probably think about only two people, Semetey and Sary Taz, and their sudden encounter, conversation and emotions related to that particular episode. However, Takhmina's vocalization expanded and enriched the dramaturgy of the entire episode. Through her singing one can think about *Kanykei*'s lamentation to her lost husband and her overall life circumstances: how after her husband's death she had to flee to Bukhara, her home land with her child *Semetey.* The overlay technique, which is easy to implement in a film, worked well in this musical episode, with a different line to develop a parallel idea.

Takhmina was inspired by the *Manas* epic. She was used to the role of Kanykei, which helped her weave her musical culture in *falak* style into the Kyrgyz epic tradition. Even though she doesn't speak Kyrgyz, the recitation of the *manaschi* helped her to express her emotions at her own pace. She probably could catch up with single words, such as Bukhara, Kanykei, Temir Khan, Semetey, which may have helped her to understand the episode. But it is not necessary to know and understand Kyrgyz to be inspired by the *Manas* epic. As was said with respect to the late renowned *manaschi* Sayakbay Karalaev, "A person who did not know the Kyrgyz language could listen to Sayakbay Karalaev for hours, so expressive and exciting was the manner of his performance."[429]

Manaschi Samat, at the same time, was also inspired by the singer in this episode. My comparison of his two performances of the same episode in 2011 and 2014 shows that his recitation was more agitated and expressive, with more high notes and faster pace during Lab I. As Vinogradov noted about Karalaev: "The audience reacted vividly to the acute situations arising in the tale, creating a special atmosphere full of emotions inspiring the manaschi.

[429] Vinogradov, 1979, 16 (my translation)

Karalaev was keenly aware of such an atmosphere. He was on fire only when the listeners empathized with him, accompanied his performance with spontaneously escaping remarks and exclamations."[430] Such exclamations are typical for Kyrgyz listeners of the *Manas* epic or traditional musicians, especially outdoors on *jailoos.*[431] The presence of Takhmina and other musicians supported *Manaschi* Samat, even though it may seem that during the performance he was immersed in the narrative and did not consciously collaborate with the others on the stage.

Analysis shows that seemingly incompatible things went well. Different modes, rhythm, pitch, and intervals intertwined, harmoniously representing two completely different cultures as it was presented in the episode with the singer and was shown through the notation and use of the SPAX. Rather than being incompatible, *falak* and *Manas* complemented each other and together better revealed the narrative of the epic. Two performers representing two Central Asian traditions perfectly merged together, and thereby represented the historical ties of the two peoples but also projected those historical ties into the present through mutual understanding between musicians of different nationalities.

[430] Ibid.
[431] *Jailoo* (Kyrgyz) – pastureland

Figure V.5: *Manaschi* Samat Köchörbaev and Tajik singer Takhmina Ramazanova; Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory 1, Bishkek, Philharmonic society, 2014. Photo capture from the videorecording by the author.

Figure V.6: After the first Ethnojazz Laboratory with Kyrgyz participants at the Philharmonic Society in Bishkek, April 2014. From the left: Azamat Otunchiev, Ruslan Jumabaev, Kanykei Mukhtarova, Samat Köchörbaev, and Jusup Aisaev. Photo by PF CAAM.

V.1.7 Episode two, Lab 1: Collaboration of a *manaschi* and a pianist

In Episode 2 which actually preceded Episode 1 in the performance,[432] there was a collaboration between just two performers: the *manaschi* and the pianist.[433] In the video below we can see Sanjar Nafikov, a pianist, playing free improvisation and clearly responding to the *manaschi's* recitation. The pianist in his improvisation covered the entire keyboard, highlighting from time to time the lowest and the highest notes. He also skillfully used the pedal, amplifying overtones and giving the episode an orchestral sound. However, it wasn't clear if the *manaschi* was also responding to the pianist, as they are usually in a trance. Even though the *manaschi*, Samat Köchörbaev, mentioned in an interview, below, that the rhythm and music helps him to get to the story faster, he did not mention that he actually feels the presence of the musicians so he can interact with them actively. We don't know if a trance facilitates interaction or inhibits it.

Samat participated in two laboratories (Labs 1 and 2). Before inviting him for the project I was looking for a *manaschi* for the project and asked the musicians if they knew someone. They suggested Samat noting his musicality compared to the others, which seems to be an important skill in a musical project. From an interview with Samat I found that he enjoyed performing with jazz musicians:

> I have performed two or three times with jazz musicians and after the performances the jazz musicians shared with me that for them it is very interesting to perform with a *manaschi* because they do not know what to expect next. At the same time I found that for me it is very interesting to perform with jazz musicians as their rhythm and improvisation helps me to get into the story faster. They create a kind of a dialogue to which I respond.[434]

[432] I was pleased to be able to talk to Samat after analysing the performance using Kharuto's SPAX program.
[433] "Ethnojazz: Central Asian ethnojazz laboratory- MANAS" 2014, https://youtu.be/eHXrtzxhkdo
[434] Samat Köchörbaev, interview with author, 2021 (my translation)

To measure the degree of interaction between pianist and *manaschi*, I drew a graph based on Kharuto's SPAX graphs. Since the program cannot pick up multiple voices, I decided to trust my ear. In Table V.3 I measured the loudest point (0 dB) in both performers and wrote the timing under those points. In the *manaschi's* recitation he took several rests, which I drew as a rest square. What I noticed is that the first two rests (22nd sec. and 33rd sec.) related to taking a breath and are very short, about a half second; the pianist was still playing soft background music. The next two rests in this episode (44th and 56th sec.) are longer—1 and 1.5 sec.—and happened when the pianist suddenly played the lowest note on the forte (40th sec.), and on the 52nd sec. the highest notes. This gave me an idea that the *manaschi* was not only taking a breath on those longer rests, but listening to the pianist. The next rest (68th sec.) is again short, but here pianist and *manaschi* are united in apotheosis and almost breathing together. The graph therefore, shows the independent melodic line in the beginning, a dialogue in the middle, and a duet at the end of this graph.

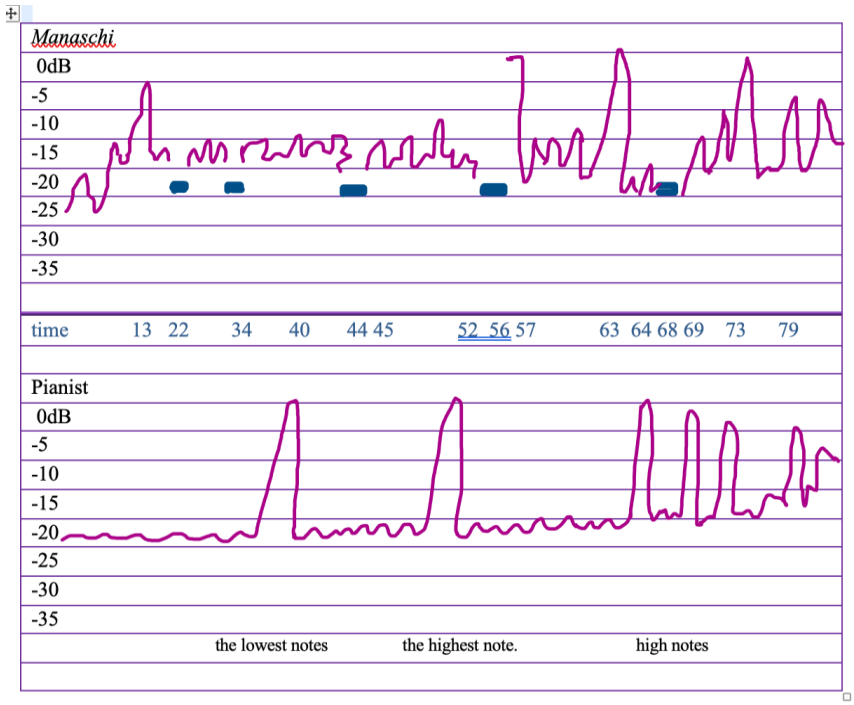

Figure V.7: Interaction of the *manaschi* and pianist, Ethnojazz Lab I, 2014

Besides the high tessitura, the *manaschi* actively used hand gestures, especially after getting into interaction with the pianist (1.01-1.04 sec.). When I compared this excerpt with the same episode of Samat's recitation in 2011, which I mentioned above (V.1.6), I can see that in the second performance after the pianist suddenly played the low notes in forte, the *manaschi* became more emotional using more gestures; it seems that the pianist provided the cue that pushed the *manaschi* to more action. To support my hypothesis that both *manaschi* and pianist are collaborating inspired by each other's performance I asked the *manaschi* to comment on this episode:

> In the episode with the pianist, perhaps, even if not directly, one can observe that I instinctively react to the pianist. I went up several times to the upper register and then paused while the pianist played in the upper register immediately after, so one can clearly observe the dialogue between the two performers.[435]

This interview with the *manaschi* shed some light on understanding what a *manaschi* feels when performing with others. Since in Kyrgyz culture the Manas recitation does not require other participants or musical accompaniment, the response of the *manaschi* about his feelings in this episode is an important discovery and provides valuable insight for future scholars about the interaction of a *manaschi* with the outside world

V.2 Lab 5

V.2.1 Propp's morphology of the folk tale

On the first day of the fifth laboratory, Artyom Kim introduced the musicians to the concept of the morphology of the folktale propounded by Vladimir Propp and proposed working with this concept in the composition process. He explained to the musicians that according to this morphology, many fairy tales traditional to different peoples are identical or

[435] Samat, interview with author, 2021 (my translation)

similar. The musicians listened with great interest and started to discuss between themselves, recalling some of the fairy tales they knew. Later, in the interviews, I found that the musicians were impressed with this morphology and liked applying the concept to the composition.

In his influential work *Morphology of the Folktale*, Vladimir Propp (1895-1970), a Russian/Soviet scholar and folklorist, identified thirty-one "functions" within which actions in all the hundred Russian folktales he analyzed were developed. He pointed out that: "the study of the folktale should rely not on the study of characters as such but on the study of their actions, or functions, because these functions are stable elements of the folktale and because identical functions can be assigned to different characters."[436] He also said that these "functions" may be applicable to many other folktales in other nations.[437]

As he noted:

> It is remarkable not only that folktales are so widespread but also that the tales of the world's people are interconnected. The folktale symbolizes the unity of peoples, who understand one another in their tales. Folktales pass widely from one people to another, disregarding linguistic or territorial or state boundaries. It is as though the nations conspire and work together to create and develop their poetic wealth.[438]

As a matter of interest, I tried to apply this morphology to Kyrgyz fairy tales and was impressed that many fairy tales have similar plots, situations and characters. Indeed, I found that many of Propp's "functions" apply to Kyrgyz fairy tales.

During the discussion with musicians Artyom used some of the functions to build the dramaturgy of the composition. He suggested naming the composition "Wayfarer" as the tale was about a lonely person who went on a long journey, facing and overcoming various difficulties on his way. The musicians precisely followed this concept and connected certain

[436] Propp, V. ÎA., Sibelan E. S Forrester, and Jack Zipes, 2012, 80
[437] Propp, V. ÎA., 1928, 74
[438] Propp, V. ÎA., Sibelan E. S Forrester, and Jack Zipes, 2012, 3

parts of the composition with various actions. Table V.3 shows which of Propp's thirty-one functions were used in the composition.

Title of the Composition in Lab 5 With reference to Propp	**Definition of functions by Propp**[439]	**Thirty-one functions by Propp**
Wayfarer[440]	Absence	I
Interdiction	Interdiction (relate to the hero)	II
Villain	Violation (by villain)	III
Test	First function of the donor	XII
Battle	The hero and villain come into direct combat	XVI
Pursuit	Pursuit	XXI
Wedding	Wedding	XXXI

Table V.1: Parts of the composition of Lab 5, compared to Propp's thirty-one functions

In addition to Propp's functions, the musicians added their own elements such as "the oath" which they all sang at the beginning of the composition in different languages, "the battle cry" which preceded the battle section, and "a reciter," the role given to a Kyrgyz musician, Askhat, who sang a Kyrgyz song and accompanied himself on *komuz* at the beginning of the composition and at the end.

On the first day of the rehearsal the musicians worked on a rhythmic pattern which Artyom introduced; later vocal elements were added, sung by all laboratory participants who improvised in different styles. The second day was devoted to the study of this rhythmic pattern along with a review of the previous day's materials, including an outline of Propp's proto tale, which now was written on the board. During the first two days, the structure of the

[439] Propp, 1928, 35-73

[440] Wayfarer is the title of the composition. Since a person leaves his place and begins his journey it could be attributed to the first function according to Propp – Absence.

composition was shaped and on the following three days, the musicians worked through the whole composition, focusing on the melodic line, adapting to the rhythm, and implementing their own ideas.

V.2.2 Episode three, Lab 5: *Mugham*

Even though the working process of Lab 5 was similar to Lab 4, I observed that the musicians' responses to the requested task were much faster. At first I didn't notice this, but by the end of the first day's rehearsal, when the structure of the composition was roughly drawn and some rhythmical patterns were already defined, it attracted my attention that this time the process got underway quite quickly. I thought that maybe two months' preparation contributed to such a fruitful process. This could be true for some of the musicians, especially for all those from the Omnibus Ensemble who all lived in Tashkent and met regularly, but it did not apply, for example, to Elchin who had joined the project for the first time.

Elchin, an Azerbaijani musician, had not participated in the online discussion, as at that time his candidature had not yet been approved by the grant organization. At the beginning of the first day's rehearsal Elchin was a little behind and needed more time to adapt, as he was new to the project. However, besides being an experienced musician, there was something else that helped him to quickly get involved in the process. He mentioned in an interview: "Yesterday Artyom told us about a fairytale, I was very surprised, how everything is accurately conveyed in fairy tales. After all, there was no internet in the past, but as the fairy tales of different peoples show, everything is the same."[441]

In this lab all musicians besides playing their instruments were invited to vocalize. After one episode, where Sofia, a violinist, vocalized in the style of Balkan people, Elchin joined in singing as well: "Yesterday, at a rehearsal, I suddenly began to sing, although I am

[441] Elchin, interview with author, 2017 (my translation)

not a *khanende*. At that particular moment, I felt that playing the instrument was not enough for me as I wanted to express myself even more and this desire grew into singing, much to my surprise."[442] Elchin's sudden reaction which he described in the interview led me to think more about what he said. He mentioned during our conversation that although he has a good singing voice, he doesn't usually sing and stays within the boundaries of instrumentalist and accompanist to *khanende*. The privilege of singing *mugham* is granted to *khanende* only, a role that requires many years of study and musical talent. Already on the second day, Elchin was fully engaged with the process of composing and freely improvised on *tar* and sang in the style of *mugham.*

V.2.3 Episode four, Lab 5: Bushmen ritual song

To further stir up the musicians' intuitive thinking Artyom introduced a line from a Bushmen ritual song into the composition:

On the day of our death, the wind comes to erase the traces of our feet.

