What if Marco Polo had owned a tape recorder? And what if his epic travels across the heart of Asia had taken place not at the end of the 13th century, but at the beginning of the 21st? The Silk Road: A Musical Caravan presents a panoramic sweep of the vast and rich musical territory that an adventurous traveler like Polo might uncover in this vitally important region today. Produced in collaboration with The Silk Road Project, an international cultural initiative founded by renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma, this 2-CD set presents traditional music from Afghanistan, China, Iran, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, and other Central Eurasian nations and peoples. Most of these tracks were recorded on location and have never before been commercially available. 2 CDs, full color booklet, extensive notes including an introduction written by Silk Road Project Artistic Director Yo-Yo Ma. 47 tracks, 146 minutes.
**DISC ONE: MASTERS & TRADITIONS**

1. Makur (Kazakh) 3:37
2. Fakhrul Hassani (Afghani) 3:38
3. Balletraun (Kazakh) 1:23
4. Dance of Tamir Agha (Turkmen) 2:47
5. Dilkaa (Azeri) 3:36
6. Uchun Dur (Urdu/Tajik) 4:17
7. Chohan Bayati (Azeri) 1:49
8. Makbule (Turkmen) 3:59
9. Shusharti (Iranian) 4:06
10. Lullaby from Ituiku (Japan) 2:46
11. Ker-Tolgo (Uriya) 2:52
12. Xio Yue Er Gao ("High Little Moon") (Chinese) 2:16
13. Jiu Kuang ("Wine Mad") (Chinese) 2:16
14. Kharegy ("The Pine Tree") (Khmer) 3:24
15. Ilme ("Hook") (Kazakh) 2:10
16. The Gallop of Jonen Khar (Mongolian) 2:15
17. The Nightingale (Kyrgyz) 1:57
18. The River Herlen (Mongolian) 4:00
19. Nava (Uzbek) 1:46
20. Woy Bala ("Hey, Kid") (Uyghur) 2:12
21. Meskin II (Uzbek) 2:41
22. Ufar-e Bayat (Tajik/Uzbek/Bukhara Javan) 3:51
23. Chabbiyat Tasi Margul (Uyghur) 3:05
24. Shawm and Percussion Band (Chinese) 2:49

**DISC TWO: MINSTRELS & LOVERS**

1. Jew’s Harp Melody (Kashub) 1:45
2. Khai (Khakas) 2:07
3. Tepen Kuk (Kazakh from Mongolia) 1:15
4. Kogmen (Khakas) 3:17
5. Excerpt from Alpamish Epic (Uzbek) 3:28
6. Bayish Namasi ("Melody of Paradise") (Qosapolkun) 3:26
7. Terme (Khazak) 3:35
8. Lament (Tibetan from Iran) 4:47
9. Musiq-e Javanian (Tajik/Uzbek) 2:45
10. Kuu (Kyrgyz) 1:17

**II. TRADITIONS OF FESTIVITY**

11. Saman (Uyghur) 4:34
12. Charzarb (Tajik) 3:42
14. Lure Song (Azeri from Iran) 3:31
15. Qara Qulu (Uyghur) 2:01

**III. SPIRITUAL MUSIC**

16. Kertolghau (Kashub) 2:17
17. Dargilik (Tajik) 3:28
18. Madh (Tajik) 4:21
19. Zikr (Uyghur) 3:45
20. Kyrgyz Wisdom Song (Kyrgyz) 3:27
21. Allah Madad (Uzbek/Afghan) 3:13
22. Aleri Song (Turkic) 4:01
23. Sufi Hymn (Turkic) 4:38
A Word from Yo-Yo Ma
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR.
THE SILK ROAD PROJECT

Along the Silk Road began back in college, when I took some anthropology courses and got hooked. In the years since, as I’ve traveled and played the cello with quite a few different kinds of “bands,” I’ve been struck by the way that diversity of cultural expression is so often the result of a reordering of the same basic elements.

As human culture-producers, we have much more that connects us than separates us, and of all the arts, music surely offers one of the most vital ways to feel the glow of connectedness—to loved ones and friends, community and nation. But what about connecting to strangers, and to cultures we consider alien, impenetrable, or even uncivilized? Might we also better understand them by listening to their music? In doing so, might we come to see, hear, and ultimately trust them in a more intimate and human way? My answer is a resounding “yes.” If I’m familiar with your music, that’s the beginning of a conversation, and now more than ever, we cannot afford not to know what other people are thinking and feeling—particularly in the vast and strategic regions of Inner Asia linked to the Silk Road.
These recordings offer a panoramic survey of music from nations and ethnic groups that have only recently entered the world of many Americans: Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan; Uyghurs, Turkmenens, Kazakhs, and Qaraqalpaks. Who knows where Khakasia is? The music of these places and peoples—as well as music from China, Japan, Armenia, and other Silk Road countries—tells an inspiring story about our common humanity.

While all of the music on these CDs represents authentic traditions rooted in the lives of communities, almost none of it is "pure." Look deeply enough into any tradition and you'll find elements of other traditions. Discovering what's shared, and what can be appropriated, refined, and restyled is the essential work of cultural exchange and innovation. As a crucible for cultural intermingling, the lands of the Silk Road, then and now, offer an unparalleled vantage point from which to understand the flow of expressive culture. The music on these discs, traditional and contemporary, kindred and diverse, illustrates the dazzling, sometimes daring results of musicians along the Silk Road getting connected—to their roots, their neighbors, and at some usually anonymous moment, to strangers.


**The Silk Road: A Musical Caravan**

*Jean Durin & Ted Levin*

What if Marco Polo had owned a tape recorder? And what if his epic travels along the Silk Road had taken place not at the end of the 13th century, but at the beginning of the 21st?

Far-fetched conjectures to be sure, but our compilation, *The Silk Road: A Musical Caravan,* offers a glimpse of just the sort of rich musical life that an intrepid and curious traveler like Marco Polo might find in the lands of the Silk Road today.

**WHICH SILK ROAD?**

Two compact discs can scarcely represent the wealth of music that exists along the Silk Road, or more accurately, Roads. The term "Silk Roads" was the brainchild of Baron Ferdinand von Richthofen, a 19th-century German geologist and explorer, and indeed, the trade routes that criss-crossed Eurasia from around 200 BCE to around 1500 CE were far from a single road. Multiple routes extended from China to Southeast Asia, Japan, the Indian subcontinent, and Africa. Yet for all its color, Richthofen's term is misleading. The Silk Roads were not exclusively a land route, but included many sea passages. These sea routes in time became faster and more reliable than overland trade, and gradually eclipsed it. Moreover, trans-Eurasian trade consisted of far more
than silk. Other luxury goods such as porcelain, glass, and jewelry were well represented. And as the present compact discs demonstrate, cultural exchange served as a constant companion to commercial trade.

