

THE MUSICAL REPERTOIRE OF BUKHARIAN JEWS IN QUEENS, NEW YORK

by

EVAN JOSEPH RAPPORT

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
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## Abstract

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Evan Joseph Rapport

Adviser: Professor Stephen Blum

This dissertation explores the music that Bukharian Jews in Queens performed from January 2002 to February 2006. Bukharian Jews, living for centuries in Central Asia and recently emigrating *en masse* to New York City, Israel, and Europe, explore their history, identity, values, and migratory experiences through repertoire performance and transmission. By maintaining classical, celebratory, and religious repertoires in various media and performance contexts, Bukharian Jews articulate complex, multifaceted ideas about their community. The first-hand research, conducted at the beginning stages of Bukharian immigration and adaption to life in the United States, fills a gap in scholarship of Jewish music and American music, and complements extant work on music and poetry of Iran and Central Asia.

This study examines various issues of structure and composition in Bukharian repertoire. The statements and activities of musicians elucidate theoretical principles and possibilities for performance. Maqom is understood as a living practice, and detailed analyses of rehearsals and demonstrations of standard repertoire by Roshel Rubinov and the setting of a new text to an existing maqom melody by Ezro Malakov's ensemble

reveal ways in which principles of maqom repertoire are understood and engaged by contemporary working musicians.

The author's experiences in Queens learning to play the tanbūr with two teachers, Roshel Amin and Roshel Rubinov, provide the foundation for discussions of transmission and pedagogy. This study explores methods of developing instrumental technique, memory, and cognitive style, pedagogical uses of recordings and notations, and the aesthetics and issues surrounding the professional musician and master–student relationship.

Professional musicians, with support from community institutions, have an authority to perpetuate Bukharian ideas of tradition. Through repertoire, they construct historical narratives, sustain and uphold community values, and keep a sense of community intact across the vast distances of a unique, multi-layered diaspora. By engaging music and literature of the past and creating new repertoire, musicians address and satisfy the Bukharian community's desire to maintain continuity and unity in the face of upheaval, and to flourish and prosper in a new environment.

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## NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION AND TRANSLATION

Four languages with regional variations and combined in multiple ways with four alphabets, a wide variety of existing practices of translation and transliteration, and the particular demands of analyzing music and poetry posed thorny issues for this study. The Persian language spoken by Bukharians is a quintessential example of an unstandardized tongue to which numerous orthographic systems have been applied.

When transliterating or transcribing Persian and Russian as written or spoken by Bukharians, I model Latin-alphabet spellings after Cyrillic spellings. I follow a slightly different system when transliterating from the Hebrew language and alphabet. I also use a different system for items in Iranian Persian written in the Perso-Arabic script, which for the purposes of this dissertation is mostly scholarship.

When transliterating from the Cyrillic, Perso-Arabic, and Hebrew alphabets into the Latin alphabet, consonants follow a system of one letter to one symbol (with one exception, the Cyrillic  $\Psi$ ).  $\check{C}$  is pronounced *ch* as in *charlie*, and  $\check{s}$  is *sh* as in *shape*.  $\check{G}$  is pronounced like the French *r*, and  $\check{z}$  like the French *j*. *X* is a guttural *h* sound (sometimes transliterated elsewhere as *ch* or *kh*, as in “Chanukah” or “Bukharian”).  $\check{S}$  is pronounced *ts* as in *its*.  $\check{H}$  is an aspirated *h*, not quite the value of *x*, and *q* is a stronger, more back-in-the-throat *k*.  $^c$  is an unvoiced stop.

Vowels have a much greater range of values than consonants and, consequently, are more difficult to treat consistently. Pronunciation of vowels can differ from person to person due to regional variations and/or the linguistic background of the speaker. For example, Roshel Amin, from Dushanbe, will say *oxar* while Ezro Malakov, from

Shahrisabz, will say *oxir*. These different ways of pronouncing words occasionally surface in my transcriptions. There is no exact relationship between one letter and one sound.