Each musician translated this line into their own language. The line of the poem, which was in Russian, had to be translated into Azerbaijani, Kyrgyz, Tajik, Uzbek, and performed in all these languages, including Russian. Artyom placed different translations into different parts of the composition. This task was unusual for some musicians because they are instrumentalists and did not consider themselves to be singers. Although, perhaps, the musicians had a barrier that needed to be overcome by singing, even if they had never sung in their lives, I did not notice any resistance from them. It seems that their enthusiasm for the work and full commitment naturally removed these barriers. Yet, as I mentioned with respect to Elchin's reaction to singing, the literary element of the composition activated the musician's potential and eased the tension that could arise from an academic background and its rules. Artyom noted:

[442] Ibid.

> We strive for a spontaneous splash of creative ideas, rather than to some structural things, because we already are familiar with these rational technologies and possess this knowledge. But then what? Next comes an appeal to the deep foundations. In this case, we look for appropriate material that will help us to address these foundations; this is how we chose the Bushman ritual chant and Propps' concept. When we search for the materials we have to remember to avoid referring to a specific story or religion, but rather to focus on a prototype, to what preceded it all. At the conceptual level, it all adds up more or less into one story.[443]

Having in mind Propp's concept, the musicians recited a line from the Bushmen song in their own languages and all these components were harmoniously combined, immersing the musicians into another reality. The line from the song of the Bushmen runs through the whole piece, adding its philosophical meaning to the whole composition.

V.2.4 Episode five, Lab 5: *Falak*

In the episode 5, *Falak*, the underlying rhythm was in a very unique 13/16 rhythm cycle. The violin, cello, tar and the guitar repeated the ostinato throughout the section as shown below. At the time stamp 1:30, the bass guitarist tried to harmonize the refrain for a few bars and again started playing the refrain. At 30 second time stamp, the *falak* singer introduces his voice with a free style improvisation of a maqam starting on D flat and accompanied himself on the *tabla* occasionally. Interestingly, he never played the right drum, often referred to as *tabla*, but only played the left drum called the *baayaan*. He explores only the upper tetrachord starting from D flat and only eventually comes to the lower tetrachord to end on A flat.

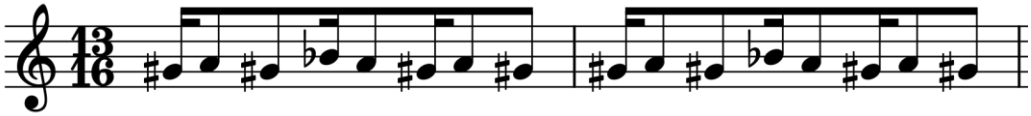

Figure V.8: Lab 5, *Falak*; the rhythm of 13/16, 2017; transcription by author.

[443] Artyom, interview with author, 2017 (my translation)

The ultimate goal of this ethnojazz composition as a whole was to achieve a collective and participatory form of music composition through an intercultural exchange of musicianship. Therefore, this composition not only uses a variety of percussion instruments such as *tabla*, congo, mallets but also offers the flexibility to incorporate percussion instruments from various other cultures.

The context of *falak* in this episode is different from the one in Lab 1, being closer to "*beparvo falak*"—"unconstrained" or "carefree"[444]—performed by a soloist in a free rhythm and in high tessitura. The important part of this type of *falak* is a poetic text that expresses "an emotionally wrought appeal to fate or to the Divine."[445] For example, a line from the Bushmen song which Khushbakht sang in Episode 4 didn't interfere with the structure of *falak* but complemented it.

The rhythm of the overall composition they produced in Lab 5 was complex. Ignat noted, "We can all play in different rhythms, but we all gather in beats. These are like different branches that are connected by the same root."[446] The drums and percussion held the beat of the compositions, all other instruments and singing supported the complex rhythm as well.

As I mentioned in Chapter III, Artyom Kim and the Omnibus Ensemble work with traditional Uzbek music and study music treatises of medieval scholars, such as Al-Farabi (ca. 870–950), Ibn Sina (ca. 970–1037), Jami (1414–1492), who lived in the territory of the current Central Asian region. Working in 11/8 rhythm (Fig. V.9), the musicians in Lab 5 referred to Jami's music treatise.

Artyom explained the use of the numbers in the composition as follows:

[444] Azizi, 2016, 505
[445] Ibid.
[446] Ignat, interview with author, 2017 (my translation)

> The magic of numbers is another hidden code that is not declared, but is always present in this lab. The proportion of numbers is a philosophy close to the Pythagorean tradition of numbers, which is very close to the perception of the world by Arabic-speaking scientists. Since we constantly work on this information [music treatises] we use our practices in this lab with the idea of structuring everything proportionally and harmoniously. [447]

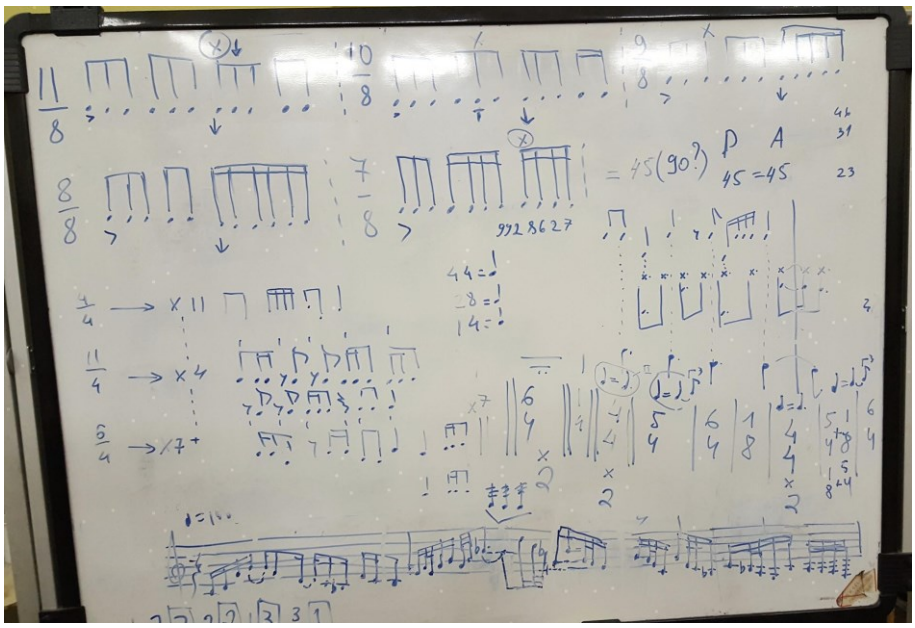

Figure V.9: Original sketch on a board at the fifth Central Asia Ethnojazz Laboratory, 2017. Photo by author.

Fig. V.9 shows the contracting pulsations of the rhythm occurring due to the reduction of one-eighth beat in each subsequent measure: 11/8; 10/8; 9/8; 8/8; 7/8. Altogether, these measures add up to 45 beats without repetition and 90 beats with the repeats. The notation at the bottom of the board is the string section's melodic line whose basic function was to provide a rhythmic accompaniment that complements the percussion section.

[447] Artyom, interview with author, 2017 (my translation)

V.2.5 Episode six, Lab 5: *Falak, Mugham, Mavrigi*[448]

In the battle scene, all three Central Asian musical traditions—*Falak, Mugham*, and *Mavrigi*—were presented, which followed one after another and were accompanied by the dense texture created by the ensemble. At the rehearsal, Khushbacht, a Tajik musician, wrote his translation of the line Artyom had given them on the board. The musicians needed to recite a Tajik version of the translated line in the style of *falak*. They copied the text from the whiteboard into their notebooks and began to study the text in the unfamiliar language. The whole group spent the rest of the rehearsal day practicing *falak*; an improvisation by Kushbacht on an *Afghan rubab* was added to the *falak* part, which was organized in a call and response form. The Tajik version of the poetic line translation sung in *falak* style was energetic and rhythmical so it was assigned to represent the beginning of the battle scene according to Propp's concept. The *falak* part was continued by Elchin's improvisation in *mugham* style and followed by a short appearance of *mavrigi* sung by Sanjar in a high tessitura and supported by Sofia's singing as well. This episode became one of the climactic points of the composition. Ignat expressed his appreciation of the percussion instruments in this scene:

> Yesterday we worked on an episode of the battle, according to a proto-tale where a proto-hero fights against a proto-enemy. The music in this episode is heavy, which is justified by the episode's content. At first, I was afraid that the sound would be too heavy because we are going to perform at the jazz festival. And if it were only drums, it would have sounded quite heavy, but thanks to tabla, congo, and the rest of percussion, it sounds powerful on the one hand, and on the other, not so wooden.[449]

[448] "Mavrigi is a song cycle typical for musical traditions of Bukhara . . . It initially emerged and got widespread on the territory of Bukhara Emirate in the Middle Ages (in the XVI-XVII centuries) as a distinct type of music creativity of Iranian people. Later on, it became popular among Uzbek and Tajik peoples." http://ich.uz/en/ich-of-uzbekistan/national-list/domain-2/276-mavrigi

[449] Ignat, interview with author, 2017 (my translation)

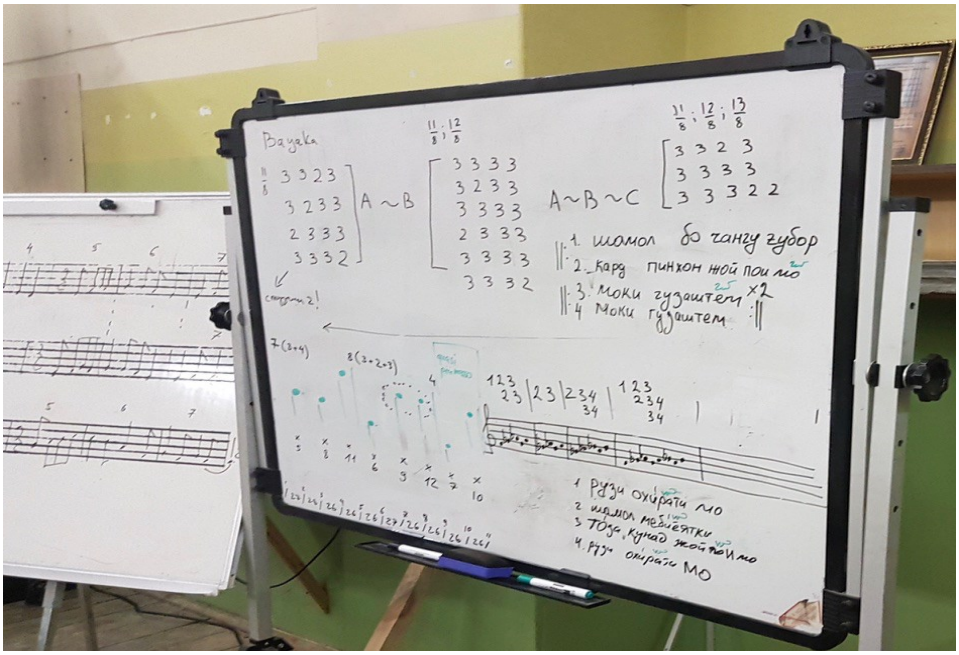

Figure V.10: A working board at the fifth Central Asia Ethnojazz Laboratory, 2017. Photo by author.

Figure V.10 shows a structure written in three parts: A-B-C. The ABC are not related to a musical form, but rather structured for the musician's convenience. Part A has 4 measures of 11/8 beats each. These 11/8 beats are further subdivided into three groups of 3 eighth beats and one group of 2 eighth beats ((3/8+3/8+3/8+2/8=11/8). The order in which these clusters are arranged changes from one bar to the next. For instance, in 3323, 3233, 2333, the 2 right beats appear in the third, second, and the first position, respectively.

In Part B, Part A has been modified by interspersing each 11/8 beats measure with an additional 12/8 beats measure. This results in alternating measures of 12/8 and 11/8 beats each. Structurally Part B would look like 1m: 12/8; 2m: 11/8; 3m: 12/8; 4m: 11/8; 5m: 12/8; 6m: 11/8. Similarly, Part C is obtained by adding a 13/8 beats measure to Part B. The rhythmic structure of Part C, therefore, would be: 1m: 11/8; 2m: 12/8; 3m: 13/8 and so on. The words written in cyrillic are a translation of the poem line in the Tajik language which all the participants had to sing.

V.3 In summary

The six examples I describe in this chapter show that when there is a theory behind the music that washes over musicians, it stimulates their imaginations and helps them express a variety of identities. In Episode 1, a Tajik singer by singing a mourning *falak,* expanded another aspect of the story in addition to the *manaschi*'s narrative, and thereby enriched the content of the episode. Computer analysis helps to see the different pitches and intervals that these musicians used, which might seem to be incompatible with each other, but in fact show how different tempo, rhythm, meter, and harmony combine well and create a unified sound from the perspective of the musicians and a reaction of the audience. Even though the computer analysis helps with identifying pitch, intervals and dynamics of a single performer, in analyzing a *manaschi*'s recitation it was more reliable to do it by ear.

In the second episode from the first Lab, the pianist was absorbed in the dynamics unfolding in the epos and expressed himself in free improvisation. The *manaschi*, in turn, reacted intuitively to the pianist, even if he were in a trance. The power of the Manas epic and its impact on listeners through the *manaschi* is known and recognized in Kyrgyz society. The interaction of the *manaschi* and pianist was a very interesting discovery, but there has not been any research done to investigate the *manaschi's* perception of the "real world" and its people during the recitation. As Samat, a *manaschi,* explained in his interview, he begins his recitation slowly, and as he recites he observes the surroundings—people, atmosphere—gradually focusing on the episode he is reciting.[450] A Kyrgyz scholar, researcher of *Manas*, Jyldyz Orozobekova, explained that a *manaschi* slowly enters a special state to recite the epos and can stay in a "parallel world" for a long time, it is also hard to exit this state.[451] At the end of the excerpt, someone may need to touch the shoulder of the *manaschi* and talk to them

[450] Samat Köchörbaev, interview with author, 2018.
[451] Jyldyz Orozobekova, interview at Zamana, 2021

to help them come back to our world. In this second episode of Lab 1, performers were able to heed each other and to interact consciously or intuitively. This is similar to a jazz session with two musicians, when after each of them lead, they finish playing together. A pianist who does not understand Kyrgyz was not necessary to respond to *manaschi*, but he knew the story, as it was introduced to the musicians in the beginning. As a result, the pianist was able to listen actively with immediate reaction to any changes in intonation, dynamics, and modes in the *manaschi'*s recitation.