Charting a "sound map" that shows how musical instruments, ideas, repertories, and styles migrated along the Silk Roads is a daunting task. Mindful of the challenge, we have focused our compilation on music linked to a single group of trade routes—the so-called northern Silk Road, which originated in Xi'an (formerly Chang'an), the capital of ancient China, and crossed Central Asia to the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Indeed, about two-thirds of the music on the compact discs is drawn from the central portion of this route: northern Iran, Azerbaijan, the Central Asian "-stans" including Afghanistan, and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of northwestern China. Other selections represent more easterly, westerly, and northerly regions—Turkey, Armenia, central China, Japan, Mongolia, and the tiny south Siberian republic of Khakasia—that have provided important sources, destinations, and consanguinities for music linked to the central region. Our reasons for this emphasis are threefold: first, the Turco-Mongol and Persianate cultures of Central Asia and its geo-cultural extensions form a coherent musical realm. Second, the music of Central Asia remains less known in the West than music from other regions linked to the trade routes, such as India and the Middle East. Third, Smithsonian Folkways Recordings is releasing the present compilation in conjunction with the 2002 Smithsonian Folklife Festival whose theme is the Silk Road, and in particular, the northern Silk Road, with a major focus on Central Asia.

Most of the music on these discs has never been commercially released and is drawn from the personal archive of the two producers—the majority from the collection of Jean During. A few tracks have been licensed from small record companies; two tracks originally appeared on Folkways Records, the antecedent of Smithsonian Folkways.

THE CONUNDRUM OF CATEGORIES

The first of our two compact discs, "Masters and Traditions," brings together what is commonly called art music, court music, or classical music. The definitions of these categories invite dispute and refinement, but all share one core feature: they describe a musical art performed by professionals and most often appreciated by connoisseurs. By contrast, the second disc, "Minstrels and Lovers," features music whose orientation is toward a larger public. The term "lover" is used to designate several categories of musician in the local languages of Central and West Asia. First are amateurs (hooaz-khe, shawq), who are passionate about music and practice their art without the necessity of earning an income from it. Second is the bard (ashiq, "amorous"), a professional performer of oral poetry and lyrical song. Third is the mystic (qarfi, darvish, mujah, qalandar), who is infused with spiritual love and makes music as a means of approaching transcendence. In this arena, at once Sufi, shamanistic, mystic, and spiritual, music has always played an essential role. Such music is typically transmitted orally and lacks the elaborate theories, erudite scholarship, and organized repertory that surround most of the music on "Masters and Traditions."

"Minstrels and Lovers" is subdivided into three rubrics: The Nomadic Sound, Traditions of Festivity, and Spiritual Music. A jew's harp solo divides one section from the next.

The boundary between art music and popular music is of course porous. For example, in Iran and Azerbaijan, certain classical singers enjoy popularity not unlike that of Pavarotti in the West. Meanwhile, virtuoso performers of "popular" nomadic lute music in countries such as Kyrgyzstan and...
Uzbekistan who once played to large crowds at traditional ceremonies and festivals have seen their audiences shrink as mass media encroaches on live entertainment. These days, their difficult art is appreciated mostly by enlightened amateurs.

"WORLD MUSIC" A MILLENNIUM AGO

It may well have been along the Silk Road that some of the first "world music" jam sessions took place. For both Europeans and Asians, the mesmerizing sound of exotic instruments must have had an appeal not unlike the visual allure of exotic textiles, ceramics, and glass. Innovative musicians and luthiers adapted unfamiliar instruments to perform local music while simultaneously introducing non-native rhythmic patterns, scales, and performance techniques. Before the Crusades, numerous instruments from the Middle East and Central Asia had already reached Europe: lutes, viols, oboes, zithers, drums, and other percussion. Following trade routes in both directions, many of these instruments also turned up in China, Japan, India, and Indonesia. For example, the Central Asian short-necked lute called barbat is the ancestor of the Middle Eastern and European lute as well as the Japanese koto and Chinese pipa—an instrument that Chinese documents record as belonging to the "northern barbarians," which is to say, nomads. Turkic and Mongolian horsemen from Inner Asia were not only lutenists, but were probably the world's earliest fiddlers.

Upright fiddles strung with horsehair strings, played with horsehair bows, and often featuring a carved horse's head at the end of the neck have an archaic history among the nomadic peoples of Inner Asia and are closely linked to shamanism and spirit worship. Such instruments may have inspired the round-bodied spike fiddles played in West Asia (kamanche, ghijak) and Indonesia (rebab) and the carved fiddles of the Subcontinent (surma, sarinda, sarangi). Loud oboes called sumai in Central Asia became the shahnai in India, suona in China, and zurna in Anatolia. Central Asia in turn imported musical instruments from both East and West. For example, at the end of the 14th century, the great Islamic music theorist 'Abd al-Qadir Maraghi described the Mongolian jughun (plucked zither) and European hurdy-gurdy in a work on musical instruments.

PASTORALISTS AND SEDENTARY DWELLERS

From this web of human connectedness two great axes emerge linking musical instruments, styles, performance practices, and repertories with fundamentally different patterns of culture and visions of the world. The first of these axes represents the culture of nomads, and the second, that of sedentary peoples. Nomadic and sedentary peoples have coexisted in Central Asia for millennia, and their relationship has not always been an easy one. In the 13th century, for example, Chinggis Khan's nomadic armies laid waste to Central Asia's cities, while in the 20th century, the Soviet Union, an empire built on the power of industry and agriculture, tried forcibly to sedentarize some of Inner Asia's last nomads. Yet despite periods of hostility, pastoralists and sedentary dwellers have both relied on an intricate commercial and cultural symbiosis that is one of the hallmarks of Inner Asian civilization.

In nomadic cultures, the preeminent musical figure is the bard: a solo performer of oral poetry who typically accompanies himself or herself—for women have played an important role in the Inner Asian bardic tradition—on a strummed lute with silk or gut strings (certain epics, most notably the Kyrgyz Manas, are traditionally chanted a cappella). Nomadic cultures have also produced virtuoso instrumental repertories performed by soloists on strummed lutes, jew's harps,
flutes, fiddles, and zithers. The distinguishing feature of these repertories is their narrative quality: pieces typically tell stories by using a kind of musical onomatopoeia, for example, the pounding of horse's hooves or the singing of birds, all represented through musical sound. Individual innovation is highly valued, and bards are performance artists who combine music with gesture, humor, and spontaneous improvisation to entertain their audience. One of the most intriguing aspects of nomadic music is rhythm, which tends toward asymmetry and is never expressed on percussion instruments (with the exception of the ritual drum used by shamans). Such rhythmic asymmetry may be an abstract representation of the natural rhythms of wind and flowing water, the shifting gait of a horse as it adjusts its pace to changes in terrain, or the loping of a camel—all central to the nomadic soundworld.

In sedentary cultures, by contrast, metrical drumming is a highly developed art. Reflecting perhaps the deep impact of Islam as a spiritual and cultural force among Central Asia's sedentary populations (in contrast to its relatively limited impact among nomads), the central artifact of musical performance is the elaboration and embellishment of words and texts by a beautiful voice. Singers are typically accompanied by small ensembles of mixed instruments that almost always include percussion. The beauty of the voice may also be represented symbolically by a solo instrument such as a plucked lute, violin, or flute, which reproduces the filigree embellishments and ornamentation characteristic of a great singer.

