

UZBEKISTAN

Musical Traditions of the **Karakalpaks**



The ancient, orally-transmitted epic tradition of the Karakalpaks, woven with the songs they sing in their everyday lives, forms a rich musical tapestry in the arid land of Karakalpakstan (an autonomous republic in Uzbekistan). From lullabies, Jew's harp solos, wedding tunes to the guttural cantillations of *jirow* bards, life stories of epic heroes sung by *baqsy* bards, creative performances on *dutar*, and instrumental pieces played by small ensembles, these recordings provide a panoramic view of Karakalpak music. They were drawn from 10 hours of field recordings made in 2000 during an expedition conducted under the aegis of the UNESCO office in Tashkent. 73 minutes, 22-page notes.

This is a previously-unpublished volume of the UNESCO Collection of Traditional Music, which was transferred to the Smithsonian to keep the series publicly available.



COVER PHOTO:
Turghanbay Kalendarov
performing on the *dutar*. Nukus,
2000.
Photo: Jean During

Karakalpak women. Kegeli,
2000.
Photo: Jean During

1. **Hawjar**, Jilva Kegeli vocal ensemble 1:10
2. **Jew's Harp Solos**, Genjexan Esimbet-qizi, *shanqobyz* 2:54
3. **Hayyu** (Lullaby), Qalbike Uzaqbergenova, vocal 2:27
4. **Kelte Nalysh**, Qalbike Uzaqbergenova, vocal and *dutar* 2:22
5. **Qobyz Namasy** (Melody on the Qobyz), Baxtiyar Esemuratov, *qobyz* 1:05
6. **Qaytarip Ber Amudariamni** (Give Me Back My Amu Darya [River]), Baxtiyar Esemuratov, vocal and *qobyz* 3:15
7. **Qoshaq "Sen Yar Gedeli"** (Since You Left), Turghanbay Kalendarov, vocal and *dutar*; Jarylkaghan Esjanov, *ghirjek* 3:00
8. **Kepter Muxallasi**, Tengelbay Qalliev, vocal and *dutar*; Injegul Saburova, *ghirjek* 2:25
9. **Siy Perde** (Gift Song), Ghayrat Otemuratov, *dutar* 3:10
10. **Bes Perde**, Gulnara Allabergenova, vocal; Turghanbay Kurbanov, *dutar* 3:21
11. **Kizlar Uyga Kir** (Girls, Come into the House), Bibigawhar Uzaqbaeva, vocal; Turghanbay Kalendarov, *dutar*; Jarylkaghan Esjanov, *ghirjek* 3:03
12. **Qara Jorgha** (The Black Steed), Turghanbay Kalendarov, *dutar* 1:31
13. **Ne Payda Namasy** (What's The Use), Zulfiya Arzumbetova, vocal and *dutar*; Injegul Saburova, *ghirjek* 2:54
14. **Qara Jorgha** (The Black Steed), Ghayrat Otemuratov, *dutar* 3:02
15. **Aq Ishik** (The White Coat), Ghayrat Otemuratov, *dutar* 2:37

16. **Laylay**, Gulbahor Rametova, vocal and *dutar*; Injegul Saburova, *ghirjek*; Azat Turdibayev, *bulaman* 4:28
17. **Oramal**, Gulbahor Rametova, vocal and *dutar*; Injegul Saburova, *ghirjek*; Azat Turdibayev, *bulaman* 3:25
18. **Dembermes**, Roza Kutekeeva, vocal, with the Ensemble of the Nukus Philharmonia 2:11
19. **Adingnen**, Student ensemble from Sanat Bilim Yurti, directed by Tengelbay Qalliev 3:30
20. **Kelte Nalysh**, Turghanbay Kurbanov, *dutar* and vocal 4:28
21. **Musa Sen Yary**, Turghanbay Kurbanov, *dutar* and vocal; Jarylkaghan Esjanov, *ghirjek* 3:40
22. **Qoshim Palvan Namasy** (Melody of Qoshim the Champion), Turghanbay Kurbanov, *dutar* and vocal; Jarylkaghan Esjanov, *ghirjek* 3:58
23. **Uch Top Namasy**, Turghanbay Kurbanov, *dutar* and vocal; Jarylkaghan Esjanov, *ghirjek* 3:04
24. **Gel Ey Laylim** (Come, My Leyli), Turghanbay Kurbanov, *dutar* and vocal; Jarylkaghan Esjanov, *ghirjek* 3:19
25. **Qaradaly**, Turghanbay Kurbanov and the Ensemble of the Nukus Philharmonia 3:06

UZBEKISTAN: Musical Traditions of the Karakalpaks

Kalmurza Kurbanov and Jean During



Map of Karakalpakstan Republic in Uzbekistan.