In Lab 5, the third episode describes an unexpected burst of self-expression when Elchin suddenly sang like a *khanende.* This explained a very important point: something pushed the experienced musician beyond his usual state, so he wanted to express himself more fully, through voice and text in addition to the instrument he plays. Music is one of the arts that can reach the heart of a person quickly. However, to express themselves emotionally, musicians need to go through a process that is not just cognitive but also emotional. Based on Propp's theoretical concept, I believe that the musicians were able to react emotionally. During certain parts of the composition, Artyom used the metaphor of a fairy tale to stimulate the imagination of musicians and inspire them to produce a masterpiece.

Episode 4 in Lab 5 shows how instrumentalists can express themselves in a vocal form as well, and that when there is an idea, it can drive musicians to overcome their barriers and stimulate them to perform more creatively. In Episode 5 of Lab 5, Khushbakht, a Tajik musician freely expressed his identity without any hesitation by applying a Bushmen poetic line to *falak* singing, like Elchin who sang *mugham* in Episode 3. Episode 6 of Lab 5 shows a kind of parade of Central Asian cultures, by presenting *falak, mugham*, and *mavrigi* in one episode, following one another; moreover, the musicians expressed their appreciation of Tajik culture by singing in Tajik in this episode. Musicians shared their thoughts about having a general idea behind a project, as was clearly expressed by Ignat:

> There are times when some general idea doesn't work and remains as a headline in a newspaper, to which real life has nothing to do. In our case it is different. I learned something very important from this project. I always knew that there must be a general idea, but here, I am witnessing how it works. It works not only for the musical result and for the dramaturgy of the whole composition, but also this type of work is much more productive. The idea of a common point, a common thought, a common story, focuses people, relieving them of unnecessary directions of thought.[452]

In using this model in the laboratory, Artyom argued that he could awaken unconscious and intuitive thinking in the musicians, in order to access deep and hidden knowledge that all of us have but never use:

> This technique is associated with the appeal to spontaneous improvisation, to intuition, to intuitive thinking, to the intuitive way of expressing oneself. In this regard, the material should appeal not so much to rational thinking, but to some deep-seated knowledge, to genetic codes, to generic information blocks, to information databases, which we all have, but which in most cases remain asleep.[453]

Overall in Lab 5, using Propp's concept of the proto tale, the musicians could employ their imagination to express themselves according to the given parameters, without being limited by any "academic" musical obligations according to which musicians need to follow all existing rules.

This chapter showed how joint music-making and reference to the literary culture of various peoples stimulated the artistic expression of musicians. This joint music making helped musicians to imbue each other's culture and create intercultural dialogue. This approach, in turn, helped the musicians to overcome differences and any existing barriers and, thus, contributed to my third research question and hypothesis.

[452] Ignat, interview with author, 2017 (my translation)
[453] Artyom, interview with author, 2017 (my translation)

Chapter VI: The Geopolitical Significance of Ethnojazz: Western Funding Organizations and Jazz Festivals in New Central Asian Countries

In this chapter, I discuss the geopolitical significance of Central Asian ethnojazz. I want to understand how ethnojazz fits into this larger cultural-sponsorship "soft power" picture to answer my fourth hypothesis. First, I provide an overview of international funding organizations through their support of the Bishkek International Jazz Festival and discuss the geopolitical motivation for this funding; second, I present jazz festivals in Almaty, which started in 2000, and in Dushanbe and Tashkent, which were set up after the establishment of the Bishkek festival. I also provide a comparative analysis of the Dushanbe and Bishkek jazz festivals, to show similarities as well as differences of geopolitical significance between the two regional festivals.

VI.1 Funding organizations: international donors and embassies in Central Asia

VI.1.1 Geopolitical interests of the funding organizations

The Central Asian region drew the attention of the West after the dissolution of the Soviet Union because of its strategic importance– bordering Afghanistan, Iran, China, and Russia, and close location to India and Pakistan. The Western countries are concerned about "regional instability and transnational threats" which are possible if some of the newly emerged countries fail.[454] Therefore, the US, as well as other European countries, support human rights in the region because it contributes to their national security.[455] The other reason for Western countries' interest in the region is natural resources, especially oil and gas.

[454] Boyer, 2006, 93
[455] Ibid.

Table VI.1 shows the major natural resources in each Central Asian country and data on exports and imports.

	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan
GDP U.S.$ billions	29.7	1.9	1.4	6.2	9.9
Natural resources	Energy (gas, oil), uranium (1/4 of world)	Gold, other minerals	Aluminum processing and cotton	Energy (gas)	Cotton (12% of world 2001/02), gold, energy (gas)
Agriculture as % of GDP in 2003	7.8	38.7	23.4	19.7	35.2
Imports as % GDP	30.8	43.2	63.0	40.7	25.8
Exports as % GDP	45.6	39.2	57.0	58.9	31.0
Exports U.S.$ millions	12,900	745	798	3,465	3,065
Imports U.S.$ millions	8,300	821	881.3	2,521	2,554
Fuel & oil products % of total export trade	59.8	0	0	30.4	0
Products as % of total export trade 2003	Base metals 11.6%	Gold 44.1%	Aluminum 49%, electricity 23%, cotton 12%	Natural gas 54% cotton 3%	Gold 34.7%, cotton 28.8% (4th-largest producer in world)

Table VI.1: Economic data on Central Asian countries, 2003[456]

One particular US interest in the region is its long-standing military confrontation with Russia. Both countries are eager to show military superiority over each other. Afghanistan, as one of the most unstable countries in the region, attracted the attention of both the US and Russia. Since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, this country has been at the "center of geopolitical contests for centuries" and "high on the American priority list."[457] Recently published documents suggest the real motivation for the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was "a fear that Afghanistan might switch loyalties to the West."[458]

Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, the US has searched for places in new Central Asian countries to place their military bases. In Kyrgyzstan, for instance, from 2001 to 2014 the US Air Base "Manas," was located near the Manas airport (changing its name to Transit

[456] "Source: All data either from World Bank, World Development Indicators 2004, available at www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2004/; "World Bank Country at a Glance" data sheets available at web.worldbank.org/; U.S. State Department Country data sheets available at www.state.gov/p/eur/ci/." (cited in Boyer, 2006, 96)
[457] Baker, 2019
[458] Ibid.

Center at Manas in 2009). The US base was opened in December, right after the 9.11 event in 2001. A Russian air base was opened in October 2003 in the town of Kant, 20 km east of Bishkek. The American air base was closed during the presidency of Almazbek Atambayev, who had made promises to Russia about closing it. Russia was most concerned about the presence of American bases in Central Asia and "views the departure of American forces as geopolitically significant to its goals of reestablishing itself as the sole dominant power in Central Asia."[459]

Recently, US diplomats discussed the possibility of returning its air forces to Central Asia, particularly to Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan "that housed American troops and intelligence officers during the war."[460] However, President Japarov said "one base is enough for us. We don't want to play cat and mouse with two powers by placing two bases."[461] So, as political struggle continues the region will likely continue to attract various US soft power policies to strengthen its influence in the region, especially if military options are not favoured by the local governments.

VI.1.2 Central Asian NGOs

During the Soviet time all the arts institutions and organizations belonged to the Soviet State. Non-governmental organizations did not exist and were not allowed at that time. After the Soviet Union's dissolution, the arts institutions passed to the governments of the newly emerged post-Soviet republics and gained the status of state organizations. The 1990s saw the first appearance of embassies and international organizations in the new Central Asian countries, including non-governmental international organizations (NGOs), such as George Soros' Open Society Foundation and the Christensen Fund. The new era opened a

[459] Ibid.
[460] Mazzetti and Barnes, 2021.
[461] Sputnik Kyrgyzstan, 2021

new opportunity for local activists to establish NGOs which were supported by international funding organizations. The founders of these local organizations did not have any prior experience leading such operations or raising funds, so they relied on the guidance of the international organizations that work partly with governmental institutions but mainly with NGOs. Donors assisted the NGOs, not only to support culture for artistic reasons but with the objective of "strengthening civil society," understanding its importance in the "democratization process," and its role in "democratizing state institutions."[462]

It was not only in providing funding that the donor organizations and embassies were helpful, for in some cases they facilitated visits by international musicians. After the breakup of the Soviet Union, it had become difficult to travel around the region as some countries require a visa. To bring musicians from these countries to festivals was a big task which required a tremendous effort from the many people involved.[463]

My experience with the Bishkek festival shows how Western donor organizations were able to fill a local need for funds. As with many NGOs, we were driven by our own ideas for organizing the festival, so did not care much about the real reason for the support. However, behind seemingly simple humanitarian aid, under which some organizations include support for arts and culture, these foreign organizations have objectives and their country's interest as the main reason for their support, which is what I explore further in this chapter.

VI.1.3 1990s humanitarian aid from Western countries

After the break up, Soviet Central Asian countries faced many political and economic problems. In their report, Rumer, Sokolsky, and Stronski stated that, "A number of Central

[462] Crawford, 2001

[463] Email conversations with the band administrators would start two-three months ahead to discuss the logistics and performance details. All the logistics, including flights, accommodation, per diems, visas and honoraria, accounted for the lion's share of a festival's budget.

Asian states are afflicted by varying degrees with internal weaknesses—poor governance, corruption, weak rule of law, lack of economic opportunities for large sectors of the population—that increase state fragility."[464] With the change in their "geopolitical orientation towards the West," the Central Asian region enjoyed receiving support from the West, which was "the leading provider of economic and technical assistance to Central Asia for many years following its independence."[465] My selection of the organizations in the following sections is based on their support of the Bishkek International Jazz Festival during its sixteen year history.

VI.2 Funding organizations and embassies

VI.2.1 American funding

The American Embassy, together with the Goethe Institute and Swiss Cooperation Office (SCO) in Bishkek, was among the first that supported the idea of a jazz festival in Bishkek. To bring the American musicians to the festivals in Almaty and Bishkek, the American embassies in both Almaty and Bishkek were involved. Besides supporting the musicians, a couple of times the embassy covered some of the festival expenditures related to the day when American musicians performed. They also appreciated and recognized the efforts of local people in popularizing American music.[466]

Unlike the Goethe Institute and SCO (see below), the American Embassy did not support all fifteen festivals. There were some breaks, shown in Table VI.2, which could be related to the organization's priority change with new people involved, or perhaps they were related to the political preferences at that particular time. For the young Bishkek jazz festival it was unfortunate not to feature American musicians, because they were the highlight of the

[464] Rumer, Sokolsky, and Stronski, 2016, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
[465] Ibid.
[466] The State Department awarded me a certificate of recognition for popularizing jazz, during the alumni reunion organized by the US Embassy in Bishkek. I was an alumni of the State Department Junior Faculty Development Program (JFDP) in 2002.

program in the first years of the festival, since the audience admired them and was eager to listen to the American musicians who play famous jazz standards.

The variation in US support was obviously a reflection of their own priorities, not of the wishes of the local musicians or audience. The US air base left Kyrgyzstan in June 2014, but in April the Bishkek festival had hosted a well-known jazz pianist, a Grammy nominee and Bishkek born pianist, Eldar Djangirov.[467] His visit was sponsored by the US as a "soft power" approach to bring media attention to the event, even though it was probably more expensive to invite him, considering his busy schedule and high rank as a jazz musician. Then in 2015 the US Embassy did not bring any musicians to the festival (see Table VI.2).[468]

However, in 2016 the American Embassy in Kyrgyzstan invited Anthony Stanco and The Crucial Elements band, and requested that the group be included in all possible festival events. Usually any group has one main performance during the festival in addition to participation at master classes and jam sessions. But this time, besides participating in the second half of the closing day, which the American embassy had "booked" (starting from the first festival) to gain the maximum audience and media attention, the band also performed at the open air concert that was held that year.

During the open air concert, the band leader, Anthony Stanco came off the stage to mix the public and together with playing lively compositions he and his band musicians chanted "Freedom!" This was the name of their composition and this word was used for audience participation. When the musicians were among the public, the MC announced that the public could chant "Freedom" when Anthony gave them a signal to do so. Anthony played trumpet and when he stopped he pointed to the public to repeat the word "Freedom,"

[467] His visit was a special occasion for all: for the embassy, to feature their native son; for Eldar, to visit his motherland and meet his relatives; for the Bishkek audience, who were proud to hear a talented compatriot, and for PF CAAM, to deliver such a high standard at the festival.
[468] As I mentioned in Chapter III, the fifth festival which Americans declined to participate in, actually did not happen, due to the 2010 revolution.

an event captured on video.[469] I thought at that time that it was a good addition and an improvised action to cheer up the audience. But, later, when I talked about this episode with the festival sound people, I found out that actually it had been rehearsed at the sound check, when the musicians discussed the moment they needed to come down from the stage, and it was also discussed with the MC who had to announce the moment the public needed to join in. Only later did I realize that it was a "soft power" approach adopted by the State Department, as part of their revanche in the contested zone to help bring back US influence to the region.

The festival #	**American jazz musicians**	**Year**
1st	William Cepeda and band	2006
2nd	Ari Roland	2007
3rd	-	2008
4th	Roseanna Vitro and the JazzIAm band	2009
5th	-	2010
6th	Shamarr Allen and the Underdawgs	2011
7th	Eve Cornelious and Jazz Trio	2012
8th	Carla Cook and Jazz Trio	2013
9th	Eldar Djangirov Trio	2014
10th	-	2015
11th	Anthony Stanco and the The Crucial Elements	2016
12th	-	2017
13th	Gina Chavez and band	2018
14th, 15th, 16th	-	2019, 2020, 2021

Table VI. 2: Participation of American musicians at the Bishkek jazz festival (2006-2021)

[469] https://youtu.be/X85KuYh8gTI

There were several occasions when the embassy showed no interest in participating or brought musicians to Kyrgyzstan at other times of the year, for instance in the summer of 2018, which was dedicated to July the Fourth and the hundredth birthday of Leonard Bernstein.[470] Although we had come to rely on US participation in the early years of the festival and were very disappointed the first time they declined, at other times when America skipped the festival, we were better prepared, working hard to bring more musicians from Europe and elsewhere. I do not know why the US support for the festival became intermittent, as they never gave a reason when they declined a request for funding. However, I assume that once they could see the festival was well-established, they wanted to use their resources elsewhere to widen the scope of their influence in the region.

The Christensen Fund

The Christensen Fund, which is a privately run, non-profit American fund founded in 1957, came to the Central Asian region at the beginning of 2000, the main office being located in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The funding was available for initiatives from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan that had primarily a biodiversity focus.