The 47 tracks that comprise this collection represent only a small sampling of the musical treasures that can still be found in the lands of the Silk Road. Notwithstanding the political ructions that have all too frequently frayed and fractured connections among the region's inhabitants, the legacy of cross-cultural contact and the spirit of tradition remain strong. We hope that the music we have collected provides just the beginning of your own musical journey along the Silk Roads of today and tomorrow.

DISC ONE

Masters and Traditions

Mahur (Iranian)
Dariush Safvat, santur, Bruno Caillat, zarb
(Recorded by Radio France, Paris, 1988)

The santur is a form of hammered dulcimer, or struck zither, with ancient roots in Iran. Dariush Safvat is one of the last representatives of the old style of Persian santur playing, characterized by its sharp sound and subtle ornamentation. In this selection, he improvises during a concert in the Persian melodic mode Mahur, whose pitches correspond to the notes of the Western major scale. As is traditional, Safvat performs with the zarb, a goblet-shaped drum played by French percussionist Bruno Caillat, a virtuoso on this instrument.

Fakhri Havasi (Azeri)
Edalat Nasibov, sac
(Recorded by J. Durand, Baku, Azerbaijan, 1997)

Edalat Nasibov is a living legend in Azerbaijan whose improvisational style on the sac, a long-necked lute which exists in many forms in West Asia, is based on the vocal repertory of the Azeri bards, called ashiq. Strumming on the sac, Nasibov imitates the delicate inflections of the ashiq's voice. He can play the same melody a dozen times, each time with new inspiration and a different effect.

Though Edalat Nasibov has never released recordings in the West, his cassettes can be found in any Azerbaijani bazaar.
Balbyraun (Kazakh)
Aygul Ulkenbaeva, dombra
(Recorded by Saida Etemanova, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 1998)

In the hands of Aygul Ulkenbaeva, who began her musical studies at the age of five, the two-stringed dombra projects a virtuoso technique. Here she plays a form of instrumental solo known as musical studies at the age of five. the two-stringed

that is, the piece tells a story or recounts a legend purely through musical sound. This kui belongs to the famous Kazakh composer Kurmanghazy (1818-1889), who left more than

program music: Kui has several possible derivations. Literally, bolbyraun means "honey fingers," while a closely related word, bolborun, means "honey tuning"—namely, a piece in a sweet melodic mode. A third explanation, probably apocryphal, ascribes the title to an event in the life of the composer. Fighting against injustice under the czars, Kurmanghazy was frequently put in prison or exiled. Once while he was in prison, a general by the name of Braun organized a ball, and on this occasion ordered that Kurmanghazy be summoned to entertain his guests. At the moment that Kurmanghazy left his cell, the inspiration for this melody suddenly came to him. When people asked him the name of the melody, he replied, "the melody inspired by Braun's ball," or bolbyraun.

Dance of Tamir Agha (Armenian)
Georg Dabaghian, duduk; Grigor Takushian, dhol
(Licensed from Armenian Anthology, Traditional Crossroads CD 4311)

The duduk is a type of clarinet whose plangent sound has come to symbolize Armenia's traditional musical culture. The same instrument, known as balbun, is also popular among Turkic-speaking peoples in the greater Caspian region, in particular, Azeris and Khorezms, who live in the Khorezm region of northwest Uzbekistan. A typical performance always includes a second duduk that holds a steady drone note. Georg Dabaghian, the soloist, is a professor of
duduk at the Komitas State Conservatory in Yerevan.

"Dance of Tamir Agha," a male-only ritual dance from the Moks region near Lake Van, is from a recording of the Shoghaken Ensemble, a group which Dabaghian founded in 1991 to recreate the authentic sound of Armenian folk music.

Dilkash (Azeri)
Elishan Mansurov, kamanche
(Recorded by J. During, Baku, Azerbaijan, 1997; used courtesy of Buda Records from Azerbaijanian Je kamanche (Elishan Mansurov)

"Dilkash" is the name of a mugham, one of the collection of melodic modes, each with its own emotional character, that are the basis of the classical Azeri repertory. Azeri classical music is a close relative of the Iranian classical repertory called dastgah. The soft nostalgia of "Dilkash" is particularly well suited to the expression of romantic passion. Here Mansurov improvises on the kamanche, a "spike fiddle" whose neck extends through the instrument's spherical, skin-covered resonating chamber, and protrudes from the base in the form of a spike. In "Dilkash," Mansurov plays in a deep, meditative style rare for Azeri music, which tends to be more extroverted. Born in 1963, Elishan Mansurov achieved renown from an early age performing with his brother, tur player Malik (track 7). The Mansurov brothers are known for their sensitive accompaniment of the great Azerbaijani vocalist, Alim Qasimov.

Uchun Dur (Uzbek/Tajik)
Jurabek Nabiev, vocal; Shuhrat Nabiev, vocal and tanbor; Shakhat Nabiev, ghuj; Abdurahim Hamidov, dutar
(Recorded by J. During, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 2002)

Jurabek Nabiev represents a synthesis of two great Central Asian vocal traditions: the elaborate courtly classical style of Bukhara and the lighter style of Ferghana-Tashkent. Nabiev, considered one of the most accomplished living masters of classical vocal music, is equally at home singing in Uzbek and Tajik.

In this piece, he evokes an old tradition of duet singing in unison—here with his son, Shuhrat, who also plays tanbor. The song, on a poem of Fuzuli, is one of Nabiev's many compositions that describe amorous passion aroused by a beautiful woman's charms. The evocation of her beauty has a double meaning, and can be understood as a reference to Divine attributes.
Chohan Bayati (Azeri)
Malik Mammadov, tr, Mahmol Sadaf, sf
(Recorded by J. Daring, Baku, Azerbaijan, 1997)

This brief excerpt from a longer recording illustrates the musical genre called pahdo—an improvisation on a rhythmic theme, in this case in the melodic mode (mughm) Chohan Bayati. Chohan means “shepherd,” and suggests a popular origin for the mughm. By turns following the rhythm and moving away from it, the tar—a skin-topped lute with multiple sympathetic strings—traces a subtle counterpoint with the sf, a frame drum. A high level of mastery is required to sustain the ambiguous relationship between melody and rhythm on the two instruments.

Mokhalef (Iranian)
Hoseyn Qavami, vocal. Ali Tajvidi, violin
(Recorded by Radio Tehran; first released in 1966 as
Classical Music of Iran: Dastgah Systems, Folkways
8831 and 8832; reissued as Smithsonian Folkways
40039, 1991)

Hoseyn Qavami (also known as Fakhte’i) was a great Iranian classical vocalist. Ali Tajvidi provides a fine accompaniment on the violin. Between the 1940s and 1970s, violin was very popular in Iranian classical music, but during the past two decades it has almost disappeared in favor of the Iranian classical vocalist. Ali Tajvidi provides a fine traditional, musical item.