This album provides a panoramic view of Karakalpak music drawn from 10 hours of field recordings that were made in the course of an expedition organized in 2000 with help from the influential bard Turghanbay Kurbanov (1946–2007) and conducted under the aegis of the UNESCO office in Tashkent.

THE KARAKALPAK PEOPLE

The Karakalpaks are a Turkic people of Central Asia who presently number less than 600,000, around 80% of whom live in the northeast of Uzbekistan in a region known as the Autonomous Republic of Karakalpakstan within Uzbekistan. Between the second and fourth centuries CE, the Huns, who had reached the Aral steppe from the east, intermingled to some extent with the local population. In the sixth and seventh centuries, the region was occupied by Turkic tribes. By the end of the 16th century, the Karakalpaks were known by their present name. They were engaged in seminomadic activities (raising cattle and horses), agriculture, and fishing.

At the start of the 19th century, the Karakalpaks pledged their allegiance to the khanate of Khiva. Like all Turkic peoples, they led a hard life, with constant fighting, and have preserved to the present day a rich heritage that tells of an eventful history. The region has been prosperous despite its climate extremes: freezing in winter and torrid in summer. In recent decades, Karakalpakstan has garnered international attention for its dramatic ecological disaster caused by the irresponsible use of irrigation, which considerably reduced the level of the Aral Sea, resulting in the salinization of irrigated areas of the Amu Darya and the Syr Darya rivers. Despite these difficult conditions, indigenous populations continue to inhabit the region.

THE KARAKALPAK EPIC TRADITIONS

Jirow Bards

The Karakalpak language, close to the Kazakh, belongs to

the Eastern Turkic linguistic group and is transcribed in an adapted Latin alphabet. The orally-transmitted epic tradition is an indivisible part of the Karakalpak heritage. Epic poems—*dastans* (or *destan*)—are sung or cantillated by three sorts of *dastanshys* (singers of *dastans*): *jirow* bards, *baqsy* bards (also spelled *bakhshi*), and *qissaxan* storytellers. They are distinguished from each other by the significance of the stories in the repertoire, the style of performance, the sung melodies, and the instrumental parts.

Of all these *dastan* forms, the first to appear was the art of *jirow*. The term *jirow* comes from the word *jir*, whose original meaning derives from related terms such as *yighlash*, to cry, and *yuqlow*, to visit, and also *kuylash*, to sing. *Jirows* sing about

heroic figures and their quests for the beloved that fate has singled out for them. Legendary and mystical characters also play an important part in these stories. The poetic texts that occur within prose narratives (*qara soz*: literally, “black words”) follow meters of seven, eight, or eleven syllables, like the folk songs.

The *dastans* performed by *jirow* bards have a distinctive feature: they are always sung accompanied on the *qobyz* (bowed fiddle) to melodic schemes known as *nama*. The same *nama* may be sung three or four times in the course of a narration; however, the great

bards who know many *namas* never use the same one twice during a performance.

The *jirows* sing the *namas* in a guttural vocal style called *ishki avaz* (inner voice) produced by constricting the throat (see tracks 5 and 6). The melodies are mainly based on the E and the A modes, and their range does not exceed a sixth, a seventh, or an octave. They are most often based on two- and three-beat rhythms.