During the almost fifteen years of its presence in the region, the Christensen Fund supported a number of unique initiatives and was the first funding organization that supported selected NGOs for a continuous eight to ten years. PF CAAM was among the selected NGOs and received support for nine years (2009-2017). The ethnojazz component was one of several projects we realized. The Ethnojazz Development Project, together with the subsequent five laboratories which became a focus of this dissertation, were supported by the Christensen Fund. This reliable support for a decade helped various organizations to gain

[470] U.S. Embassy in the Kyrgyz Republic 2018

experience and sustainability and some of these organizations are now attempting to function independently, with variable success.

It is hard to say what this wealthy NGO's motivation was in supporting the cultural initiatives in the region in the 2000s. Allen D. Christensen "was a civil and mining engineer who for several decades led the Utah Mining and Construction Company," and his foundation initially supported major art museums.[471] It changed its focus in the 2000s to "grant making instead of art collections,"[472] with a focus on the restoration of the land and support for indigenous people, including the ethnojazz in Central Asia project as a grass-roots musical collaboration. A few organizations in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan benefitted from the fund's presence in the region, as the support helped them to realize unique cultural projects and build a network among cultural local NGOs

Open Society Foundation

The Open Society Foundation (previously Institute), founded by an American business magnate George Soros, was among the first international organizations to open offices in the region right after the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991 and had clearly stated socio-political objectives. In Kyrgyzstan the office was opened in 1993 "to help Kyrgyzstan with the transition to becoming a more open, democratic society."[473] The OSF arts program was among the first to support arts and culture. In the case of the Bishkek International Jazz Festival, it provided funding in 2010 and 2011, in the grant category "Developing Public Cultural Spaces: Public Cultural Events."

[471] https://www.christensenfund.org/about/history/
[472] Ibid.
[473] https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/newsroom/open-society-foundations-kyrgyzstan

Although George Soros is one of the world's generous philanthropists who donated hundred of millions of dollars to support "democracy, human rights, and open society,"[474] the OSF was not always welcomed in some of the post-Soviet countries. Mr. Soros's name has become associated with "interfering in domestic politics, promoting dubious values, sponsoring civil wars and striving to destroy objectionable regimes from within," including colour revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan.[475] In 2004, for instance, the OSF office in Uzbekistan, which had opened in 1996, was shut down by the Uzbek government.[476] Although the OSF continues its program in Kyrgyzstan, from time to time Parliament and society mistrust the activities of this organization which through its support of various projects, including arts and culture, masks its real motives, which are similar to the soft power approach of the US.

VI.2.2 European organizations

The Goethe Institute

The Goethe Institute, despite its name which implies that it might be an NGO, is a cultural institution of the Federal Republic of Germany with branches in many countries of the world.[477] It opened its centres in the post-Soviet countries after the breakup of the Soviet Union, as did many other international organizations at that time. On their website the Institute states their objective as "promoting the German language abroad and expanding international cooperation in the field of culture" as well as to "support intercultural dialogue and promote cultural exchange."[478]

[474] Palley 2005, 407
[475] Vechernyi Bishkek 2021
[476] *TheGuardian*, 2004
[477] https://www.goethe.de/ins/kz/ru/ueb/auf.html
[478] Ibid.

Germany, compared to the US, does not focus only on jazz to promote their presence in the region and realizes other educational and cultural projects.[479] However, jazz festivals in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have been a good opportunity to present German jazz musicians on a regular basis. Fulfilling the mission of the country, the musicians sometimes help to advance its geopolitical purpose. For instance, they not only want to export their own culture but express willingness to collaborate with Central Asian musicians.

Hugo Siegmeth, a German musician of Romanian ethnicity who first came to the Bishkek festival in 2014, returned in 2015, when he included in his program a *komuzchu,* Ruslan Jumabayev, and a *manaschi,* Samat Köchörbaev. Hugo wrote the arrangements for their joint performances. He then invited the two of them to Germany and toured German cities. About his experience working with the different musicians he noted that,

> . . . I have had the opportunity to work with musicians from several different parts of the world, such as the Central Asian, the Arab countries, Sudan, Indonesia, . . .With all of these different backgrounds joining each other, the music always had the power to connect people within seconds as well as form a relationship and perception of each other far beyond language barriers.[480]

In 2015, Hugo presented a paper entitled "Music as a reflection of the globalized, intercultural society," at the first ethnojazz conference in Bishkek. He noted that in improvised music one can easily find ways of communication and that "problems, misunderstandings and cultural differences can be understood and respected in this process."

Swiss Cooperation Office

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Swiss Cooperation Offices were opened in Kyrgyzstan (1993),[481] Tajikistan (1998),[482] and Uzbekistan (1994) with the Arts and

[479] In 2008 the Goethe Institute supported my visit to "Jazzahead" in Bremen, a jazz fair which gathers jazz musicians and promoters from Europe and abroad.
[480] Ethnojazz in Central Asia, PF CAAM, 2015.
[481] In Kyrgyzstan the SCO was upgraded to Embassy in 2012 (Embassy of Switzerland in Kyrgyzstan, 2021)
[482] The cooperation with Tajikistan began in 1993 with a Swiss Humanitarian Aid mission during the civil war. (Embassy of Switzerland in Tajikistan, 2021)

Culture program being one of several programs. All three offices are part of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) program. The SDC considers that the Art and Culture component is an important "tool of good governance" and that "Culture is not one of life's luxuries—it is life itself."[483] The Arts and Culture program of the SCO in Bishkek supported hundreds of initiatives from different parts of the country, thanks to the Small Grants project (up to $1500). The grant proposal was designed in a simple way, which allowed people without any knowledge in project management to be able to write a proposal, realize their initiatives and write a narrative and financial report at the end.

As a manager of the Arts and Cultural Program in Kyrgyzstan in 2005-2010, I was involved in developing and launching the Regional Art and Culture Programme (RACP) in 2007 together with my colleagues in Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan; it focused on "cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue."[484] The Bishkek jazz festival with its mission to promote understanding among different Central Asian ethnicities perfectly fit into the objectives of the SDC and was included in the RACP of the SCO Arts and Culture program.[485] Once, as a RACP grantee, the Bishkek festival was further developed, it inspired the appearance of the Dushanbe jazz festival, which was initiated and supported by the Swiss Cooperation Office, as I discuss in section VI.4.2 of this chapter.

International Embassies

The international embassies that support jazz festivals in the region appreciate the opportunity to present their musicians. As in the case of the Bishkek festival, the embassies need only to bring the musicians to the festival by covering their expenses and do not need to

[483] Embassy of Switzerland in Uzbekistan, 2021 (https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/uzbekistan/en/home/internationale-zusammenarbeit/projekte.html/dezaprojects/SDC/en/2007/7F05029/phase3)
[484] Ibid.
[485] To avoid conflict of interest as a director of the festival and a manager of the Arts and Culture program, I avoided influencing the decision by being in a neutral position during the discussion, simply answering questions regarding the festival. I also did not participate in writing a full proposal for the RACP program, but let my colleague Keneshbek Almakuchukov, a PF CAAM director do it.

think about the venue, promotion, invitations, technical rider and many other tasks related to the performance of live music and the organization of the event. The embassies realize their duties to build relationships with the selected country, while the ambassadors enjoy introducing their musicians on stage in front of thousands of people, and highlighting the importance of diplomatic relations. Over the years the Bishkek jazz festival was supported by various embassies, some of which can be seen in Figure VI.1.[486]

Figure VI.1: Back page of the 4th Bishkek jazz festival booklet with the logos of funding organizations and media partners

Central Asian ethnojazz which started in 2009 and originated in Bishkek, bore fruit in other countries of the region. Each year, during the nine years of the ethnojazz projects (2009-2017), we invited musicians from within and beyond the region to participate and share their music at the festival. During the seminars, they also shared their thoughts about the development of this new genre in the region. Over almost a decade Bishkek audiences enjoyed performances by groups from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

[486] The first logo features PF CAAM as the "*Organizator*" (organizer); the next, "*Partnery festivalya"* (festival partners) are the Christensen Fund, American Embassy, the Goethe Institute, the Swiss Embassy, the Austrian Embassy, the German Embassy; the last line presents media partners.

This was possible only because of the funding that PF CAAM raised every year from various Western funders. Like many other local NGOs who received support from international donors for their initiatives, we unwittingly became participants in the implementation of the soft-power approach used by Western countries. Sometimes local NGOs were criticized by Parliament members who claimed that these organizations were agents of the West.[487] However, at the same time these NGOs benefitted from the support the West provided, as they were able to realize their cultural projects, which contributed to the positive cultural environment in the region. As there are no state funds for cultural initiatives Western funding is the only funding available.

The current situation is in complete contrast to Soviet times when all cultural initiatives were State funded and there were no NGOs. However, Soviet ideologists also used arts and culture as a tool for propaganda. I describe their soft-power approach in the next section.

VI.3 Brief comparison with Soviet times

Experience during the 21st century is quite different from during the Soviet time, when there were no borders between Soviet republics so musicians travelled and visited neighbouring republics more often than after the breakup of the Soviet Union. In Soviet times all the trips musicians made within the republic, region, and abroad were state funded. Soviet cultural officials encouraged the Soviet people to share their national culture through music and arts to contribute to the "*Druzhba narodov SSSR*" (Friendship of the Peoples of the USSR) concept, strongly developed by the Soviet ideologists, which I discuss in the next section. The Soviet government clearly recognized the value of cultural institutions as a way of building friendship between people and gaining political acceptance.

[487] *Nastoyashee Vremya* 2020

VI.3.1 "*Druzhba narodov SSSR*": The Soviet policy of friendship between peoples of the USSR

The concept of *druzhba narodov*, peoples' friendship, emerged in the 1930s as a powerful tool for controlling the masses of a multi-ethnic Soviet society. Lowell Tillett in his book *The Great Friendship: Soviet Historians on the Non-Russian Nationalities* wrote that, "Since about 1930 Bolshevik propagandists have loudly asserted that Leninist nationality policy has created something entirely new in history—a multi-national society without national hatreds or hostilities."[488] To build a multiethnic state was a big task for the Bolsheviks, as Tillet wrote, "The complex of tensions generated in a multinational state, consisting of dozens of peoples of different language, religion, and ethnic and historical background, was a major centrifugal force which threatened to pull the old Russian Empire apart."[489]

The idea that in the Soviet Union there was no enmity between peoples of different nationalities, but friendship, was always popularized, as far as I remember from my Soviet childhood and youth.[490] Friendship between the republics was also popularized through festivals, conferences, exhibitions, when a large number of artists, scientists, and musicians from one republic went to another Soviet republic to celebrated the day of their country's culture (e.g. *Dni kultury Kirgizii v Tajikistane*).[491]

I remember how in 1982, my late father, a famous Soviet opera singer, Hussein Mukhtarov, received one of the highest Soviet awards—Order of Friendship of the Peoples of the USSR. My parents travelled through the Soviet Union together for more than seventeen years with their solo and duet program.[492] My parents' repertoire included many songs in

---

[488] Tillett, 1969, 6
[489] Ibid., 7
[490] I had friends of different nationalities, and we all played together in the courtyard (*vo dvore*), a common outdoor area for apartment buildings.
[491] Days of Kyrgyz Culture in Tajikistan
[492] They also toured abroad, but only separately, as by separating an artistic family, the Soviet officials tried to prevent Soviet artists from fleeing abroad.

foreign languages; they would prepare a song in the language of the country they were going to visit, later keeping the favorite ones in their repertoire. They always received a lot of presents, books, souvenirs and warm memories about people they met. It was a sincere hospitality that could later grow into friendship.

;

Figure VI. 2: My parents (third and fourth from the left) at the Days of Culture of Kyrgyz SSR in Tajik SSR; Dushanbe, 1976; from author's family photo archive

Figure VI. 3: My parents at the Days of Culture of Kyrgyz SSR in Tajik SSR; Dushanbe, 1976; from author's family photo archive

In Figure VI.2 my parents are among other Kyrgyz artists being greeted on their arrival in Tajikistan with flowers by the representatives of the Ministry of Culture of Tajik Soviet Republic and famous Tajik artists during their visit for the Day of Culture of the Kyrgyz Soviet Republic in Tajikistan. In Figure VI.3 my parents are on a street in Dushanbe upon arrival; they are standing in front of female Tajik students in traditional costumes, who are creating a living barrier to express the hospitality of the residents of the city.

To provide a high level reception for guests (*prinyat' gostei na vysokom urovne*) during the day of cultures of various Soviet republics was the task of country officials for almost all fifteen republics. This was necessary to obey the Party's order to contribute to the Friendship of the Peoples of the USSR, one of the main concepts of Soviet ideology for ruling the multiethnic population of the country (*sovetskyi narod*). However, on the people's level, there were emotional ties which helped Soviet people to believe in friendship and open their hearts to each other. As Jeff Sahadeo noted, "Mixing migrant voices and official discourse exposes the layers and complexity of the friendship of peoples and its relationship to Soviet mobility. The state enjoyed the power to set conventions and interactions, but Soviet citizens seized the friendship and perpetuated it decades after the USSR's end."[493] My parents, who worked hard to fulfill the Party's order to build friendship among the people of the USSR, strongly believed in friendship between the people of that big country, like all other artistic communities of the country. They showed their commitment by touring to various Soviet republics, staging the plays/operas of different nations,[494] and participating in various festivals, exhibitions, and concerts. However, their view differed from the political concept of *Druzhba narodov* promoted by the Communist party.

[493] Sahadeo, 2019, 37

[494] The repertoire for those operas and plays was also selected by the Soviet ideologist to fulfill the Soviet *realism* concept.