Shushhtari (Iranian)
Hossein Kasa’, ng
(Recorded by Radio Tehran; first released in 1966 as
Classical Music of Iran: Dastgah Systems, Folkways
8831 and 8832; reissued as Smithsonian Folkways
40039, 1991)

Instruments called ng or nai include endblown and sideblown flutes. The endblown ng of Turkey and Iran is made from the stem of a reed plant. About a century ago, the performance technique of Iranian ng players was transformed by a master musician inspired by the ng playing of Turkic peoples. In the Turkic technique, the end of the flute is placed not between two upper teeth, which makes for a particular strangle and warm sound (this technique is also used by the player on track 5 of “Minstrels and Lovers”). The “wedge” technique was perfected by Hossein Kasa’, whose name was synonymous with the ng in Iran for 50 years. This excerpt, from the melodic mode Shushhtari—a section of dastgah Homayun—is a masterpiece of free improvisation, a genre that Iranians hold in higher esteem than any fixed composition.

Lullaby from Ituski (Japanese)
Kojirou Umekazi, shakuhachi
(Recorded by Kojirou Umekazi, Montreal, Quebec, 2001)

“Lullaby from Ituski ("Ituki no Komoruta") is a folk melody from Kumamoto Prefecture in southern Japan. With lyrics, it is the lament of a young nursemaid sent away to be employed by a family of the noble class. Ironically, it is sung as a lullaby to the infant she nurses. Recognized as a favorite traditional melody in Japan, it has been adapted into the repertory of many other genres of Japanese music, for example, as presented here in a classical interpretation on the shakuhachi. The shakuhachi and ng (illustrated in the preceding track) share a similar timbre, or tone color, while each instrument has quite a different performance technique and musical style. The shakuhachi player searches not only for sounds that are pure and "beautiful," but to a greater or lesser degree introduces the sound of breath, thus enlarging the expressive palette of the instrument. The reed flute’s ability to amplify the sound of breath—the wellspring of life and spirit—probably explains the fact that from North Africa to Japan, mastery of bamboo or reed flutes is
always a spiritual vocation. For example, the shakuhachi’s historical association with Zen Buddhism is analogous to the ny’s link to Sufism.

Kojiro Umezaki received traditional instruction on the shakuhachi while growing up in Japan and later earned a degree in electro-acoustic music from Dartmouth College. He presently lives in Montreal and teaches in the Music Department at McGill University.

11 Ker-Tolgoo (kyrgz)
Samara Tokhtakunova, kmur
(Recorded by J. During, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 2000)
This solo instrumental piece exemplifies the genre known as kuu (cognate with Kazakh kuu, cf. track 5). “Ker-Tolgoo” was composed by Niyaazaly, a composer who lived a century ago. The title refers to the rhythmically even canter of a horse. The complexity of the melody is partly a result of the structure of the instrument. The kmur has three strings which can be tuned in at least eight different ways in order to obtain particular acoustic effects with minimalist effort.

The spark ling, harp-like sounds in this arrangement of a Khakas folk song come from the chultan, a plucked zither whose 7–12 strings run over individual movable bridges made from sheep knucklebones. Like fiddles, lutes, and oboes, zithers comprise an extended family of musical instruments found across Eurasia in a variety of local forms. Plucked zithers like the chultan (closely related to the Tuwan chadagon and Mongolian yatga) that are rooted in nomadic cultures may have developed from ancient Chinese models such as the cqin and cheng, or may represent an independent development. A plucked zither called kunte has ancient roots in Finland, perhaps showing how Southern and Central Asian lutes, and European lute, like the pipa, are not only a cousin of the Japanese biwa, but a relative of the Arabic oud and European lute. While Turkic lutes, it is not played with a plectrum, but with all the fingers. The spirit of this music is not far from that of the Kazakh kuu and Kyrgyz kuu: short, autonomous pieces of a descriptive or narrative character in which improvisation is reduced to a minimum. “Xiao Yue Er Gao” ("High Little Moon") is a popular tune for pipa from the Shanghai area that was written down toward the end of the 19th century, though the tune itself is very likely older. Wu Man, one of the world’s premier pipa virtuosos, graduated from Beijing Central Conservatory and now lives near Boston, Massachusetts. Her worldwide performance career encompasses both traditional Chinese music and a range of contemporary solo, ensemble, and orchestral repertory for pipa.

12 Xiao Yue Er Gao ("High Little Moon") (Chinese)
Wu Man, pipa
(Recorded by T. Levin, Villecroze, France, 2001)

The pipa offers a musical illustration of China’s historic link with Inner Asia, which was both a result of Silk Road commerce and of contact with nomadic marauders. The pipa may have come to China by both routes, but in any event is the descendant of Central Asian lutes that were carried both east to China and Japan and west to the Middle East and Europe. Thus the pipa is not only a cousin of the Japanese biwa, but a relative of the Arabic oud and European lute, like Turkic lutes, it is not played with a plectrum, but with all the fingers. The spirit of this music is not far from that of the Kazakh kuu and Kyrgyz kuu: short, autonomous pieces of a descriptive or narrative character in which improvisation is reduced to a minimum. “Xiao Yue Er Gao” ("High Little Moon") is a popular tune for pipa from the Shanghai area that was written down toward the end of the 19th century, though the tune itself is very likely older. Wu Man, member of The Music Research Institute of The Chinese Academy of Arts, Beijing, China)

The pipa, a zither with seven silk strings, is the instrument par excellence of the learned Chinese in a tradition leading back to Confucius himself. Charged with symbolism, the pipa holds an almost sacred status in Chinese musical philosophy. Unlike most of the music in this compilation whose transmission has been exclusively through oral tradition, compositions for pipa have long been notated in a tablature form in handbooks as well as orally transmitted from teacher to student. “Jiu Kuang” ("Wine Mad") disappeared from the orally transmitted repertory but was brilliantly reconstructed from a 15th-century handbook by one of the most eminent contemporary masters, the late Yao Bingyan (1920–1983) of Shanghai. Yao’s interpretation features triple rhythm, which is otherwise unknown in pipa music. This particular triple rhythm expresses the lurching of a drunk person, and at the end of the piece, an ascending glissando humorously represents the sound of vomiting.

13 Jiu Kuang ("Wine Mad") (Chinese)
Yao Bingyan, guqin
(Recorded by The Music Research Institute of The Chinese Academy of Arts, Beijing, China)

This particular triple rhythm expresses the lurching of a drunk person, and at the end of the piece, an ascending glissando humorously represents the sound of vomiting.