The bowed fiddle of the *jirow*, the *qobyz*, is an ancient Turkic instrument. Moreover, *dastans* accompanied by the *qobyz* are



Turghanbay Kurbanov, S. Kaipnazarov, and Ziada Sharipova. Bishkek, 2001.
Photo: Jean During

one of the oldest *dastan* genres of the peoples of Central Asia. The *qobyz* is found today only among the Karakalpaks, the Kazakhs, and the Kyrgyz. It has two parts: the body, with an inverted pear shape and the neck. The lower part of the body is covered with camel skin or oxhide, but the upper part is open. It has two strings made of horsehair, 70 to 75 cm in length, tuned a fourth apart, and played in a range of two octaves. The *qobyz* is usually carved from a single piece of wood, but in recent years *jirows* have begun to use a type of *qobyz* known as a *qurama*, whose body and neck are made separately, and only assembled when the *jirow* is about to play. This type of *qobyz* is connected with the nomadic lifestyle of the *jirows*: it may have been designed to fit easily into a saddlebag.

In addition to *dastans* (epic poems), the repertoire of the *jirow* also includes *terma* and *tolgaw*. The *terma* belongs to the didactic genre “wisdom and counsel” (*pand nasihat*), and it takes the form of a short song, usually 25 to 30 verses in length. The *tolgaw*, which may be called a historic poem, is a longer song about a particular historic event. It generally contains between 100 and 150 verses. The *tolgaws* have been forgotten today, with the exception of the history of Armanbet Bi.

Baqsy Bards

Another type of Karakalpak bard is the *baqsy*. Unlike the *jirow*, he sings in full voice (*oshiq avaz*) stories that generally revolve around love and emotions. Besides the great lyric poems, the repertoire of the *baqsys* includes the poetry of classical authors who sometimes use a sophisticated system of quantitative verse meter (*aruz*) based on long and short syllables.

There are two styles—northern and southern—in the *baqsy* genre. The style and manner of singing the *nama* in the south differ from those of the Turkmen and Khorezm *baqsys* in the neighboring province. The bards of the southern school



Ziada Sharipova. Bishkek, 2000.
Photo: CLOÉ

perform the *dastans* (epic poems) with the *dutar* (lute), the *ghirjak* (or *qijak*, spike fiddle), and the *balaman* (small clarinet). The southern *nama* melodies are usually lively and dance-like, and contain complex instrumental parts. They typically feature a descending contour, beginning in high register and ending in low.

The melodies of the northern *baqsys* are closer to folk songs and give more prominence to the vocal parts. The singer usually employs a sort of tremolo or slight trill, called an *irghaq*, a term which refers to a decorative motif in textile arts in the shape of a horizontal letter *s*. The *irghaq* is one of the vocal characteristics of the northern *baqsys* and their repertoire.

Despite their differences, the two styles have much in common, especially the *namas*, which constitute the basis of invariable rhythmic cycles.

The *namas* of the *baqsys*, like those of the *jirows*, are based on the minor mode, the E mode, and the D mode. Mixed modes are also occasionally found. They generally have a range from a sixth to a ninth or tenth. Some *namas* have simple, short two- or three-beat rhythms, others

use asymmetrical rhythms in 5/8 or 7/8, while a third group occasionally has mixed rhythms, such as sequences of 5/8 in a context of 2/4.



Celebrated bard Turghanbay Kurbanov toasting his talented student Gulnara Allabergenova, who has now become an acclaimed bard herself. Their toast symbolized *fatiha*—a blessing and transmission from master to disciple. Nukus, 2000.
Photo: Jean During

Qissaxan Storytellers

The tradition of *qissaxan nama* was still extant at the end of the 20th century but has now practically disappeared. In many instances, the *qissaxan* were educated and knew the poems from the manuscripts or else had learned them by heart.

The *qissaxan*'s performance belonged to the recitative genre, close to natural speech, but with two or three *namas* and some *irghaq* vocal effect.

If a *jirow* or a *baqsy* was not available to perform at a festival, then a storyteller would cantillate the poems. When someone wished to play a joke on his friend, he would give money to the *qissaxan* so that the latter would make fun of him during his performance. This was known as “making fun of someone in song” (*ustidan nama olish*).

The Training of Young *Dastanshys*

The training of pupils of the various kinds of *dastanshys* (singers of *dastans*) traditionally followed certain rules. The period of apprenticeship used to last for years, during which time the disciple would even carry out domestic chores for his master. The master would examine the pupil from time to time and, when the latter approached perfection, would give him his blessing (*patiha* or *fatiha*) to become a *jirow* or *baqsy*. This formal event took place before an assembly of experts.