Assembly of the People of Kyrgyzstan

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union the problem of controlling and governing a multi ethnic society, which was a "headache" of the Russian Soviet authorities, became a big task for new Central Asian leaders. The ethnic conflict between ethnic Uzbek and Kyrgyz which happened in 1990 in the city of Osh, is still fresh in the memories of the Kyrgyzstani people. To address the issue of ethnic tension and contribute to the preservation of civil peace and harmony the Kyrgyz government led by Askar Akayev called the *Kurultay* (congress) of the People of Kyrgyzstan which took place in Bishkek in 1994.[495] At the *Kurultay* the Assembly of the Peoples of Kyrgyzstan was formed and the Declaration of Unity, Peace, and Accord (*Deklaraziya edinstva, mira, i soglasiya)* was proclaimed.[496] For the Assembly, premises were allocated for offices of different diasporas in the centre of the city, which still exist. With the support of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe the information research centre was opened at the Assembly in 1997.[497]

Although the Assembly of the People of Kyrgyzstan initiative was needed in the transition to lessen ethnic tension, in practice it did not result in improved ethnic relations in the country. Just as it was during Soviet times, the Kyrgyz authorities used the concept of friendship between nations when they needed to show off their work in addressing this problem. In reality, the diasporas would present their amateur groups in traditional costumes and present traditional cuisine during the national holidays such as Independence Day or *Nowruz*.[498]

---

[495] Assembly of the People of Kyrgyzstan, 2004
[496] Ibid.
[497] Ibid.
[498] Nowruz – "The word Nowruz (Novruz, Navruz, Nooruz, Nevruz, Nauryz), means new day; its spelling and pronunciation may vary by country. Nowruz marks the first day of spring and is celebrated on the day of the astronomical vernal equinox, which usually occurs on 21 March. It is celebrated as the beginning of the new year by more than 300 million people all around the world and has been celebrated for over 3,000 years in the Balkans, the Black Sea Basin, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and other regions." (https://www.un.org/en/observances/international-nowruz-day)

Figure VI.4: An article in *Muzykal'naya jizn'*[499] journal title *"Khorovody Drujby"* (Round dance of friendship.)[500]

VI.4 Jazz festivals in new Central Asian countries

Although a few jazz festivals were organized in the Soviet Central Asian republics during the Soviet time, it was in the 2000s that they really revived, ushering in a new era in the development of jazz festivals in the region. These festivals were enthusiastically supported by the US and other Western countries as they saw a new opportunity to influence the territories of the former USSR.

VI.4.1 Almaty Jazz Festival

The Almaty jazz festival, entitled "Jazz From A To Z," was initiated and co-founded by Tagir Zaripov in 2002. A Kazakhstani musician and jazz lover, Tagir Zaripov, like many other Soviet jazz lovers at that time, learned jazz through the radio program "The Voice of America Jazz Hour," hosted by Willis Conover.[501] After graduating as a trumpeter from the

[499] The Soviet State music periodical, which was published twice a year, was an officially published journal of the "Soyuz kompozitorov SSSR" (Union of Soviet composers)
[500] Muzykal'naya jizn, 1974 (V. Belyakov)
[501] Zaripov, interview with author, 2017 (my translation)

Almaty conservatoire in 1973, he worked at the Estrada Symphony Orchestra and later created his own jazz band. In 1996 he joined the International Jazz Association and started to visit international conferences and build a network. Through his network, he started to collect jazz music scores and brought donated scores to Almaty where he opened a jazz school in 2001.[502] After six years of holding the jazz festival in Almaty there was a conflict in the organization, which resulted in the festival being split between the two co-founders. The annual Almaty jazz festival changed its name and Tagir Zaripov continued the festival under a new name: "International Festival of Jazz, Almaty."[503] Tagir Zaripov makes great efforts to educate young Kazakhstani people in jazz and instill in them a love of jazz.

The Almaty jazz festival has not focused on ethnic components compared to the festivals in Bishkek and Dushanbe. Because of Tagir Zaripov's love of American jazz and his experience of teaching standard jazz at his jazz school, the festival has enjoyed jazz bands from Europe and the US offered by the international embassies. However, there were talented jazz musicians in Almaty who did not want to miss the opportunities of the new time and experimented with their traditional music. Besides the local group, ethnojazz groups from Bishkek and Dushanbe, who already actively participated in the Ethnojazz Development in Central Asia project and Central Asia Ethnojazz Laboratory, performed at the Almaty jazz festival, strengthening the voice of Central Asia at the Almaty festivals. Their visit to Almaty was funded once by PF CAAM, which was possible through the funding received from the Swiss Cooperation Office in Bishkek and Dushanbe. On other visits, they were invited by the Almaty festival organizers.

[502] Ibid.
[503] https://artmisto.com/musicnews/913-dzhaz-kanat.html

VI.4.2 Dushanbe Ethnojazz Festival

Prior to the first jazz festival in Dushanbe in 2009, a jazz concert was organized there in 2008 with the participation of the Swiss trio "Zoom" led by Lucas Niggli, following their performance at the Bishkek jazz festival. Supported by the Swiss Cooperation Office (SCO) in Dushanbe, the first jazz concert was implemented by the Bactria Cultural Centre, an NGO that realized different cultural projects in music and visual arts. The concert took place at an historical place—the drama theatre named after the Soviet poet, Vladimir Mayakovsky, where in 1929, at the first congress of the deputies, the Tajik Soviet republic was proclaimed.[504]

The first concert was a big success, which I witnessed. The theatre had about three hundred and fifty seats, and all the tickets were handed out as invitations; there was a full house. In the second half of the concert, the Swiss trio ZOOM played together with a famous Tajik traditional group "Shams" and the joint performance received a standing ovation. Lucas Niggli from the ZOOM trio and musicians from Shams had already played together in Bishkek in 2007, when they were the musicians who replaced a group that couldn't come, as I mentioned in Chapter III.2.2. The success of the first jazz concert in Dushanbe inspired the organizers to launch a jazz festival in 2009.

Table VI.1 illustrates a schedule of the Swiss trio ZOOM on one of their Central Asian tours, which was funded by the Swiss Cooperation offices in Bishkek and Dushanbe. This kind of intense schedule was typical for European musicians who toured Central Asian jazz festivals organized by their embassies. The embassies clearly wanted to showcase Western culture over as wide an area as possible to realize their geopolitical influence.

[504] In 2016 the building was demolished as were many other Soviet epoch buildings. https://rus.ozodi.org/a/28361299.html

Central-Asia Tour with Lucas Niggli ZOOM feat.Nils Wogram / Philipp Schaufelberger 24.04-03.05.				
25.04.2008	KZ	Almaty, Int. Jazzfestival	Lucas Niggli ZOOM	20.30
27.04.2008	KZ	Almaty, Int. Jazzfestival, Masterclass/ Workshop	Lucas Niggli ZOOM	10.00
27.04.2008	KG	Bishkek, Int. Jazzfestival, at Operahouse	Lucas Niggli ZOOM	20.00
28.04.2008	KG	Karakol (Issey-kul), Philharmonie	Lucas Niggli ZOOM	18.00
01.05.2008	TJ	Dushanbe, Culture Centre Baktria	Lucas Niggli ZOOM, Masterclass	14.00
02.05.2008	TJ	Dushanbe, Theater Majakowski	Second Set with Mizrop (TJ-group)	18.00

Table VI.3: Schedule of Central Asian tour of the Swiss musicians—Lucas Niggli ZOOM, in 2008.[505]

VI.4.3 Dushanbe and Bishkek jazz festivals – comparative analysis

The Dushanbe Jazz Festival took the model of the Bishkek jazz festival, including the structure, mission, and partnership, with the embassies inviting the musicians from abroad. Like the Bishkek festival it lasts for three days and is organized on a weekend in spring. It also has a component of master classes for young musicians, a round table, and a jam session, in a similar way to the Bishkek festival. Responsibility for the Dushanbe festival is delegated to the Bactria Cultural Centre; in Bishkek it is managed by PF CAAM.[506] The main initiator and funder of the Dushanbe festival is the Swiss Cooperation Office (SCO) which is represented by Mouattara Bashirova, head of the SCO's cultural program. Mouattara was my Dushanbe colleague, when I worked at the SCO Bishkek as the cultural manager; she witnessed the success of the Bishkek jazz festival and visited some of its concerts together with her Dushanbe colleagues. They liked the idea, as it matched well with the SCO's

[505] http://www.lucasniggli.com/english/0400_daten/0100_archiv.asp The table is copied verbatim.
[506] Public Fund Central Asian Arts Management

objectives of contributing to a dialogue between the people of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, three Central Asian countries which they support, as mentioned in VI.2.2. Therefore the prerequisite for the festival organizers was to present musicians from these countries.

It was sometimes a problem for Bishkek organizers to find jazz musicians in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, as the Swiss office required us to present different musicians from different regions of those countries every year. The Tajik group Avesto, who actively participated in both of our ethnojazz projects for several years, was once declined SCO funding, as the SCO had requested us to find a group from the rural areas of Tajikistan. That was almost impossible, since there are not many groups who can play jazz or ethnojazz in those countries. Sometimes the Bishkek festival had musicians from other Central Asian countries, including Kazakhstan and once from Turkmenistan, but found it difficult to find funding for those groups, as neither SCO nor the Christensen Fund were interested in supporting groups who were outside their scope of interest. Thus it was evident that the socio-political, "soft power" aspect of an organization's mission was more important than the musical wishes of festival organizers.

The festival board and organizational committee

The Dushanbe festival has a board which includes the main partner organizations and key figures in the organization of the festival. Sergey Chutkov, manager of the Bactria Cultural Centre, explained: "The board consists of representatives of the Bactria Cultural Centre, the Swiss Cooperation Office, Dushanbe National Conservatoire, Jasur Khalilov who is artistic director of the festival, and Jafar Khalilov who is its technical director. We meet regularly and discuss all the organizational matters, including the design, groups, fundraising, etc."[507] Sergey also mentioned that the Tajik Ministry of Culture is a partner organization,

[507] Sergey Chutkov, interview with author, 2019 (my translation)

which reminded me of our experience with the Kyrgyz Ministry of Culture in the early years of the festival. The ministry does not provide financial support, but their role is mainly to patronize the event and be a part of it. Jasur and Jafar Khalilov, whom Sergey mentioned, are brothers who as part of the Avesto Ensemble have come to the Bishkek festival many times and participated in both ethnojazz projects, as well as round table discussions. By learning from the Bishkek festival the Khalilovs gained the experience that they then successfully implemented at the Dushanbe festival.

Compared to the Dushanbe festival, the Bishkek festival has an organizational committee, the members of PF CAAM, including its director, director of the festival, and technical director. PF CAAM hires additional personnel for the festival period, including executive manager, various other managers, designer and technical staff, while the main staff of PF CAAM negotiate with the partner organizations and search for funds. Before the festival, PF CAAM conducts seminars for volunteers and new members to train them in soft skills; each senior staff member on the festival committee makes a presentation at the seminar and shares their experience with the new team. This model, which we set up when I organized the festival, was successful as we saw how young volunteers who had to work in a very stressful, intensive atmosphere for two months became experienced managers in NGOs and other organizations. The success of this approach could be explained by the encouragement we gave volunteers and the new festival team to be independent and to take decisions in extraordinary situations. In real situations they learned much faster and never forgot their new skills.

In the case of the Dushanbe festival, the SCO is the main organizer with assistance from the implementing NGO organization and musicians, who over time had gained experience not only in ethnojazz but in developing new skills of festival management. On the Dushanbe Jazz Festival website the festival concept states as follows:

> The Swiss Cooperation Office, as the main initiator and donor, together with its partners Bactria Cultural Center and the Tajik National Conservatory, have successfully held jazz festivals for several years (2009, '10, '12, '14 and '17). The festival brings together jazz composers and musicians from different parts of the world (Central Asia, Europe, America, etc.) to hold concerts, round tables, master classes and art laboratories that contribute to the outbreak of a new wave of interest in ethno-jazz music in the Republic of Tajikistan.[508]

Planning and festival management

The Dushanbe festival was planned as an annual event and was organized in 2009 and 2010, but it was changed to a biennial affair (though there was even one three-year break). During the interviews different reasons were given for the frequency of the festival. Jasur Khalilov expressed a willingness to hold the festival annually.[509] Sergey said that the Bactria Cultural Centre implements various projects at the same time and they do not have enough resources to do the festival annually; he also mentioned that they start seven months prior which is still a tight timeline and they think they need to start a year before.[510] Mouattara (SCO) noted that the two-year period is a good time for the preparations; she also mentioned that because of the civil war (1992-1997) many specialists had left the country.[511] As many as 800,000 people fled to other post-Soviet countries and Afghanistan at that time.[512] Beside the funding, one of the most important components of organizing international festivals is to have professionals who have gained experience in the event field. Since I worked at the SCO Bishkek, I think one of the reasons for the time between festivals could be the budget planning. At SCO we planned the budget for two to three years.

In founding and organizing the Bishkek jazz festival, our four-person team already had personal experiences of organizing events. I gained the basic knowledge of arts events management during my study in the States (2002) and was able to test it in practice in my

[508] http://jazzfestival.tj/en/#about
[509] Jasur Khalilov, interview with author, 2019 (my translation)
[510] Sergey Chutkov, interview with author, 2019 (my translation)
[511] Mouattara Bashirova, interview with author, 2019 (my translation)
[512] https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/long-echo-of-tajikistan-s-civil-war/

internship at the Smithsonian Folk Festival (2003). My late brother, Daniyar Mukhtarov, also had experience in event management, organizing classical concerts in Germany and Kyrgyzstan; Arstan Mambetov, my husband, had many years experience in show business; Steffen Laas, as a cultural attache, contributed with his excellent skills as European clerk and his experience in international relations. The four of us not only had considerable experience, but the warm relationship between us was an important factor in the overall success of the Bishkek jazz festival, which set an example for the development of other festivals in the region. My other colleague and friend, Keneshbek Almakuchukov, who joined the organization in 2008, had experience in marketing and as a businessman. With him we established PF CAAM and organized all the subsequent festivals and many other cultural events.

Audience

At the first jazz concert in Dushanbe in 2008, the majority of the audience were foreigners, diplomats, and local people who worked at the international organizations, and students. In a country where traditional music prevails, jazz music is something very unusual and probably won't be appreciated by the majority of the residents. Mouattara mentioned differences with the Bishkek festival noting that "we have different audiences."[513] Therefore, it was the right choice for the Dushanbe festival to focus specifically on ethnojazz.

Ethnojazz, with national tunes and traditional instruments familiar to the public, together with jazz, presents the traditional music of Tajikistan in a new, fresh way. The organizational committee of the festival carefully chooses the foreign groups giving preference to those who present fusion. In addition to this, the artistic team sends Tajik songs to foreign groups in advance, with the request to include them in their program. This is also something they took over from the contests of the Ethnojazz Development Project; it was the

[513] Mouattara Bashirova, interview with author, 2019 (my translation)

Spring of Ala Too contest, where Kyrgyz songs were first sent to Central Asian groups as the basis for their composition. The Bishkek festival continued this practice by sending Kyrgyz songs to foreign groups who were interested in including them in their performance in Bishkek. The Dushanbe festival included this component as the requirement for all groups, choosing different Tajik songs for each festival. As a result one Tajik song appears in almost every performance and acts as the leitmotif of the festival.[514]

Continuity

As the last three festivals show, the Bishkek festival is facing financial difficulties being without the support of a major donor (the Christensen fund support ended in 2018). The Swiss Embassy continues its support, but strictly funds the areas of their interest—musicians and young audiences in rural areas from three countries: Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. PF CAAM is trying to accumulate funds from selling tickets to finance the start of the next festival, but it is not always successful. The Bishkek festival, which had formerly been strongly dependent on foreign funding, and thus a tool in realizing the geopolitical interest of Western countries, has now become more independent, even through financial struggles. Taking a long term perspective the Bishkek festival may disappear as a regular event if the foreign funding organizations lose their interest in the festival, no longer seeing it as a tool in realizing their own goals, or perhaps preferring to broaden their sphere of influence elsewhere. Perhaps by that time the local businesses will become more active as well as state organizations, who will understand the effectiveness of such events in promoting mutual understanding between countries and different ethnicities. Currently, individuals and organizations are not much interested in supporting cultural events, as they are not able to obtain any tax deduction when they make donations to various projects. The Dushanbe festival is a creation of SCO in Dushanbe and is still strongly dependent on them. For

[514] Jasur Khalilov, interview with the author, 2019 (my translation)

instance, it was an annual festival in the beginning, but then became biannual, probably to fit the SCO Arts and Culture program budget. That festival is even more likely to disappear than the Bishkek festival, if the SCO changes its focus to a different area in the country or leaves the country.