14 Kharaagy (“The Pine Tree”) (Khakas) (arrangement by Alexander Bapa and Vyacheslav Kuchenov)
Sabjilar: Svetlana Chebodeev, vocal and percussion; Vyacheslav Kuchenov, chultan and vocal; Sergei Charkhov, chultan and vocal
(Recorded by Turne-Studio, Moscow, Russia, 1999; licensed from Sver Chome, Pure Nature Music CD PNM-909)

The sparkling, harp-like sounds in this arrangement of a Khakas folk song come from the chultan, a plucked zither whose 7–12 strings run over individual movable bridges made from sheep knucklebones. Like fiddles, lutes, and oboes, zithers comprise an extended family of musical instruments found across Eurasia in a variety of local forms. Plucked zithers like the chultan (closely related to the Tuwan chadagon and Mongolian yatga) that are rooted in nomadic cultures may have developed from ancient Chinese models such as the cqin and cheng, or may represent an independent development. A plucked zither called kunte has ancient roots in Finland, perhaps showing how Southern and Central Asian lutes, and European lute, like the pipa, are not only a cousin of the Japanese biwa, but a relative of the Arabic oud and European lute. While Turkic lutes, it is not played with a plectrum, but with all the fingers. The spirit of this music is not far from that of the Kazakh kuu and Kyrgyz kuu: short, autonomous pieces of a descriptive or narrative character in which improvisation is reduced to a minimum. “Xiao Yue Er Gao” ("High Little Moon") is a popular tune for pipa from the Shanghai area that was written down toward the end of the 19th century, though the tune itself is very likely older. Wu Man, member of The Music Research Institute of The Chinese Academy of Arts, Beijing, China)

The pipa, a zither with seven silk strings, is the instrument par excellence of the learned Chinese in a tradition leading back to Confucius himself. Charged with symbolism, the pipa holds an almost sacred status in Chinese musical philosophy. Unlike most of the music in this compilation whose transmission has been exclusively through oral tradition, compositions for pipa have long been notated in a tablature form in handbooks as well as orally transmitted from teacher to student. “Jiu Kuang” ("Wine Mad") disappeared from the orally transmitted repertory but was brilliantly reconstructed from a 15th-century handbook by one of the most eminent contemporary masters, the late Yao Bingyan (1920–1983) of Shanghai. Yao’s interpretation features triple rhythm, which is otherwise unknown in pipa music. This particular triple rhythm expresses the lurching of a drunk person, and at the end of the piece, an ascending glissando humorously represents the sound of vomiting.
to ensure that his wife survived, hid her in a pine tree. He skied away and, indeed, the Red soldiers found and killed him. His wife survived, and composed this song.

Ilme ("Hook") (Kazakh)
Aysyl Ulanovskaya, dombor
(Recouted by Saida Elemenova, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 1998)

The name of this well-known luir comes from the finger technique used to perform it: the player "hooks" the strings with the fingers of the right hand by plucking up on them rather than strumming down in the usual style of dombor performance.

The Gallop of Jonon Khar
(Mongolian)
Baterdene, morin khuur
(Recorded by Joel Gordon and Ted Levin, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 2000)

"The Gallop of Jonon Khar" ("Black Jonon") is probably Mongolia's best-known example of tatluu, a genre of instrumental music sometimes accompanied by dance that tells a story through melody, rhythm, and timbre (tone quality). This tatluu tells of the origin of the horsehead fiddle. In the musical story, a herder, Khokhoo Namjil, was given a magical winged horse. Herding his sheep became jealous of the horse, and the herder created a fiddle on which he played songs about his horse. This is one of those songs.

Duduk Wooden clarinet with a soft, reedy tone often regarded as the national instrument of Armenia. Dhan duduk refers to a second duduk used to provide a steady drone pitch.

Dutar Designates different kinds of 2-stringed long-necked fretted lutes among Uzbeks, Tajiks, Turkmen, Qarqalpak, Uyghurs and other groups.

Ghirjak Round-bodied spike fiddle with 3 or 4 metal strings and a short, fretless neck used by Uzbeks, Tajiks, Turkmen and Qarqalpak.

Gujuin Shallow, long wooden either with 7 silk or silk-wrapped metal strings regarded as the instrument par excellence of Chinese sages (pronounced "guchin").

Kamanche Spike fiddle, identical to a ghijak, important in Iranian and Azeri classical music and in the popular music of Iran.

Komuz Kyrgyz 3-stringed fretless lute used as a virtuoso solo instrument and to accompany lyrical songs.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 24
Turgun Alimatov (b. 1922) is a startlingly original symbols of sonority of Alimatov's arrangements of traditional pieces, for example, this and 22-- --------------------------

"traditional innovator" who has brought new creative energy to performance on long-necked lutes in Uzbekistan. He plays the dutar, tanbur, and, here, the sato, an instrument that he not only revived, but also re-created. Alimatov's slurred, highly embellished style on the sato is strongly reminiscent of Indian music, which he first heard in Indian films and over the radio during the Nehru-Khrushchev era of close relations between India and the USSR. Alimatov views his own appropriation of Indian melodic style as a continuation of the long history of cultural contact between Central Asia and the Subcontinent. He has created many free arrangements of traditional pieces, for example, this (somewhat abridged) version of Nava, one of the six main melodic modes in Uzbek classical music (Shah naghma). The signature of his style is an elegant, laconic miniaturization in which melodic form is plucked with a metal plectrum on the tanbur, and strummed on the dutar.

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Nur Mahamat Tursun

USAF Bala ("Hey, Kid") (Uyghur)

Nur Mahamat Tursun (solo)

(Recorded by Rachel Harris, Urumqi, Xinjiang Autonomous Uyghur Region, China, 2001)

The signer of his style is an elegant, laconic miniaturization in which melodic form is plucked with a metal plectrum on the tanbur, and strummed on the dutar.

Uzbek has high respect for the master-disciple relationship. The master, they say, is more important than one's own father. This idea is sometimes reflected in musical forms. In "Meskin II," one of several variants of a traditional melody from the Ferghana region of Uzbekistan, Abdurahim Hamidov plays the dutar, a two-stringed lute, in perfect unison with the tanbur, a bronze-stringed long-necked lute played by his close disciple, Shuhrat Razzakov. Subtle ornaments are mirrored on both instruments—plucked with a metal plectrum on the tanbur, and strummed on the dutar.

Meskin II (Uzbek)

Abdurahim Hamidov, dutar; Shuhrat Razzakov, tanbur

(Recorded by J. During, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 1988)

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Ufar-e Bayat

(Yiqi/Usbek/Bukharan Jewish)

Barno Is'hakova, vocal; Rama Narkalav, ghijak; Sultanali Khudaberdiev, dutar; Zakirjan Yunusov, tanbur

(Recorded by J. During, Dushanbe, Tajikistan, 1991)

Barno Is'hakova (1927–2001) was in her time the greatest classical female vocalist of Central Asia. Born in Tashkent to a Jewish family from Samarkand, Barno Is'hakova grew up in a musical milieu which encouraged her innate talent. Music lovers in Central Asia have remarked that before her, women singing classical music like men. Barno Is'hakova developed a style that was specifically female in its softness and refinement, perhaps reflecting an ancient tradition of seduction in court music.

The cultivation of the classical repertory known as Shah naghma, to which the present selection belongs, is closely identified with Bukhara, a city that is itself all but synonymous with the Silk Road. Bukhara's caravanserais welcomed travelers from afar, and its bazaars were a center of mercantile trade from early times. Presently within the borders of Uzbekistan, it has long been a multilingual and multicultural city whose residents speak Tajik—a dialect of Persian—and Uzbek, a Turkic language. While the Shah naghma rests on a tradition of Islamic poetics, music, and music theory, many of its important performers, like Barno Is'hakova, have been Persian-speaking Jews.