Of particular importance is the distinction of vowels as either long or short, because this distinction is the basis of the quantitative meters central to Bukharian poetry and music. Longs and shorts are dependent on timbre, emphasis, and the quality of adjacent syllables. In transliterations of Tajik Persian words, *a* and *e* are short vowels and *o* is long. *I* and *u* can be either long or short, so macrons are used to indicate a long vowel when clarification is necessary. This system may seem unusual to readers who are used to seeing words transliterated from Iranian Persian and the Perso-Arabic script, in which *o* is generally assumed to be short and *i* and *u* are generally assumed to be long.

The following list explains in greater detail the treatment of each vowel with respect to transliterating Tajik Persian into the Latin alphabet:

- *a* is a transliteration of the Cyrillic character **а**. It is short, except it can be scanned as long at the end of words which would have a silent *he* in the Perso-Arabic script (e.g., *xona* and *doira*).
- *e* is a transliteration of the Cyrillic character **е** when it represents a short vowel (as in *peš*). The character **э** is also transliterated as *e*, although it rarely appears in Cyrillic representations of Tajik Persian.
- *i* is a transliteration of the Cyrillic characters **и** and **й**. It is short except in the case of *ezafe*, written with a hyphen as *-i*, which can be either long or short. The variable length of the *ezafe* provides poets with increased options for composing in poetic meters. To avoid confusion with the very different ending *ī* (as in

*zardūzī*, *mūsīqī*), which may become separated with hyphens when dividing words into syllables for purposes of scansion, long ezafe-s are not written with a macron. The value of the ezafe should be clear from the meter.

- *ī* is a transliteration of the Cyrillic character *ѣ*. The Cyrillic *е* is also written as *ī* when it is a long vowel (as in *mīzanam*, written in Cyrillic as *мезанам*).
- *o* is a transliteration of the Cyrillic character *о*, and is long (as in *maqom*). This vowel is normally transliterated from the Perso-Arabic script as *ā*. The pronunciation is nearly the same.
- *u* is a transliteration of the Cyrillic characters *у* and *ѣ*.<sup>i</sup> It is short except in the case of the conjunction “and,” written with a hyphen as *-u*, and monosyllabic words ending in *u* (such as *tu*), in which the vowel can be either long or short to meet the demands of poetic meters. When long, this character is written as *ū*.
- *ū* is a transliteration of the Cyrillic character *ѣ* (as in *tanbūr*). The Cyrillic *у* is also written as *ū* when it appears as a long vowel.

When transliterating from Hebrew, long vowels are always indicated with macrons. The characters *ē* and *ō* are only used for Hebrew words, as is the symbol *ə*, used to transliterate the vocalized form of the vowel *šəva*.

This transliteration and transcription system occasionally produces spellings that are unfamiliar in English. To prevent confusion in the main text, more conventional

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i. *U* is particularly complicated, as I have seen Bukharians use *ѣ* and *ѣ* interchangeably. For example, Mallaev uses *ѣ* (Mallaev 2003) and Rubinov uses *ѣ* (Rubinov 2002) in many of the same words. Speakers pronounce these two characters in several ways: as a long u (as in English *do*), a short u (as in English *cut*), a long o (as in English *no*) or something in between (like the English *book*).

English forms are used for names of people (e.g., Hafez instead of Hofiz) and places. Places follow the primary entry in Merriam-Webster's *Geographical Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (1997), with a usual result of *kh* instead of *x*, *sh* instead of *š*, and *a* instead of *o* or *ā* (e.g., Bukhara and not Buxoro, Dushanbe and not Dušanba, Tajikistan and not Tojikiston). For people, common spellings are used. For certain names, such as Menaḥem and Iṣḥoq, I retain the ḥ character, following the tendency of Bukharian Jews to retain the ḥ sound represented by the Hebrew פ, which is distinct from the more guttural כ even though both are commonly written as X in Cyrillic and pronounced identically in Modern Hebrew. Words such as Torah, Rosh Hashanah, and bar mitzvah appear in their standard English spellings, following Merriam-Webster's *Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th edition.