VI.4.4 International Jazz Day

April 30th was proclaimed as "International Jazz Day" in November 2011, at the UNESCO General Conference.[515] Jazz was chosen to promote "peace, dialogue among cultures, diversity, and respect for human rights and human dignity, eradicating discrimination, promoting freedom of expression, fostering gender equality, and reinforcing the role of youth for social change."[516] Initiated by the legendary jazz pianist and composer Herbie Hancock and every year led by him together with the UNESCO Director General, Jazz Day is marked in many countries of the world to celebrate "its root, its future and its impact."[517] The Bishkek International Jazz Festival joined the world's celebration of jazz in April 2021 for the first time. However, the Tashkent jazz festival appeared under the auspices of UNESCO right from the start.

Figure VI.5: International jazz day event map, 2021[518]

[515] https://www.un.org/en/observances/jazz-day
[516] Ibid.
[517] Ibid.
[518] https://jazzday.com/participate/

Figure VI.5 shows participant countries on International Jazz Day 2021, including three cities in the Central Asian region—Bishkek, Dushanbe, and Ashgabat.

VI.4.5 Tashkent Jazz festival under auspices of UNESCO

Although jazz in Uzbekistan was popular during the Soviet time and the country has a new generation of talented jazz musicians, it started its jazz festival much later than the other Central Asian countries. Uzbekistan's first International Jazz Festival was held in Tashkent in 2015 to mark the occasion of International Jazz Day, supported by UNESCO in partnership with the Ministry of Culture. The festival was organized by the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan, the State Jazz Orchestra of Uzbekistan named after B. Zakirov, and the Ilkhom Theatre, with the support and participation of four embassies.[519] In 2019, the festival lasted for a month and was held in the cities of Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara and Kokand and, as in Bishkek and Dushanbe, was accompanied by master classes and jam sessions.[520] Uzbek Ethnojazz groups such as Jazirama,[521] established by Uzbek jazz musicians Sanjar Nafikov and Saidmurat Muratov, were among actively participating bands.

The Bishkek festival with its continuous ethnojazz component stimulated the appearance of new young leaders. Experienced musicians like Jasur and Jafar from Dushanbe, and Saidmurat and Sanjar from Tashkent got their training at the Bishkek festival, by participating in almost all Ethnojazz Development projects and in most of the labs, seminars and round table discussions. Therefore, Saidmurat, with his passion for jazz and

[519] http://www.uzbekistan.org.ua/en/news-en/cultural-news/1239-international-jazz-festival-to-take-place-in-tashkent-8-april-2015.html
[520] The Tashkent Times, 2010
[521] The Jazzirama band was established by Sanjar Nafikov and Saidmurad Muratov in 2011, two musicians who participated in both the Ethnojazz Development projects and Ethnojazz Laboratories. Sanjar participated in all of them, but Saidmurat only participated in three labs.

desire to develop Uzbek traditional music, became one of the active organizers of the Tashkent UNESCO jazz festival.

VI.5 In summary: geopolitical influences in the development of jazz and ethnojazz

This chapter has shown how jazz, which had been a tool for US political influence since the end of the 1950s through the Jazz Ambassadors program (described in Chapter II), was again used by the United States after 2005 through the Rhythm Road project, although the US continues to mask the real "soft power" motive for supporting tours of American musicians abroad. However, starting in 2000, several jazz festivals have emerged in Central Asia, each promoting their own national identity and capitalizing on jazz by developing their own form and expressions.

The Central Asian jazz festivals, by accepting support from the US and other embassies, unwittingly became accomplices in the implementation of their geopolitical goals. Mainly driven by the desire to organize a good event, festival organizers cannot be too selective especially when they depend on foreign funds. Moreover, the organizers could not recognize if donors had ulterior motives for providing the support. I remember how we, the organizers of the Bishkek festival, refused the offer of a tobacco company, although the festival needed funds. We informally decided not to engage in politics or cooperate with alcohol and tobacco companies. But the alcohol and tobacco companies were business sponsors; the embassies who bring the musicians are a different story; the festival organizers depend on embassies as they hope to feature musicians from their countries.

Foreign organizations that appeared right after the breakup of the Soviet Union provided humanitarian aid to the region to make sure that the newly emerged countries had a smooth transition. Besides the US embassy, other embassies and government bodies promoted their artists and presented their cultures through participation at the festivals.

The Swiss Cooperation Office (SCO) came to the region earlier than the other donor organizations. While the main funds go to meet other needs, the SCO equally paid attention to the culture of the region. The other NGO funding organizations also helped to realize many important cultural initiatives in the region. The Christensen Fund, especially, supported selected organizations for a longer term and helped to implement complex projects which contributed to the biodiversity of the region, in accordance with their main principle. In addition, it provided continuous support for the ethnojazz project, which was able to form and impact Central Asian musicians, who till this day continue developing this new genre and are switching their focus from American traditional music to their own traditional music. International organizations, such as UNESCO, refer to jazz as something important in building dialogue and understanding in the world. As Herbie Hancock noted, "Jazz [. . .] has never been given its just due or recognition for having affected so many lives in various cultures throughout the world [. . .] Unesco is exactly the proper setting to do that. With these musicians from various nations, we're really showing a vision for globalization that's a positive one."[522] The year 2000 was the start of a new era of reappraisal of the meaning of jazz with its limitless possibilities and impact on the world.

Earlier, the Soviet ideological concept of the Friendship of the Peoples of the USSR (*Druzhba narodov SSSR*) also had the effect of "soft power" and had shown how arts and culture were important tools in realizing the Communist's Party's order to educate the image of the Soviet person (*obraz sovetskogo cheloveka*), and helped Soviet officials in ruling the multiethnic Soviet society. The top-down approach, however, did not contribute to understanding between different nationalities which led to ethnic conflicts and tension after the USSR's demise. Despite this, among ordinary Soviet citizens it had a positive impact on relations between different ethnic groups of the country, since the sincere feelings of

[522] *The New York Times*, 2012

musicians and artists were expressed through music and art and this contributed to the friendship between people.

The new jazz festivals in the region now have their own concepts of building a dialogue and developing ethnojazz. Ethnojazz, originating with the Bishkek jazz festival, has been successfully continued and expanded by these new festivals that follow their own concept of expressing national identity through the synthesis of traditional music and jazz.

Chapter VII: Conclusion

VII.1 Ethnojazz – a new sound in Central Asian music: queries and hypotheses

In this dissertation "The Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory: Music and Intercultural Understanding" I have examined the experiences of musicians brought together in a laboratory setting to create a collective musical composition, and consider to what extent the dialogue and collaboration among musicians contributes to the mutual understanding between different groups in Central Asia.

My research examines the phenomenon of Central Asian ethnojazz, a form of jazz, contemporary music, and the traditional music of Central Asia. The term ethnojazz was used for grant purposes, as I and the other festival organizers believed it well expressed the idea of mixing the traditional with the modern. Despite some criticism of the term, the organizers retained it for the festival, since the title, "Ethnojazz in Central Asia," aptly described the synthesis of traditional music of the region with jazz practices and would be understood by the audience and funders. Although an appeal to the national musical heritage existed among the musicians of the Soviet republics, the innovative approach that Central Asian musicians use to express national and regional identities has thrived especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The start of a new page in the history of music in Central Asia has seen a growing interest in expressing national and regional identities in the music of the region.

Ethnojazz has been a unique feature of the annual Bishkek International Jazz Festival in Kyrgyzstan, which I established in 2006, where various Central Asian traditional and jazz musicians developed and presented their ethnojazz compositions. The Bishkek festival and its two projects, Ethnojazz Development in Central Asia (2009-2013) and the Central Asian Ethnojazz Laboratory project (2014-2017) have facilitated the emergence and development

of ethnojazz, a new genre that has led to the appearance of new Central Asian ethnojazz bands and jazz festivals in Dushanbe and Tashkent, and even the inclusion of the word "ethnojazz" in the title of the Dushanbe Ethnojazz Festival.

As I witnessed through participant observation, interviews, music analysis, and other primary sources, laboratory musicians generated new ideas and established social and cultural connections; each of them contributed their artistry, talent and professionalism, and disparate elements were poured into one pot. Their contributions have made a unique sound, redefining their fluid identity and transforming it into a cohesive whole. In addition, I examined whether the music created through this dialogue also resulted in a positive atmosphere due to the combination of different Central Asian cultural groups. Moreover, I explored how these musical experiences promoted mutual understanding among different nationalities of the region while celebrating the cultural diversity of Central Asia, something that has been lacking due to the national and ethnic conflicts both within and between nations.

My research questions asked: (1) how do Central Asian musicians of different nationalities synthesize traditional music based on oral traditions and improvisation with jazz and contemporary music to create a unique sound identified as Central Asian Ethnojazz; (2) how do Central Asian musicians of different nationalities overcome ethnic, national, cultural and professional differences and build a dialogue while expressing their identities during collective music-making; (3) how do Central Asian musicians of different nationalities find the musical settings or materials that are most effective or successful in creating connections; and (4) what are the motives of international donors such as wealthy NGOs and governments represented by embassies, who arrived in the region after the collapse of the Soviet Union, in supporting jazz festivals realized by newly established local NGOs?

As I planned, I used two methods—performative and discursive—to show the musical and socio-political sides of this project. The performative perspective shows how musicians fuse indigenous music, including Central Asian oral traditions, such as the *Manas epic, falak, mugham,* and *maqom,* with jazz and contemporary music to create new and unique sounds and express their regional identities.

Using a discursive approach, I address the broader social impact of ethnojazz across the region. In addition, I discuss the geopolitical interest of international funding organizations in supporting jazz festivals in the region. These two approaches—performative and discursive— and their interconnections provided opportunities for cultural criticism, musical analysis and an ethnographic description of ethnojazz and its aesthetics.

VII.2 Research findings

My findings in this dissertation show how ethnic barriers are most easily overcome and intercultural relationships are facilitated when talented musicians from the region gather together for a certain period of time, have an idea, engage with the process and create ethnojazz compositions collectively. They show both the musical and socio-political impacts, which were observed during the investigation of four research questions and the related hypotheses. The findings are presented below.

The value of a collaborative laboratory setting

To answer my first research question of how musicians collaborate to synthesize traditional music, based on oral culture and improvisation such as *Manas* epic, *maqom*, *mugham*, and *falak*, with jazz and contemporary music to create a unique sound identified as Central Asian Ethnojazz, I examined the way they worked within a laboratory setting in a limited time-period. This was to test my hypothesis that ethnic and national barriers are most

easily overcome under such laboratory conditions. I analyzed all five laboratories that were held under the auspices of the Bishkek jazz festival.

The laboratories gathered musicians with both shared and diverse backgrounds that included a Soviet conservatoire degree, which most of the musicians had, shared Central Asian musical traditions, as well as a crisis in creative expression and lack of creative opportunities, which some of them experienced. I discussed this in Chapter IV where I was able to show that in a laboratory setting contemporary and traditional musicians from diverse backgrounds were able to create a new, unique sound which is described as Central Asian Ethnojazz. This laboratory setting allowed them to explore foreign cultures and new aesthetic norms, as well as discover the commonalities of tradition.

Blending European and indigenous instruments

My second research question was whether in the process of creating music together musicians could express their national identities. I observed that they could achieve this by blending European and indigenous instruments and musical traditions when creating new jazz compositions. In each of the five laboratories there were almost equal numbers of traditional and European instruments. If the European instruments in some of the laboratories dominated, it was then balanced by the way musicians played on those instruments, trying to match the sound of European instruments with the traditional instruments. It required active listening in a collaborative process, as there were no pre-written scores, except in Labs 4 and 5, where musicians collaboratively wrote the structure of the compositions with some identified notes and rhythm. Each of the traditional instruments brought from different regions was new for the majority of the participants. They would spend some time getting familiar with each instrument, its tuning and modes; then musicians would try to match the sound of their instruments, whether traditional or European. I presented various episodes showing how musicians blend these instruments in Chapter IV.

Blending musical traditions of the region with jazz

The experiments with synthesizing traditional music of the region with jazz in both centuries clearly shows that musicians were able to find commonalities between the two traditions. This includes similarities between the steady rhythmic pulsation of jazz and *usul*, a rhythmic formula used by sedentary people; the improvisatory nature of both traditions; and the modes of *maqom* and jazz. The shared frame of styles and genres helps bring musicians together and allows them to integrate their traditional music with jazz.

New Central Asian identity

But there is also a secondary question: what is the regional identity and what is the national identity in new independent Central Asian countries? Throughout the research I was trying to find an answer to this question, as well as to understand the difference between nation, nationality, and nationalism. As Benedict Anderson discussed in his *Imagined Communities,*[523] the new Central Asian countries created "their imagined community" and the new Central Asian leaders introduced new "invented traditions" (to use Eric Hobsbawm's term),[524] to enhance the relevance of their respected country and its position in the world and sometimes even to show its superiority over others. They continue the concept of nation, once created by Stalin, adding their own new interpretation.

However, for new Central Asian musicians, a new regional identity probably does not mean belonging to a national, ethnic, religious or territorial group, but something more. The new sound they created was possible because of all their experiences, having access not only to their national cultural heritage, but also to European musical education, and the exchange of experiences with each other and with Western musicians. Central Asian musicians no longer need to look up to the way their American colleagues play jazz, as they are able to

[523] Anderson 1983
[524] Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983

proudly share their own national heritage and impress Western musicians and audiences with Central Asian jazz.

To summarize, my observations confirmed my second hypothesis. It was evident that musicians who actively participated in the creative process, which involved attentive listening and adapting their own cultural heritage and musical background to the common sound of the collective composition were able to engage in constructive dialogue which overcame differences.