Chabbiyat Tazi Marghul (Uyghur)

Uyghur Muqam Ensemble

(Recorded by J. During, Hong Kong, 1988)

The Uyghur Onniki muqam is a monumental musical repertory consisting of 12 suites (muqams) whose individual movements total some 360 distinct compositions. A muqam is the instrumental "double" of a vocal piece. That is, it follows the same rhythm but at a faster tempo and in a lighter tone with frequent modulations. This muqam is the first in a series of such pieces in muqam Chabbiyat (Chap Bayat). The performance reflects a trend toward larger ensembles, with themes and motives dispersed among the various instruments. Uyghur muqam is melodically

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eclectic: in two or three phrases, melodies cover a wide range of modal styles, shifting, for example, from a five-note Chinese scale to a seven-note Middle Eastern or Indian one in rhythmic cycles of the purest Arab or Persian idiom, all the while maintaining a Uyghur intonation. A listener has the impression that all the traditions of the Silk Road are summed up in this exuberant composition.

Shawm and Percussion Band from Southern Liaoning (Chinese) Gongxiao Dasha Ensemble (2 shawns, sheng, drum, cymbals, gongs) (Recorded by Francois Picard, Dalian, Liaoning Province, China, 1994; produced by Chantal and Jean-Luc Larguier, le Jardin des Poiriers, in co-production with the Culture Bureau of the city of Dalian. Used by permission)

Conical shawms with a flared metal bell called suana, derived from Persian zurna or surn', may have first appeared in East Asia in a mural painting in the Yungang caves in the Northern Wei period (386-534). Around the 15th century, they started to become common among the Han Chinese and assumed a central place in celebrations of life-cycle and calendar events. One of the most admired styles is in northeast China, where this track was recorded during a New Year celebration at Wafangdian, Dalian municipality, Liaoning Province. Two shawms accompanied by a sheng (free-reed mouth organ), drum, cymbals, and gongs repeat simple tunes with continuous variation in an excerpt from a suite of short melodies. The musicians belong to the Gongxiao Dasha Ensemble, whose eponymous patron is a large department store chain.

Glossary of Instruments

Morin khuur Mongolian trapezoid-bodied 2-stringed fiddle with horse's head carved into the wooden scroll at the end of the neck.

Ney Most commonly an endblown flute made from reed; also a sideblown flute made from reed, wood, gourd, or metal and played almost everywhere in Asia, often under local names.

Pipa Chinese short-necked plucked lute.

Qa'ar Frame drum used in folk music in Badakhshan and Azerbijan.

Qylqoqyz Upright fiddle with 2 horsehair strings rooted in the nomadic culture of Kazak, Kyrgyz, and Qaraqalpak herders, strongly identified with shamanism and spirit worship. (Also: qylqoqyz).

CONTINUES ON PAGE 27

Morin khuur

I. The Nomadic Sound

This section surveys nomad musical aesthetics in Inner Asia. The following tracks from "Masters and Traditions" also fall within the category of "nomadic sound", 3. 11, 14-18.

Jew's Harp Melody (Kazakh)

Edil Huseinov, sheng-qo£i (jew's harp) (Recorded by I. During, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 2001)

Jew's harps—commonly played by women as well as men—are widespread in Inner Asia. These days, most instruments are made of metal, but softer and more delicate wooden jew's harps survive in some regions. Edil Huseinov (b. 1955) grew up in Atyrau, in the southwest of Kazakhstan, where the culture of nomads is still strong. Trained as a composer, he became interested in archaic Kazakh instruments and vocal styles, and has devoted himself to their revival. This virtuoso composition for jew's harp combines several different performance techniques. At the end, Huseinov throws in a breath of khai—the ultra-low guttural style of throat-singing that has been forgotten in Kazakhstan but is still practiced among Kazakhs in Mongolia, as well as in the Altai region to the north of Kazakhstan.

Edil Huseinov
Khai (Khakas)  
Evgeni Ulugbashev, vocal and chubshun  
(Recorded by J. During, Almaaty, Kazakhstan, 1994)

The Khakas are a Turkic people, once nomadic but now sedentarized, whose traditional territory lies in the Altai Region of south Siberia. Their eponymous republic, Khakasia, is now part of the Russian Federation. Like other Altai Turks, the Khakas have a rich musical tradition that includes throat-singing, epic songs, and instrumental music. Khakas throat-singing, called khi, is typically used to perform epic songs, as in this example excerpted from a longer performance.

Evgeni Ulugbashev is a remarkable singer of Tepen Kelek Kumaqay-o lu. (Recorded by T. Levin, Abakan, Khakasia, 2000)

Kogmen (Khakas)  
Sabhijal: Slava Kuchenov, Sergei Charkov, Anna Burnakova  
(Recorded by T. Levin, Abakan, Khakasia, 2000)

Kogmen is the old Khakas name for the Sayan Mountains, Khakasia's most visible topographic feature. Herders who live near the mountains go to special sacred sites, usually in passes between two summits, to leave offerings to the spirit of that place, to pray, and to ask for good fortune. This song, written by Slava Kuchenov, is just such a prayer, and exemplifies the herders' respect for nature and the spirit world. Sabhijal was formed in 1998 with the goal of revitalizing Khakas traditional music. Their stirring new compositions and tasteful arrangements of folk songs offer a model of neo-traditionalism at once innovative and authentic.

Endblown reed or wood flutes called zhibigyi, huur, kunu, and other cognate names are found among pastoralists all the way from the Ural Mountains to Mongolia. The traditional performance technique involves blowing into the open-ended flute while simultaneously producing an accompanying vocal drone in a low register. The resulting polyphony evokes the sound of throat-singing, the technique in which a single vocalist produces both drone and melody by selectively amplifying harmonics naturally present in the voice. The two parallel traditions—throat-singing and flute with vocal drone—typically exist in one and the same region. A curious anomaly is the presence of the flute with vocal drone in Rajasthan, India, which suggests a centuries-old musical connection between two highly distinctive cultures.

Excerpt from Alpamish Epic (Uzbek)  
Jaul Baikhal, vocal and domra  
(Recorded by J. During, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 1997)

Originally a nomadic people, the Uzbek gradually settled in towns and villages. Some groups such as the Qaraqalpaks and Qongrats farther to the north, Jaul Baikhal is a well-known bard (bakhshi) from the Qashqadarya region of southern Tajikistan, which the hero expresses the pain of exile and his longing to return to his home in beautiful Bayson, an ancient city in what is now southern Uzbekistan.

Satar Long-necked, bowed lute with sympathetic strings in Uyghur music, also, a small strummed lute played by mountain dwellers in Tajikistan.

Sato Uzbek bowed inshore, or long-necked lute.

Saz Long-necked fretted lute with metal strings identified with the oasis of Turkey and Azerbaijan. Also called chaghur.

Shakuhachi Japanese endblown flute made from the base of a bamboo stalk.