Nowadays, even if the pupils are still taught by a master, their relationship is usually not as close: they no longer have the opportunity to live with their teachers because they have to engage in professional musical activities to earn a living. Many modern-day aspiring *baqsys* and *jirows* receive their training in academic settings. Attending classes in a music faculty

does not necessarily influence the style of these young artists, however. It is quite natural for a traditional artist to enroll in a university in order to expand his or her knowledge in different domains related to the culture of the epic bards, such as philology, ethnography, or history.

Music in Everyday Life

In addition to the *dastans* described in the previous section, the Karakalpaks have preserved songs that are considered a part of the pre-Islamic culture, sung by the shamans (*porkan*,

from the word *parixân*) to heal the sick and to invoke the spirits. These songs are called *badik* or *gulupsan*. Did the ancient Karakalpak *porkans* use musical instruments to treat the sick? What were *badik* songs like? We don't have precise information on this subject, and only the lyrics of the *badik* have survived to the present day. There are similarities between the *badik* and the shamanic rituals of other nomadic Turkic peoples, such as the *kuchirik* of the Uzbeks and the *quch tepme* of the Turkmens.



Karakalpak women. Kegeli, 2000.

Photo: Jean During

Today folk songs in Karakalpak music may be classified by theme and according to their place in society: love songs, historical songs, ceremonial songs, women's songs, and children's songs. These folk songs all have some melodic features in common. Most of them are based on the same modes as those of the *baqsy* tunes. Their range does not exceed an octave.

Women's songs are often characterized by their nostalgic and plaintive tone. Some tunes performed by women were composed specifically for the *shanqobyz* (metal Jew's harp) while others are simply performed with the instrument.



Dutar maker. Nukus, 2000.
Photo: Jean During

Karakalpak women have unfortunately been playing the *shanqobyz* less and less in recent years.

Another folk genre that is dying out is dramatic song and dance. A typical example, still performed, is the *chagala* (pelican) dance, which enacts a pelican hunt and imitates the bird's flight.

While the epic tradition is being continued by quite a few active, talented, young *baqsy* and *jirow* bards, folk music traditions at the local level in homes and communities are at risk

of dying out. Karakalpak folk music has still been little studied using musicological and scientific methods, and its systematic collection is a matter of urgency.

The Instruments

The *shanqobyz* (metal Jew's harp, track 2) and the *qamysh surnay* (a small reed clarinet with three finger holes) are among the Karakalpak instruments, which also include those of the professional *dastanshys*:

- the *qobyz* (a fiddle made of a single piece of wood with two horsehair strings; listen to this instrument on tracks 5 and 6)
- the *dutar* (long-necked fretted lute with two steel—formerly silk—strings; tracks 4, 9, 12, 14, 15, etc.)
- the *ghirjek* (three-stringed spike fiddle; tracks 7, 8, 11, 13, 21)
- the *balaman* (small clarinet made from a single piece of reed; track 16)

The *qobyz* and the *dutar* are considered instruments of high technical level. They provided the basis for the development of Karakalpak classical instrumental music. The instrumental

versions of the *namas* of the *jirows*, most folk songs, and the simplest *namas* from the *baqsy* repertoire can be played on the *qobyz*.

The *dutar* is an instrument that requires sophisticated technique, which is nonetheless widespread among ordinary people. It is used to play *baqsy namas* and purely instrumental melodies composed for the instrument according to the same musical principles as *baqsy namas*.

Melodies inspired by *dastans* (epic poems) and instrumental airs are the main genres that form the repertoire of professional music.

TRACK NOTES

1. Hawjar

Jilva Kegeli vocal ensemble

Recorded in a private session at the House of Culture of Kegeli

This ritual wedding tune is sung by the friends of the bride-to-be to bid farewell to her as she leaves her home to live with her husband. This type of nostalgic song is found in all marriage ceremonies in Central Asia. It is called *qyz kuzati* (the

bride's accompaniment) or *jar* (the beloved).

The Jilva Kegeli ensemble brings together several amateur and professional artists from the region.