The importance of having an experienced leader

In the course of the five laboratories several different musicians led the process, although there were times when there was not a single true leader (Labs 3), but all the musicians played a role in guiding the process. It is possible to achieve good results in a team without a leader, although a charismatic person will probably still try to lead. However, this requires some conditions to be met—the musicians need to know each other well and maybe have played together before. It also takes time for the musicians to adapt to each other and recognize a leader among them.

My observation of all five laboratories showed the effectiveness of having a true leader, especially when there is a time limit. An American musician and scholar, Mr. Kaziboni, did not meet our expectations when leading the first laboratory, partly because he was not familiar with the musical heritage and could not understand all the discussion, even though he had a volunteer translator to minimize the language barrier. A Russian musician, Alexey Kruglov, had a clear concept of mixing literary texts with music, but he had challenges because he was not familiar with the different music of the region.

The appearance of Artyom Kim in the third laboratory, where he became a guest mentor, resulted in a more creative and productive process than when it was led by peer musicians, who were themselves participants of Lab 3. Under his guidance Labs 4 and 5 went

smoothly and were well organized. The reason for his success is that he had the qualities which were important for working with musicians of the region. He was not only an experienced, highly professional leader, but also a person who had earned their respect. In addition, he knew the musical heritage of the region and spoke the language common to most of the participants. Since most of them were from the Omnibus Ensemble, which had been launched by Artyom, and most other musicians had worked with him before, he was highly respected in the group. In fact, he had exactly the qualities needed to lead the complex process of creating a new piece of music in a laboratory setting, which worked well in this particular case.

While the leader must be strong, he is not a conductor, like in a symphony orchestra where he has the power of making decisions regarding the interpretation of written music. In a laboratory where anyone can make suggestions and share his point of view, the role of a leader is to bring all the good ideas together and facilitate the dialogue that is so important in overcoming differences. “Throw me your ideas!” Artyom would say during a rehearsal. He believed that it was a collective composition, a concept that had been implemented by the Omnibus Ensemble, where he facilitated the ideas and the music was composed collectively. This type of approach is not new in world musical practices, especially among jazz musicians, but it was new to the Omnibus Ensemble, as some of its members first encountered collective composition through their practices in the laboratories.

The stimulus of literary culture: myths, epics, fairy tales

My third research question asked what musical settings or materials are most helpful in creating effective connections. I posited that references to literary culture, including myths, epics, and fairy tales facilitate and are most effective at breaking down ethnic and cultural barriers during the collective creation of music. I tested my hypothesis by examining six examples from Laboratories 1 and 5, with references to the *Manas* epic and to Propp’s

"Morphology of the Folktale," respectively, which I described in musical analysis in Chapter V. These six musical examples showed that musicians from various ethnic backgrounds deeply reacted when there was a story which was analogous to a traditional story in their own cultural tradition which therefore excited their imagination. This clearly helped improve musical creativity and facilitated the creation of connections between the musicians.

Lab I showed how both a Tajik singer and a pianist were influenced by the *manaschi*, even though they did not understand Kyrgyz; moreover, the synthesis of *falak* style singing, and a *Manas* recitation, were perfectly combined. Computer analysis and an interview with the *manaschi* helped me to understand the *manaschi's* perception; even though he could often be in a trance during the recitation, he also reacted to the performers in the composition.

In Lab 5, after being introduced to Vladimir Propp's "Morphology of the Folktale," musicians were engaged with the process of creating compositions more enthusiastically and were surprised with their own spontaneous involvement, which included singing while playing an instrument, something some of them had never done before. The role of jazz in this case was important; it served as an excellent tool for connecting different cultural traditions, backgrounds and identities, at the same time retaining all origins.

The labs provided several examples which showed that musicians were able to enter a creative state faster and be more effective during the process of collective composition when they were inspired by traditional regional literary culture, including epics and fairy tales. These forms of literature awakened their subconscious and facilitated access to deep knowledge that was common to all the nationalities present.

In particular, as the first and fifth laboratories showed, traditional myth narratives provide the strongest possible bond between musicians, helping them in their creative expression. Moreover, the combination of a European music education with an understanding of the origins of traditional music, with reference to ancient music treatises by Eastern

scholars, allowed musicians to create a new Central Asian sound which celebrates the new regional identity.

International funding organizations and their approach

The fourth research question discusses the motives of international donors in supporting various cultural initiatives in the region, including jazz festivals, by funding local NGOs. In my hypothesis I investigate how a number of international donors, both NGOs and governments, use a "soft-power" approach to advance their geopolitical interests and gain influence in a contested region. Comparison with the Soviet concept of *Druzhba narodov*, however, shows that any government program with political overtones has an impact on the people. People can get closer to each other and know each other better through arts and music. Despite the political reasons behind the US cultural diplomacy approach, American musicians showed a genuine interest when they were introduced to the Central Asian musical heritage. On the musicians' level, there is a genuine interest in the culture of others and in opportunities to explore that culture through joint music making.

VII.3 Contribution to ethnomusicology, music of Central Asia and jazz studies

From ethnomusicological perspectives, this dissertation makes two primary contributions: to scholarship on Central Asian music, and scholarship on jazz. First, with its improvisatory nature and flexibility jazz helps to incorporate different traditions, contemporary and folk, and because of its all-embracing quality it brings together musicians with different professional backgrounds in a new way; when various instruments, classical and indigenous, different modes, and a variety of folk music are all blended they produce a unique Central Asian sound, which helps musicians to express their national and regional identities.

Second, jazz, because of its capacity for spontaneous creativity, represents freedom and attracts musicians of the region to express "individual freedom" which is in opposition to the Soviet Union's ideology as well as to the new Central Asian states' authoritarian policies and lack of opportunities for artistic expression. But while jazz in some respects represents freedom, it is strongly associated with the music of the West, so there are new political implications as a result of the active involvement of international organizations.

Jazz musicians are representatives of their countries as well as being personally enthusiastic about collaborating with local musicians. The historical role of jazz as a symbol of cultural diplomacy, which appeared during the Cold War, and the "soft power" policy of some Western nations, continue today through the support of international organizations, especially the American Embassy. Most of the international organizations, which appeared after the collapse of the Soviet Union, are competing to win the hearts as well as minds of Central Asians, which seems very important for both economic and political ends.

Until recently, there was almost no mention of jazz outside the US in books on jazz. Bohlman and Plastino in their book *Jazz Worlds World Jazz* (2016) noted that "the story of jazz is not trapped in American history books but alive in global modernity."[525] In an even more recent book Johnson argues that: "neglecting and even completely ignoring the story of jazz beyond the borders of the US, the established canonical account seriously limits our understanding of the cultural work that jazz could perform, and falsifies what it did perform, as a global force."[526] While the jazz diaspora has been reflected in some of the scholarly books lately, jazz in Central Asia is still an unknown phenomenon in music literature.

My research shows the cultural significance of newly emerged Central Asian ethnojazz; it is an important contribution to the new studies of jazz and in understanding the

[525] Bohlman and Plastino 2016
[526] Johnson 2019, 14

global jazz diaspora. It fills a gap in the study of Central Asian music and it will be valuable for future scholars of the region.

VII.4 Recommendations for future research and projects

While my research produces significant findings from the perspective of the music and musicians, future research could be done on the audiences' perception of ethnojazz. I had identified positive feedback from the audience in my research, which could be measured with full houses at the festivals I mentioned and enthusiasm among the audience when they heard traditional instruments and melodies in jazz compositions, but a survey during a festival with specific questions about ethnojazz would help to learn more about the audience's perception of the new genre.

It would be useful to find out if musicians could create new music so effectively if they do not know each other as well as those who took part in the laboratories. Certainly, it was evident from the very first Bishkek jazz festival that traditional and jazz musicians could improvise together, since jazz and oral traditions of the region have points of contact, but this is not the same as creating a new composition, as that requires more than just having improvisation skills. In all five laboratories there was no absolute stranger, as all the musicians knew at least one person from the group, either because they belonged to the same country, or because they had met previously at the festival. Almost all the participants of Labs 4 and 5 knew each other very well, because most were from the Omnibus Ensemble. Artyom mentioned in his interview that people who love each other can create good music together.[527] Perhaps the success of the last two laboratories could be explained by this fact: all the musicians acted like family and friends.

[527] Artyom, interview with author, 2017 (my translation).

There is an opportunity for research on new jazz festivals in Central Asia to analyze more compositions by Central Asian musicians and their experiments with ethnojazz. A comparison with the Bishkek jazz festival would also be beneficial.

Further research might be conducted to evaluate the effect of the laboratory as a model for overcoming differences and mitigating tensions in different geographical locations and different ethnicities. All my arguments and hypotheses are viewed and shaped from my perspective and position as a founder and director of the Bishkek jazz festival, founder of PF CAAM, and coordinator as well as founder of the two ethnojazz projects.

More investigation could be done on Central Asian oral traditions and their interrelation with jazz and how the improvisational nature of Central Asian oral traditions and jazz are combined. For instance, the *Manas* epic is a big field for research; no research has been done on the musical aspect of *Manas* and the collaboration of the *manaschi* with other musicians. This is partly because there are not many projects where a *manaschi* performs with musicians, as it is traditionally a solitary art.

Another line of research could be more detailed investigation into what motivates international organizations to provide support, and sometimes later to terminate their support. This would help to better understand the geo-political interest of Western countries in the region. In addition, research on former Soviet Central Asian jazz festivals and musicians of that time who experimented with music from their national heritage would contribute to the history of ethnojazz development in the region. Perhaps a series of interviews with mature Central Asian musicians who participated in former Soviet jazz festivals is needed to compile the missing history.

To realize complex projects like the ethnojazz laboratory, requires significant funding and efforts by professional event organizers. To share the results of laboratory work with a wider audience, as we did at the Bishkek jazz festival, seems important. However, the most

important aspect is to create an arts platform where musicians from the region can meet and collaborate without any obligation to produce a final result to perform on the big stage. This approach would, I think, give musicians more opportunities for creative work and time to focus on each other's contribution and to communicate with each other. I think a project like a summer ethnojazz camp in different cities of the region, could involve the younger population of musicians from not only the capital cities but also from the rural areas. A mature, experienced artist, like Yuri Parfenov, who grew up in Central Asia and now lives in Moscow, could be a very good mentor for young Central Asian musicians, to show the technique of how to use European instruments to play Central Asian music. It seems likely that unless a special laboratory-style project can be held from time to time creativity among local musicians will decrease, since musicians face the constant need to earn a living and therefore to play primarily popular music at restaurants and special events such as weddings.

The collaboration of musicians from different professional backgrounds and from different geographic regions is essential to foster the intercultural dialogue most needed in today's complex world. When I presented my paper "The New Music of Central Asia: Ethnojazz Laboratory and Intercultural Understanding" at the 45th World ICTM Conference in Bangkok, in July of 2019, a scholar from Georgia (Caucasus region) commented: "I wish we could have such a project in our region!" This is understandable, since the Caucasus region is involved in a prolonged ethnic conflict.

I recognize that other similar initiatives contribute to addressing issues of identity and transnational musical connection and multicultural dialogue. In recent years, major music awards have acknowledged the contribution of musicians to intercultural dialogue. In 2017, a Grammy for the Best World Music Album was awarded to Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble for their album "Sing Me Home", which features musicians from the Middle East and Asia "in hopes both of finding artistic commonalities and furthering the cause of

intercultural understanding."[528] A Dutch composer, Joël Bons, was awarded the 2019 Grawemeyer Award for the "Nomaden" composition written for a cellist and eighteen musicians from Asia, the Middle East and Europe.[529] Joël Bons, who also influenced Artyom Kim, leader of the 4th and 5th laboratories, and who for a long time worked toward integrating music of different cultures said: "I imagined an unlimited potential of combinations and an unheard spectrum of timbres. My aim was to create a piece in which the musicians and the instruments, in all their cultural differences, could bloom in full glory."[530]

The importance of musical meetings is to represent one's own culture and mix it with the culture of others, be it through jazz or contemporary music. Such meetings serve primarily as an opportunity to get acquainted with traditional music and thereby bring people from different continents closer together; participants have a desire to hear others and to be heard, and most importantly, to be imbued with respect for other cultures.

I believe that the coming together of different peoples to create Central Asian ethnojazz, which emerged at the peak of political instability and ethnic tension in the region, provides a good model of intercultural dialogue that could be projected onto any other areas of our life and contribute to the broader social connectedness.

[528] CGTN 2018
[529] Cooper 2018
[530] Ibid.

Figure VII.1: Musicians from Lab 4 after the performance at the Philharmonic Hall. Bishkek, 2017, photo by author.

Bibliography

Abashin, Sergei. 2012. “Nation-construction in post-Soviet Central Asia.” In *Soviet and post-Soviet Identities,* edited by Mark Bassin and Catriona Kelly, 150-68. Cambridge University Press.

Adams, Laura L. 2010. *The Spectacular State: Culture and National Identity in Uzbekistan*. Politics, History, and Culture. Duke University Press.

Alagushev, Balbaĭ, and Aleksei Sergeevich Kaplan. 1973. *Kirgizskie opery.* Frunze: "Kyrgyzstan."

Anderson, Benedict R. O’G. 1983. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso Editions / NLB.

Allworth, Edward. 1994. *Central Asia: 130 Years of Russian Dominance, A Historical Overview*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

“Aytysh/Aytys, Art of Improvisation.” n.d. UNESCO, https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/aitysh-aitys-art-of-improvisation-00997

Azizi, Faroghat. 2016. “Falak: Spiritual Songs of the Mountain Tajiks.” In *The Music of Central Asia,* edited by T. Levin, S. Daukeeva, and E. Köchümkulova, 3-25. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Balasanyan, Sergey. 2003. “What hinders the development of opera in Central Asia.” In *Balasanyan.* S. *Articles, Letters, Memories*, 28-36.Moscow.

Barban, Efim. 2007. *Black Music, White Freedom: Music and Perception of Avant-Garde Jazz.* Sankt Peterburg: Kompositor.

Barban, Efim. 1985. “The Ganelin Trio: An Unguided Comet.” In *Russian Jazz: New Identity*, edited by Leo Feigin, 30-38. New York: Quartet Books.

Bartol′d, V. V., and Clifford Edmund Bosworth. 1968. *Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion.* 3rd ed., London: Luzac.

Bassin, Mark, and Catriona Kelly. 2012. *Soviet and Post-Soviet Identities*. Cambridge University Press.

Batashev, Aleksei. 1972. *Sovetsky Djaz.* Moskva: Muzyka.

Batashev, Aleksei. 1987. “‘Vostochnyi djazz’ Vagifa Mustafy-Zade.” [Oriental jazz of Vagif Mustafa-zadeh.] In *Sovetskyi djaz. Problemy. Sobytiya. Mastera*, edited by Aleksander and Olga Medvedevs. Moskva: Sovetskyi kompositor.