Glossary continues on page 31.
Lament (Turkmens from Iran)
Dordi Torik, vocal and dutar; Rahman Qilich Yomudli, phijk
(Recorded by J. During, Dehavet-y Yomudli, Iran, 1980)
This Turkmen lament demonstrates the intersection of a Turkic musical style with that of Khorasan, in northeastern Iran. The melody develops in a manner reminiscent of Middle Eastern modes, but the "hiccuping" vocal ornaments identify the style as distinctly nomadic. At the same time, the use of two instruments is an anomaly in the bardic tradition, where the norm is solo performers accompanying themselves on a single instrument (the only other exception is Quraqulpak bards, who also perform duets). In the text, the poet evokes the difficulties of his personal fate (gur o phoja) and wishes for a glimpse of his beloved.
This song was recorded in northern Iran, home to a large community of Turkmen. The Iranian Turkmen share the same traditions as their brethren in Turkmenistan while benefitting from the broader freedom of expression found in Iran. Since the time of this recording (1980), Dordi Torik has received state recognition for his musicianship and is the recipient of the government's highest prize for musical achievement.

Mashq-e Javanan (Tajik/Uzbek)
Sirajuddin Jureev, dutar
(Recorded by J. During, Khujand, Tajikistan, 2001)
This young virtuoso of the dutar has composed a brilliant piece inspired by traditional songs of Khujand (Tajikistan), his place of origin. While untraditional in the sense that the melody does not adhere to maqam scales, the rhythm and style reflect the nomadic character of the dutar.

Kuu (Kyrgyz)
Nurlanbek Nishanov, tenor-phijk (metal jew'har's harp)
(Recorded by J. During, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 2000)
In this brief jewel's harp interlude, Kyrgyz musician Nurlanbek Nishanov reproduces the melodic line of the kuu with the precision of a stringed instrument. Nishanov is an innovative musician who is constantly pushing the limits of traditional forms and performance practices. In Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, he organized the Murus Ensemble, which is experimenting with tastefully folklorized versions of traditionally solo repertoires—much like Sabijali in nearby Khakasia (cf. track 4).

Sanam (Uyghur)
Abdurashid Nadirev, vocal and dutar; Abdughani Tukhtiev, tanbur
(Recorded by J. During, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 2000)
Sanam is a Uyghur musical genre consisting of a continuous suite of dance pieces that progressively increase in tempo. The sanam is quite popular all over Xinjiang, and each city or area develops its own characteristic suite while following the same structure. This sanam is from the Il Valley, in the north of the Uyghur territory. The musicians are now members of the large Uyghur diaspora in Central Asia.
Charzarb (Tajik)
Abdullah Nazriev, vocal and suru; with his sons, Isma'il, domru, and Davlat, tar
(Recorded by J. During, Dushanbe, Tajikistan, 1992)

A charzarb is a piece in four sections, each with a different tempo. This charzarb belongs to the tradition that Tajiks call bukharani ("from the mountain"), to distinguish it from music from the plains, namely mazari.

Love Song (Azeri from Iran)
Ashoq Hasan, vocal and sur; Sobah, baither; Ibrahim, qaydu
(Recorded by J. During, Tabriz, Iran, 1980)

Mizhan-i Siyah ("Black Eyelashes")
Muhammad Rahim Takhar, vocal, dembru; Faqir Muhammad, rubab; Bahauddin, tambur; Malang Nejrab, qohbul—

"Mizhan-i Siyah" is a popular love song from the north of Afghanistan that is often heard at weddings and in teahouses. The text rests on a classical poetic comparison between the black eyelashes of a beautiful girl and the power of an army, a Turkish archer, and so on. The poetic form is a duxgab (two lines linked together) with repetitions of the lines separated by instrumental interludes. It is sung in Tajik, the language spoken by much of the population in northern Afghanistan, where Mazar-i Sharif is the largest city.

Qura Olu (Kazakh/Mongol)
Edil Huseinov, shang-qobyz (jew’s harp)
(Recorded by J. During, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 2001)

A large Kazakh community has lived in the west of Mongolia since the 18th century, where they maintain Kazakh musical traditions while incorporating Mongolian influences. Here Edil Huseinov plays a Kazakh-Mongol piece on the jew’s harp.

Shang-qobyz Metal jet’s harp widespread among nomadic peoples of Inner Asia.
Sheng Chinese mouth organ with reed or metal pipes.
Suona Chinese double-reed shawm derived from Persian qurn or ramii.
Sybyryghy Endblown reed or wood flute often played with an accompanying vocal drone, rooted in Inner Asian nomadic culture.
Tanbur Long-necked plucked lute with raised frets and sympathetic strings used in Uzbek/Tajik and Uyghur classical music traditions. The Afghani variant has sympathetic strings.
Tar Double-chested skin-topped plucked lute with multiple sympathetic strings used in urban music from the Caucasus and in Iranian classical music. The Iranian version has no sympathetic strings.
Temir-qobyz Kyrgyz name for metal jet’s harp.
Zarb Also known as domrub, a goblet-shaped ceramic or wooden drum which is the standard percussion instrument for Iranian classical music.
Zirbaghali Goblet-shaped drum similar to a gur bat rounded in shape, played in northern Afghanistan and Badakhshan.

Glossary of Instruments
III. Spiritual Music

While ritual music is linked to the practice of a specific religious rite or ceremony, spiritual music refers to an expression of love or longing not for other humans, but for the other world and for the Divine. In Central Asia, such music is often called "philosophical," and takes on a lyrical character. In the traditional culture of Central and West Asia, the sacred and the profane intermingle in the rhythms of daily life, and so it is not surprising that popular songs may have a religious or mystical flavor, while Sufi songs can become very popular (cf. tracks 20 and 21).

Kertolghau (Kazakh)
Sayan Aqmaoldaev, gilbüz
(Recorded by Saiida Elemonova, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 1998)
The gilbüz, a fiddle with two horsehair strings that was often played by shamans, was thought to represent the voice of spirits. These days, the gilbüz is still considered a sacred instrument that brings to a family the protection and the voice of spirits. These days, the gilbüz has become very popular.

Dargilik (Tajik)
Khodapanah Berdov, ustr; Karakan Karakhanov, tambur; Mahingul Najar-shahra, vocal
Ensemble members from Khorog, rubub, qo'vnal
(Recorded by J. During, Khorog, Tajikistan, 1991)
Like many mountainous areas, Badakhshan, the southeastern region of Tajikistan dominated by the Pamirs, has its own distinct musical traditions. One of those is the genre represented on this track, called Dargilik, performed here by a vocalist accompanied by a typical ensemble of Badakhshani instruments. Dargilik is a kind of spiritual song based on poetic couplets that express the pain and hope of human destiny.

Madh (Tajik)
T. Soltan Qaleboev and S. Tawarov, vocal and rubub
(Recorded by J. During, Sardom, Badakhshan, Tajikistan, 1991)
Madh is a devotional song of praise sung to the Prophet and to the Imams. This example comes from the Isma'ilis of Badakhshan, in southern Tajikistan, and is expressed for the "Family of the Prophet" (Abi al Roy) and particularly for the first Shia Imam, Ali. It progressively takes the form of a qar; a litany leading to spiritual ecstasy. The performers are father and son, both learned religious men from the Isma'il tradition.