2. Jew's Harp Solos

Genjexan Esimbet-qizi, *shanqobyz*

Recorded at the performer's home

Each melody refers to a song: "Shimbay Namasy," "Achluq Namasy," "Aqsaq Jorgha."

The women and girls play this version on the *shanqobyz*, a small metal Jew's harp.

Genjexan, who lived on the Shumanay kolkhoz, was known as an excellent player of this instrument.

3. Hayyu (Lullaby)

Qalbike Uzaqbergenova, vocal

Recorded in a private session at the House of Culture of Kegeli

Qalbike, who comes from Kegeli, is a well-known *baqsy* who has won several prizes and distinctions.

4. Kelte Nalysh

Qalbike Uzaqbergenova, vocal and *dutar*

Recorded in a private session at the House of Culture of Kegeli

This is a *baqsy* song, whose title refers to the lamentations (*nalysh*) of the hero Gharib addressed to his beloved Shahsenem. This is an excerpt from the great lyric poem "Gharib Ashyq" (The Wretched Lover), also known as



Genjexan Esimbet-qizi playing the Jew's harp. Shumanay, 2000.

Photo: Jean During

“Shahsenem and Gharib.” Compared with the other three *nalysh* airs: “Teke Nalysh,” “Sayqal Nalysh,” and “Nalysh,” this track “Kelte Nalysh” comes closer to a folk song.

5. Qobyz Namasy (Melody on the Qobyz)

Baxtiyar Esemuratov, *qobyz*
Recorded in a private session

Baxtiyar Esemuratov (b. 1978) is the pupil of a well-known *jirow*, Jaksilik Sirimbetov (b. 1947). He lives in Nukus, where he completed his studies at the Faculty of Music of the Pedagogical Institute.

6. Qaytarip Ber Amudariamni (Give Me Back My Amu Darya [River])

Baxtiyar Esemuratov, vocal and *qobyz*
Recorded in a private session

This poem is a *charbeyt* (four distichs), which belongs to the repertoire of the *jirow* bards. It is the work of the Karakalpak poet and writer Shaudyrbay Seitov.

The refrain “give me back my Amu Darya” expresses the affliction of the Karakalpaks and the inhabitants of the Aral region in the face of the ecological disaster that has dried up the Aral Sea.

7. Qoshaq “Sen Yar Gedeli” (Since You Left)

Turghanbay Kalendarov, vocal and *dutar*; Jarylkaghan Esjanov, *ghirjek*
Recorded at the performer’s home

This *baqsy* song expresses the feelings of Shahsenem, the heroine of the great lyric poem “Gharib Ashyq.” Turghanbay Kalendarov practices the art of the *baqsy* as an amateur, but he has all the qualifications of a genuine representative of the northern school, whose great master was Esjan Qospulatov.

8. Kepter Muxallasi

Tengelbay Qalliev, vocal and *dutar*; Injegul Saburova, *ghirjek*
Recorded in a private session

This song also comes from the epic “Gharib Ashyq.” Tengelday

(b. 1971) had the famous Genjebay Tileumuratov (1929–1997) as his master. He attended the local music school in Nukus and studied at the Faculty of Music. His second master was Turghanbay Kurbanov.



Injegul Saburova and her daughter. Nukus, 2000.

Photo: Jean During

9. Siy Perde (Gift Song)

Ghayrat Otemuratov, *dutar*
Recorded in a private session

This *dutar* air is said to have been composed by the famous Arzi *baqsy*. When he finished his studies at the Khiva madrassa, he offered this melody to his master as a present (the word *siy* means present).

Ghayrat Otemuratov (b. 1956) studied under Genjebay Tileumuratov. He teaches his repertoire and leads the Muxalles Ensemble but does not sing. He specializes in playing the *dutar*.

10. Bes Perde

Gulnara Allabergenova, vocal; Turghanbay Kurbanov, *dutar*
Recorded at Kurbanov's home

This is a song from the *baqsy* repertoire based on the moral-didactic poem “Mezger,” composed by Hâji-Niyaz (1824–1878), a major figure of Karakalpak classical literature.