Belyaev, V. 1962. *Ocherki Po Istorii Muzyki Narodov SSSR.* Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe Muzykal’noe Izdatel’stvo.

Bohlman, Philip V., and Goffredo Plastino. 2016. *Jazz Worlds, World Jazz*. Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology. The University of Chicago Press.

Bullock, Ross Phillip. 2006. “Staging Stalinism: The Search for Soviet Opera in the 1930s.” *Cambridge Opera Journal* 1: 83-108.

Capisani, Giampaolo R. 2000. *The Handbook of Central Asia: A Comprehensive Survey of the New Republics.* London: I.B. Tauris.

“Central Asia.” n.d. Encyclopaedia Britannica, https://www.britannica.com/place/Central-Asia#/media/1/102288/886

Cohen, H. G. 2011. “Visions of freedom: Duke Ellington in the Soviet Union.” *Popular Music* 3: 297-313.

CGTN. 2018. “Yo-Yo Ma and his ensemble win Best World Music Grammy.” *CGTN*, June 28, 2018. Yo-Yo Ma and his ensemble win Best World Music Grammy - CGTN

Cooper, Michael. 2018. “A Border-Crossing Work Wins One of Music’s Biggest Prizes.” *The New York Times*, December 3, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/03/arts/music/grawemeyer-prize-joel-bons.html

Cowell, Henry. 1969. “Vliyanie Vostoka na Muzyku Zapada.” [Influence of the East on the Music of the West.] In *Muzyka Narodov Azii i Afriki*, edited by V. S. Vinogradov, 274-284. Moskva: Sovetskyi kompositor.

Crawford, Gordon. 2001. *Foreign Aid and Political Reform: A Comparative Analysis of Democracy Assistance and Political Conditionality.* Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave.

DeVeaux Scott and Giddins, Gary. 2009. *Jazz.* New York: W. W. Norton & Co.

Dilip Hiro. 2010. “Kyrgyzstan’s second tulip revolution.” *The Guardian*, April 8. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/apr/08/kyrgyzstan-second-tulip-revolution

Dyer, Svetlana Rimsky-Korsakoff. 1991. *Soviet Dungans in 1985 : Birthdays, Weddings, Funerals and Kolkhoz Life*. CCS Grant Series: No. 1. Center for Chinese Studies.

Dyer, Svetlana Rimsky-Korsakoff. 1991. *Soviet Dungans in 1985: Birthdays, Weddings, Funerals and Kolkhoz Life.* Taipei: Center for Chinese Studies.

“Ethnojazz: Central Asian ethnojazz laboratory – Manas.” 2014. Produced by Bishkek International Jazz Festival “Jazz-Bishkek-Spring,” April 27, 2014. Youtube video, 6:35. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZmaR-IgjQ_Q

“Ethnojazz with the manaschi.” 2014. Produced by Bishkek International Jazz Festival “Jazz-Bishkek-Spring,” April 27, 2014. Youtube video, 1:59. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eHXrtzxhkdo

Farkhadov, Rauf, and Fariza Babayeva. 2010. *Rafik Babaev: Ot temy k improvizii* [Rafig Babayev: From theme to improvisation]. Baku: Letterpress.

Feyertag, Vladimir. 2014. *Djaz ot Leningrada do Peterburga.* [Jazz from Leningrad to St. Petersburg.] Saint Petersburg: Music Planet.

Feyertag, Vladimir. 2010. *Istoriya djazovogo ispolnite'lstva v Rossii.* [The history of jazz performance in Russia.] Saint Petersburg: Skifia.

Frishkopf, Michael. 2012. "Ethnojazz." *In Ethnojazz in Central Asia.* Bishkek: PF CAAM

Frolova-Walker, Marina. 1998. "National in Form, Socialist in Content:" Musical Nation-Building in the Soviet Republics. *Journal of the American Musicological Society* Vol. 51, No. 2, pp. 331-371. University of California Press.

Frye, Richard Nelson. 1996. *The Heritage of Central Asia: From Antiquity to the Turkish Expansion.* Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers.

Ginzburg, Semyon. 1926. *Jazz Band and Contemporary Music*. Leningrad, Academia.

Gilev, Sergey. 2008. *Besedy o djaze.*[Conversations about jazz.] Tashkent.

Hobsbawm, Eric and Terence Ranger, eds.1983. *The Invention of Traditions.* Cambridge University Press.

Huseynova, Aida. 2016. *Music of Azerbaijan: From Mugham to Opera.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Kabar. 2006. "The Ministry of Culture of Kyrgyzstan intends to apply all efforts to the spiritual and cultural revival of the people of Kyrgyzstan." *Kyrgyzstan Review*, January 16. http://rus.gateway.kg/v-etom-godu-ministerstvo-kultury-kyr/

Kaplan, Fred. 2008. "When Ambassadors had Rhythm." *The New York Times,* June 29, 2008. https://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/29/arts/music/29kapl.html.

Karomatov, Faizulla and Elsner, Jürgen. 1984. "Maqam and maqom." In *Muzyka narodov Azii i Afriki*, [Music of the peoples of Asia and Africa.] edited by Vinogradov. V., 88-135. Moskva: Sovetskyi kompozitor.

Karomatly, Faizulla. 2009. "The musical heritage of the Turkic peoples in our day." In *Music of the Turkic World*, edited by S. Utegalieva, 215-225. Almaty: Dike Press.

Keepnews, Peter. 2017. "Larry Coryell, Guitarist of Fusion Before It Had a Name, Dies at 73." *The New York Times*, February 21, 2017.

Kinzer, Stephen, 2000. "A Legendary Hero Guides a Reborn Kyrgyzstan." *The New York Times*, January 2, 2000. https://www.nytimes.com/2000/01/02/world/a-legendary-hero-guides-a-reborn-kyrgyzstan.html

Köchümkulova, Elmira. 2016. "Introduction to Central Asian Epic Traditions." In *The Music of Central Asia,* edited by T. Levin, S. Daukeeva, and E. Köchümkulova, 3-25. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Köchümkulova, Elmira and Qojakhmetova, Jangül. 2016. "Aqyns and Improvised Poetry Competitions among the Kazakh and Kyrgyz." In *The Music of Central Asia,* edited by T. Levin, S. Daukeeva, and E. Köchümkulova, 149-178. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Jami, Abdurakhman. 1960. *Traktat o muzyke.* [*Music Treatise*], edited by Belyaev. V. M. Tashkent. Akad.nauk UzSSR [Academy of Science of Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic].

Johnson, Bruce. 2020. *Jazz Diaspora : New Approaches to Music and Globalisation*. Transnational Studies in Jazz. Routledge.

Levin, Theodore. 2016. "Music in Central Asia an Overview." In *The Music of Central Asia,* edited by T. Levin, S. Daukeeva, and E. Köchümkulova, 3-25. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Levin, Theodore Craig. 1996. *The Hundred Thousand Fools of God: Musical Travels in Central Asia (and Queens, New York)*. Indiana University Press.

Maksutov, Karim. 2014. "Devyatyi festival 'Djazz_Bishkek_Vesna': ot ethno-djaza k polnomu spektru improvizazionnoi myzyki." ["The ninth festival 'Jazz_Bishkek_Vesna': from ethno-jazz to the full spectrum of improvisational music."] *Jazz.ru*. May 5, 2014. https://www.jazz.ru/2014/05/16/jazz-bishkek-spring2014

Mazievsky, Igor.2007. Folk instrumental music as a phenomenon of culture. Almaty: Daik Press.

Medvedev, Aleksander. 1987. *Sovetskyi djaz. Problemy. Sobytiya. Mastera.* Moskva: Sovetskyi kompositor.

Megoran, Nick. 2017. *Nationalism in Central Asia: A Biography of the Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan Boundary*. America: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Medvedevs, Aleksander and Olga, 1987. *Sovetskyi djaz. Problemy. Sobytiya. Mastera.* Moskva: Sovetskyi kompositor.

Miller, Rebecca S., Pettan Svanibor, Rasmussen Anne K., and Sarkissian Margaret. 2016. "Negotiating the Personal and Professional: Ethnomusicologists and Uncomfortable Truth." In *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 48: 186-203.

Minor,William. 1995. *Unzipped souls: A jazz journey through the Soviet Union.* Temple University Press.

Nye, Joseph S. 1990. *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power.* New York: Basic Books.

Palley, Thomas I. 2005. "Soros on International Capital Markets and Developing Economies: Multiple Equilibria and the Role of Policy." *Eastern Economic Journal* 31, no. 3: 407-19.

Propp, V. I͡A. 1928. *Morfologiya skazki* [Morphology of the Folktale.] Leningrad. Academiya.

Propp, V. I͡A, Sibelan E. S. Forrester, and Jack Zipes. 2012. *The Russian Folktale*. Series in Fairy-Tale Studies. Wayne State University Press.

Raussert, Wilfried. 2018. "Sounds of Freedom, Cosmopolitan Democracy, and Shifting Cultural Politics: From 'The Jazz Ambassador Tours' to 'The Rhythm Road'." In *Politics and Cultures of Liberation: Media, Memory, and Projections of Democracy*, edited by Bak Hans, Mehring Frank, and Roza Mathilde, 192-208. LEIDEN; BOSTON: Brill.

Reichl, Karl. 2016 "Oral Epics into the twenty-First century: The case of the Kyrgyz Epic *Manas*." *Journal of American Folklore* 129: 327-344.

Reichl, Karl. 2018. *Turkic Oral Epic Poetry: Traditions, Forms, Poetic Structure*. New York: Routledge.

Rumer, Eugene, Richard Sokolsky, and Paul Stronski. 2016. Report. "U.S. Policy Toward Central Asia 3.0." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Schwarz, Boris. 1983. *Music and Musical Life In Soviet Russia.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

"Sergey Balasanyan." n.d. https://www.kino-teatr.ru/kino/composer/sov/30784/forum/

Shakhnazarova, Nona Grigor'evna. 2013. *Izbrannye stat'i, Vospominaniya.* [Selected articles, memoirs.] Gosudarstvennyi Institut Iskusstvoznaniya. Moscow.

Schoeberlein-Engel, John Samuel. 1994. "Identity in Central Asia: Construction and Contention in the Conceptions of `Özbek,' `Tâjik,' `Muslim,' `Samarquandi' and Other Groups." *Dissertation Abstracts International*.

Starr, Frederick. 1994. *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union. 1917–1991.* New York: Limelight Editions.

Sultanova, Razia, and Megan Rancier, eds. 2018. *Turkic Soundscapes From Shamanic Voices to Hip-Hop.* New York: Routledge.

Sultanova, Razia and Broughton, Simon. 2000. "Central Asian Republics." In *World Music: The Rough Guide,* edited by Broughton, Simon and Mark Ellingham, 24-32. London: Rough Guides.

Sumits, Will and Levin, Theodore, 2016. "Maqom Traditions of the Tajiks and Uzbeks." In *The Music of Central Asia,* edited by T. Levin, S. Daukeeva, and E. Köchümkulova, 320-343. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Suny, Ronald Grigor. 2012. "The contradictions of identity: being Soviet and national in the USSR and after." In *Soviet and post-Soviet Identities*, edited by Mark Bassin and Catriona Kelly, 17-37. Cambridge University Press.

Spector, Johanna. 1994. "Musical Tradition and Innovation." In *Central Asia: 130 Years of Russian Dominance, A Historical Overview*, edited by Allworth, Edward, 435-484. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Spinetti, Federico. 2005. "Open Borders. Tradition and Tajik Popular Music: Questions of Aesthetics, Identity and Political Economy." *Ethnomusicology Forum* 14: 185-211.

Tarasov, Vladimir. 2004. *Trio.* Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie. [Moscow: New literary review].

Turdalieva, Cholpon and Rene Provis. 2017. "Dynamics of Reciprocity and Networks of the Kyrgyz through Bishkek Toi Making." *Central Asian Affairs* 4: 197-216.

Vinogradov, Viktor. 1979. "Poyut Manaschi." *Muzykalnaya zhizn* 7: 16.

The Christensen Fund. 2014. "Biocultural Jazz born in Bishkek." http://www.christensenfund.org.

The Economist. 2005. "A tulip revolution." March 24, 2005. http://www.economist.com/node/3785139

The Economist. 2010. "Better than feared." July 3, 2010. https://www.economist.com/asia/2010/07/01/better-than-feared

The Economist. 2010. "Bridging the divine." October 22, 2011. https://www.economist.com/asia/2011/10/22/bridging-the-divide

The Economist. 2019. "After a siege of his home, an ex-president faces grave charges." August 17, 2019. https://www.economist.com/asia/2019/08/17/after-a-siege-of-his-home-an-ex-president-faces-grave-charges

U.S. Embassy in the Kyrgyz Republic. 2018. "Jazz Bernstein Musicians to Perform Concerts in Bishkek." June 29, 2018. https://kg.usembassy.gov/jazz-bernstein-musicians-to-perform-concerts-in-bishkek/

Dilip Hiro. 2010. "Kyrgyzstan's second tulip revolution." *The Guardian,* April 8, 2010. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/apr/08/kyrgyzstan-second-tulip-revolution

Vinogradov, Viktor. 1979. " Poyut Manaschi." *Muzykalnaya zhizn* 7: 16.

Vyzgo, 1980. *Myzykal'nye instrumenty Srednei Azii*. [Musical instruments of Central Asia.] Moskva: Muzyka.

Von Eschen, Penny M. 2004. *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Walikhanov, Shoqan. 1985. *Sobranie sochinenyi.*[Collected works.], Vol.5. Main editorial office of the Kazakh Soviet Encyclopedia, Alma -Ata.

Yanov-Yanovskaya, Natal'ya Solomonovna. 1979. *Uzbekskaya Simfonicheskaya Muzyka.* [Uzbek Symphony Music.] Izdatel'stvo Literatury i Iskusstva. Tashkent.

Yudakhin, Konstantin. 1957. *Kirgizsko-Russkiy Slovar*'. [Kyrgyz-Russian Dictionary.] Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo Inostrannyh i Nazional'nyh Slovarei. Moscow.

Yunusova, Violetta, and Kharuto, Alexander. 2016. "Computer Sound Analysis of Traditional Music of Transcaucasia and Central Asia." In *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, Vol.48, 136-145.

Yurchak, Alexei. 2006. *Everything Was Forever, Until it Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Yusupov, Leonid. 1987. "Jazz in Uzbekistan." In *Sovetskyi djazz. Problemy. Sobytiya. Mastera,* [Soviet Jazz. Problems. Events. Masters.] 485-495. Moskva: Sovetskyi kompozitor [Moscow, Soviet composer.]