Zikr (Uygur)
Naqshbandi Afaq Brotherrhood
(Recorded by J. During, Xinjiang, China, 1988)
Zikr ("remembrance") is a ritual practice common to Sufis, although in Central Asia, forms of zikr are also practiced by shamans and by groups of non-Sufi Muslims. The effects of zikr can range from simple devotion to a forceful means of reaching ecstasy. The intense and protracted form illustrated in this recording (the seance of which it is an excerpt lasted two hours) is uniquely practiced by dervishes, who are believers committed to a spiritual and ascetic path under the direction of a guide, or, in certain cases, of a great saint from the past. This group belongs to the Naqshbandi Afaq brotherhood, a branch of the Naqshbandiya that has integrated elements of Sufi brotherhoods such as the Yaasviya, notably the practice of "loud qar." This genre is now rare in Central Asia, partly because the principal Central Asian Sufi brotherhoods, the Naqshbandiya, practices only silent (or mental) qar and does not use music, and partly because during the Soviet era, Sufi brotherhoods were strongly repressed. Here, the dervishes utter sacred words with rhythmic breathing while a group of singers chants mystic songs. The long and syncopated rhythm created by humming and the forceful inhalation and exhalation of breath—often with mouth closed—may bear traces of archaic Turkic vocal styles still found in Siberia.

Kyrzg Wisdom Song (Kyrgyz)
Axl Sekebaev, vocal and borko
(Recorded by J. During, Tanga, Kyrgyzstan, 2000)
Among Central Asian nomads, spirituality is expressed as much in ancient pre-Islamic forms (shamanism, animism, wisdom and morality tales) as in Muslim monotheism. Muslim faith, however, is well anchored in Kyrgyz culture, as this song shows. Though not intended for ritual purposes, it expresses a Sufi sensibility by offering moral wisdom and through the repetition of sacred words at the end of each couplet. "Everything to be done should be done in youth; there's no point in repenting when you're old; in truth there is no divinity but God. Muhammad is the prophet of God."

Allah Madad (Iranian/Afghan)
Abdolhassar Sarvar Ahmadi, dūr; M. Salar Ahmadi, vocal
(Recorded by J. During, Torbat-e Jam, Iran, 1980)
Like the previous track, this song is religious but not connected to a particular ritual. It is popular on both sides of the border between Iran and Afghanistan because of its moving description of the famous 13th-century saint Ahmad-e Jamī, whose beautiful shrine in Torbat-e Jam is visited by many pilgrims. The chorus says "God, help! Ahmad-e Jamī, help!"
Alevism originated as a pure mystical movement on the periphery of Islam and evolved into the belief system of an extensive community in Turkey. Alevi can be considered insomniacs because of their profound devotion to the 12 Shia Imams. Following ancestral bardic traditions, the Alevi cultivated a rich repertory of poems and songs for performance at ritual meetings as well as in secular environments. Alevi bards are numerous, but Chinar’s warm, deep, and stirring voice remains unique, and conveys the full meaning of the word asbı; lover. This poem of Dervish Kemal (20th century) makes allusion to the supernatural power of Imam Ali: “By his breath, our Lord put fire into the sun; so what is this spiritual event?” Together they engaged in communal prayer, chanting, and singing. Under the Ottomans, Istanbul became a meeting place of Sufis and itinerant dervishes. Different Sufi brotherhoods each had their own prayer houses (hıvahan or tekke) that served the function of a spiritual embassy: a member of the Qadiri and Naqshbandi brotherhood arriving from India could meet his conferees from the same order arriving from Kashgar or Samarkand. Together they engaged in communal prayer, chanting, and singing.

In Turkish, spiritual songs like this one are called asbı and can be performed alone or, as in this case, within a qır—the devotional and ritualized technique practiced by Sufis that may lead to ecstatic states. At the end, a singer improvises a mystic song while the dervishes continue with the qır (literally “remembrance”). This rare recording of a spontaneous qır session at a private gathering is enriched by the participation of excellent musicians. The dervishes of four different Sufi brotherhoods sing, dance, and informally make the qır together. The first song is devotional, with a refrain dedicated to one of the early sheikhs of the brotherhood. The second song is a lyric sonnet that evokes the charisma of the saint (or the Prophet) with metaphors borrowed from the vocabulary of profane love: “The Beloved brings with him scents of amber and basil.”

Bibliography

Discography


Like silk and spices, Muslim spirituality traveled across Asia, carried by Sufis and itinerant dervishes. Under the Ottomans, Istanbul became a meeting place of Sufis traveling from east to west. Different


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Special thanks to: Leyli Atashkar, Cristin Bagual, Housey During, Harold Hagopian, Stephen Jones, Alma Kunashhayeva, Yo-Yo Ma, Peter Marsh, Xian Mei, Fairouz Nishanov, Liseb Nyssen, Francois Picard, Jan van Belle, Esther Won

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Smithsonian Folkways gratefully acknowledges the support of the Age Khan Trust for Culture in the production of the CD booklet.

This compilation was produced in partnership with the Silk Road Project, Inc.
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Folkways Records was founded by Moses Asch in 1948 to document music, spoken word, instruction, and sounds from around the world. In the ensuing decades, New York City-based Folkways became one of the largest independent record labels in the world, reaching a total of nearly 3,000 albums that were always kept in print.

The Smithsonian Institution acquired Folkways from the Moses Asch estate in 1987 to ensure that the sounds and genius of the artists would be preserved for future generations. All Folkways recordings are available by special order on high-quality audio cassettes or CDs. Each recording includes the original LP liner notes.

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings was formed to continue the Folkways tradition of releasing significant recordings with high-quality documentation. It produces new titles, reissues of historic recordings from Folkways and other record labels, and in collaboration with other companies also produces instructional videocassettes and recordings to accompany published books and other educational projects.

The Smithsonian Folkways, Folkways, Cook, Dyer-Bennet, Fast Folk, Monitor, and Paredon record labels are administered by the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. They are one of the means through which the center supports the work of traditional artists and expresses its commitment to cultural diversity, education, and increased understanding.

You can find Smithsonian Folkways Recordings at your local record store. Smithsonian Folkways, Folkways, Cook, Dyer-Bennet, Fast Folk, Monitor, and Paredon recordings are all available through Smithsonian Folkways Recordings Mail Order:
750 9th Street, NW, Suite 4100,
Washington, DC 20560-0953
phone (800) 410-9815 (orders only)
fax (800) 853-9511 (orders only)
(Discover, MasterCard, Visa, and American Express accepted)

For further information about all the labels distributed through the center, please consult our Internet site (www.folkways.si.edu), which includes information about recent releases, our catalogue, and a database of the approximately 25,000 tracks from the more than 2,300 available recordings (click on database search). To request a printed catalogue write to the address above or e-mail folkways@aol.com.