Gulnara Allabergenova (b. 1970) studied at the Nukus Music Faculty. Her master was Turghanbay Kurbanov. At the time of this recording, she was just a talented disciple, but she became a great *baqsy* years later.

11. Kizlar Uyga Kir (Girls, Come into the House)

Bibigawhar Uzaqbaeva, vocal; Turghanbay Kalendarov, *dutar*; Jarylkaghan Esjanov, *ghirjek*
Recorded at Kalendarov's home

“Girls, Come into the House” is a lyric song, sung at festive

evenings at which boys and girls meet. The boys invite the girls to come into the house. The title is taken from the last verse of the poem. It may also be sung by the *baqsy*, but this is an amateur version, which may be heard at meetings or feasts.

12. Qara Jorgha (The Black Steed)

Turghanbay Kalendarov, *dutar*
Recorded at Kalendarov's home

This *dutar* air evokes a horse race. This version reflects the style of Ayta Xojalipesov, which unlike that of Ghayrat Otemuratov (track 14) is freer and leaves more room for improvisation.

13. Ne Payda Namasy (What's The Use)

Zulfiya Arzumbetova, vocal and *dutar*; Injegul Saburova, *ghirjek*
Recorded in a private session

This piece in the *baqsy* repertoire is from the poem "Miymandur" by Maxtumqoli.

Zulfiya Arzumbetova (b. 1977) is another disciple of Turghanbay Kurbanov. She studied folklore at Nukus University and won the second International Bards Prize at Termiz in 1999.

14. Qara Jorgha (The Black Steed)

Ghayrat Otemuratov, *dutar*
Recorded in a private session

Melodies of this kind are also frequently found among the Turkmens, where they are known as *at-chapar* (horse race).

15. Aq Ishik (The White Coat)

Ghayrat Otemuratov, *dutar*
Recorded in a private session

This melody is in the style of the master Aytjan Xojalipesov (d. 1954, a pupil of Qarajan Qabulov), which is closer to popular traditions.

16. Laylay

Gulbahor Rametova, vocal and *dutar*; Injegul Saburova, *ghirjek*; Azat Turdibayev, *bulaman*

Recorded in a private session

The lyrics of this air derive from the epic “Gharib Ashyq,” and the piece is titled as such because the refrain “laylay” repeats after each verse. Gulbahor Rametova is a pupil of Genjebay Tileumuratov. She is a member of the Muxalles *dutar* group and sings modern tunes as well as airs from the *baqsy* repertoire.



Injegul Saburova on *ghirjek*, Gulbahor Rametova on *dutar*, and Azat Turdibayev on *bulaman*. Nukus, 2000.

Photo: Jean During

17. Oramal

The same performers as track 16

Recorded in a private session

This recent lyrical song is the work of the *baqsy* Japak Shamoradov, based on a poem by P. Tilaganov. It is about a traveler meeting a young girl called Oramal, who offers him something to drink and gives him a present.

18. Dembermes

Roza Kutekeeva, vocal, with the Ensemble of the Nukus Philharmonia: Injegul Saburova, *ghirjek*; Azat Turdibayev, *bulaman*; Ghayrat Otemuratov, *dutar*; Kurbanbay Zareddinov, bass *dutar*

Recorded in a private session in the Nukus Philharmonia hall

This *baqsy* song is very popular and has an important place in the singer’s repertoire. Roza Kutekeeva, from Nukus, studied as an opera singer at the Tashkent Conservatory and then returned to the traditional repertoire. Her style of singing is very different from that of the *baqsys* but she provides an interesting perspective on this piece, especially with a large ensemble, as is the case here.

19. Adingnen

Student ensemble from Sanat Bilim Yurti, directed by Tengelsbay Qalliev

Recorded in a private session at the House of the Arts

It is said that the popular *baqsys* used to sing this melody to attract the attention of tired listeners.

The music of the Karakalpak *baqsys* is mainly solo music and does not lend itself to arrangements for ensembles, except for some rigidly measured pieces (such as tracks 17 and 18). Strictly speaking, this air should not be played as an ensemble piece. Played by a group, the melody is affixed to a definitive version and loses rhythmic freedom and room for improvisation. Large ensembles playing renditions like this serve an educational purpose, nevertheless, and it is impressive that the pupils can play such shifting and subtle rhythm in perfect unison without a score or a conductor. They learn to achieve this in the conservatory by immersing themselves and soaking things up slowly, as in an oral culture. Some musicians are eventually influenced by the atmosphere of the conservatory, however, and their playing is then referred to as “academic” by critics.

20. Kelte Nalysh

Turghanbay Kurbanov, *dutar* and vocal
Recorded at Kurbanov’s home

This melody is taken from a narrative session lasting more than two hours, which is broken up at five-minute intervals by a song. During his performance, Turghanbay *baqsy* alternates between emotionally-heightened prose recitation and *nama* melodies, appearing to transition from one spiritual dimension to another quickly before his fascinated audience. It is in such a setting—the original context—that the performer is inspired to unreservedly convey the *dastan*’s deep meaning and full beauty.

This amorous epic, “Qirmandaly,” is one of the 43 episodes in the monumental *Ghoroghly* cycle. In this poem, the hero sets out to find a woman he is infatuated with. When the two meet, she challenges him to a wrestling match and a poetry contest. She beats him at both. Defeated, he returns home to his master, Ashyq Aydin *baqsy*, and is told, “you should have asked my benediction before.” The song ends with the words: “the path of the lover is a difficult one” (*ashyqlyq yolu qiyindir*).



Turghanbay Kurbanov. Nukus, 2000.

Photo: Jean During

Turghanbay Kurbanov was the disciple of Genjebay Tileumuratov and afterwards became the most popular *baqsy* of Karakalpakstan. He in turn trained several excellent *baqsys*. In addition to his vast repertoire of poems, he knows the epic “Qirmandaly” well. He passed away in 2007.

21. Musa Sen Yary

Turghanbay Kurbanov, *dutar* and vocal; Jarylkaghan Esjanov, *ghirjek*
Recorded at Kurbanov's home

This song, with words from the poem “*Ghoroghly*,” is by Musa Turum-oghly (1854–1907), a great Karakalpak *baqsy*. The refrain is: “I was snared [by love], then I fell ill, then I became a wandering dervish.”

22. Qoshim Palvan Namasy (Melody of Qoshim the Champion)

The same performers as track 21
Recorded at Kurbanov's home

The words of this song, taken from the great poem “Sayatxan Hamra,” describe the beauty of the beloved. It is said that before each competition, Qoshim the champion (*palvan*) played this melody on the *dutar* in order to find the strength to defeat his adversaries.

23. Uch Top Namasy

The same performers as tracks 21 and 22
Recorded at Kurbanov's home

This poem by Hadji-Niyaz, entitled “Ayrilsa” (When We Part), belongs to the “wisdom and counsel” genre, which is often found in the *baqsy* repertoire.

24. Gel Ey Laylim (Come, My Leyli)

The same performers as tracks 21, 22, and 23
Recorded at Kurbanov's home

This song is typical of the Suyav *baqsy* school. Succeeded by Japak *baqsy* (d. 1973), Suyav *baqsy* (d. 1916) was a Turkmen from Tasha'uz (a city on the edge of Khorezm). His style may

be considered a synthesis of various regional and ethnic traditions. The poem, entitled “Kelin” (The Bride), is by Berdaq (1827–1900), a great classical Karakalpak poet. It tells of the hard life that women lived.

25. Qaradaly

Turghanbay Kurbanov and the Ensemble of the Nukus Philharmonia
Recorded in a private session at the Nukus Philharmonia hall

This is a passage from the epic “Gharib Ashyq.” According to the Turkmens, the name belongs to Qaradaly Göklen, one of their *baqsys*. It also denotes a famous Khorezmian melody that uses strands of the Karakalpak version.

FURTHER READING AND LISTENING

Leotar, Frédéric. 2008. *Asie Intérieure, vol. 1: Karakalpakistan: La Voix des Ancêtres*. Paris: Buda Records 3017797, compact disc, DVD, 24-page PDF notes.

———. 2012. *Music of the Golden Sands*. The Netherlands: Pan Records, compact disc.

———. 2012. *Karakalpak Epic Heritage*. UNESCO/French Embassy in Uzbekistan, compact disc.

———. 2013 (forthcoming). *La steppe musicienne, analyses et modélisations du patrimoine musical turcique*. Paris: Vrin.

Jean During is Director of Research at the National Center for Scientific Research in Paris. His fieldwork covers many musical traditions of Inner Asia as well as Sufi and Shamanic rituals. He has published 12 books on the musical traditions and cultures of Inner Asia and more than 100 articles in specialized reviews and encyclopedia. He has released nearly 50 CDs and organized many concerts in the West as well as in the East featuring the best musicians of Central Asia, Pakistan, and Iran.

CREDITS

Produced by Jean During

Recorded and mixed by Jean During (January 2000)

Mastered by Pete Reiniger

Annotated by Kalmurza Kurbanov and Jean During

Map provided by E. Belotte-Cousineau

Executive producers: Daniel E. Sheehy and D. A. Sonneborn

Production managed by Joan Hua

Editorial assistance by Anthony Seeger, Mary Monseur, and Joan Hua

Design and layout by Anna Bitskaya

Additional Smithsonian Folkways staff: Richard James Burgess, director of marketing and sales; Betty Derbyshire, director of financial operations; Laura Dion, sales and marketing; Toby Dodds, technology director; Claudia Foronda, customer service; Henri Goodson, financial assistant; Will Griffin, sales and marketing; Meredith Holmgren, web production specialist; David Horgan, online marketing specialist; Helen Lindsay, customer service; Keisha Martin, manufacturing coordinator; Margot Nassau, licensing and royalties; Jeff Place, archivist; Pete Reiniger, sound production supervisor; Ronnie Simpkins, audio specialist; John Smith, sales and marketing; Stephanie Smith, archivist; Sandy Wang, web designer; Jonathan Wright, fulfillment.

Special thanks to Barry Lane, Sultonali Khudoberdiev, T. Davlatmoradova, Kurbanbay Zariddinov, Marinika Babanazarova, Frédéric Leotar, Theodore Levin, and Olima Nabieva.

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings is the nonprofit record label of the Smithsonian Institution, the national museum of the United States. Our mission is the legacy of Moses Asch, who founded Folkways Records in 1948 to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. The Smithsonian acquired Folkways from the Asch estate in 1987, and Smithsonian Folkways Recordings has continued the Folkways tradition by supporting the work of traditional artists and expressing a commitment to cultural diversity, education, and increased understanding among peoples through the documentation, preservation, and dissemination of sound.

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, Folkways, Collector, Cook, Dyer-Bennet, Fast Folk, Mickey Hart Collection, Monitor, M.O.R.E., Paredon, and UNESCO recordings are all available through:

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings Mail Order
Washington, DC 20560-0520

Phone: (800) 410-9815 or 888-FOLKWAYS (orders only)

Fax: (800) 853-9511 (orders only)

To purchase online, or for further information about Smithsonian Folkways Recordings go to **www.folkways.si.edu**. Please send comments, questions, and catalogue requests to **smithsonianfolkways@si.edu**.

The UNESCO Collection of Traditional Music includes more than a hundred pioneering audio recordings of the world's traditional musics, published between 1961 and 2003 on a number of recording labels, including Bärenreiter-Musicaphon, EMI, Philips, Auvidis, and Naïve. The series was launched in collaboration with ethnomusicologist Alain Daniélou (1907–1994) and the International Music Council (IMC, created by UNESCO in 1949), joined in 1963 by the International Institute for Comparative Music Studies and Documentation (IICMSD), and from 1994 stewarded by the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM). The Collection comprises mostly field recordings made on location, in their original context. Each recording is accompanied by scholarly annotations and photographs. Together, these albums are a reflection of the immense variety of music-making and of the position music holds within cultures around the globe. Between the late 1980s and 2003, 115 albums were issued on CD but went out of print in 2005. In 2010 UNESCO and Smithsonian Folkways Recordings forged an agreement to make the UNESCO Collection of Traditional Music available to the general public again. In addition to the previously released titles, 15 never-released albums will also be available as digital downloads and on-demand physical CDs.

Disclaimer: The designations employed and the presentation of material in this collection do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO concerning the authorities or legal status of any country, territory, city, or area; or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.