Inconsistencies remain even with all of these rules and policies, although I hope the result will not be too confusing to the reader. For example, names of people and places frequently appear as technical terms in the Šašmaqom, in which case I use the stricter system. Thus, a piece in Maqom Buzruk (the first suite of the Šašmaqom) is *‘Iroq-i buxoro* although in a non-technical discussion the places would be spelled *Iraq* and *Bukhara*. Furthermore, spellings used by other authors are retained when I reference or quote their publications. It should also be noted that “Bukharian” and “Bukharian Jew” are terms that appear only in English-language contexts, and hence are not subject to changes that might be implied by my system (“Buxorian”).

Table i. Consonants.

Latin	Cyrillic	Perso-Arabic	Hebrew
B b	Б б	ب	ב
Č č	Ч ч	چ	צ
D d	Д д	د	ד
F f	Ф ф	ف	פ
G g	Г г	گ	ג
Ğ ğ	Ғ ғ	غ	
H h	Х х	ح, ه	ה
Ḥ ḥ			ח
J j	Ґ ҷ, ДЖ дж	ج	ג
K k	К к	ک	כ
L l	Л л	ل	ל
M m	М м	م	מ
N n	Н н	ن	נ
P p	П п	پ	פ
Q q	Қ қ	ق	ק
R r	Р р	ر	ר
S s	С с	ث س ص	ש ס
Š š	Ш ш	ش	ש
Šč šč	Щ щ		
T t	Т т	ت ط	ט ת
Ş ş	Ц ц		צ
V v	В в	و	ב, ו, ן
W w		و	
X x	Х х	خ	כ
Y y			י, ם
Z z	З з	ز ذ ض ظ	ז
Ž ž	Ж ж	ژ	
°	Ъ ъ	ع	ע
	Ы, ъ, ы, ь		א
'		ء	

Table ii. Long vowels.

Latin	Cyrillic	Perso-Arabic	Hebrew
Ā ā		ī	א
Ē ē			י ..
Ī ī, -i	И и, Ы ѝ, Е е (Tajik)	ی	י
О о	О о		Tajik: א א
Ō ō			י י
Ū ū	У у, Ў ў	و	ו
YU yu / -I-U -i-u	Ю ю		
YO yo	Ё ё	ی	

Table iii. Short vowels.

Latin	Cyrillic	Perso-Arabic	Hebrew
A a	А а	ا	-
E e	Э э, Е е (Tajik)	ا	א
I i	И и, Ы ѝ	ی	י
О о		ا	
U u	У у, Ў ў	و	ו
Y y	Ы ы (Russian)		
YA ya	Я я		
YE ye	Е е (Russian)		
YU yu / -I-U -i-u	Ю ю		
	Ы, ы, Ы, ы		א
ə			א

*Persian, Tajik, Buxori*

In this dissertation the term “Persian” refers to all dialects of Persian, including what is often called “Tajik” or “Buxori.” “Tajik” or “Tajik Persian” is used to refer specifically to the form of Persian spoken in Central Asia when distinguished from general Persian characteristics, and “Buxori” or “Bukharian Persian” is used to specify the form of Persian spoken by Bukharian Jews (sometimes also called “Judeo-Tajik”). The terms “Tajik” and “Buxori” appear when speakers of those languages employ them. “Farsi” or “Forsi,” the Persian word for the Persian language, is not used except in transliteration or transcription from Persian, or in quotations of other speakers and writers. The phrase “Iranian Persian” refers specifically to the form of Persian currently spoken in Iran.

There are important differences between Tajik Persian and Iranian Persian. One difference is pronunciation. The short *o* in Iranian Persian is normally treated as *u* in Tajik Persian (“*Boxārā*” becomes “*Buxoro*”), the long *o* and the diphthong *aw* or *ow* as *av* (“*nowruz*” becomes “*navruz*”), and the short *e* as *i* (as with the *ezafe*, e.g., “*nān-e padar*” becomes “*non-i padar*”). The pronunciation of Tajik Persian sometimes seems to reflect the influence of Russian and Cyrillic; for example, some pronounce the name of the city Shahrīsabz (Persian: “verdant city,” *šahr-i sabz*) as *šaxrisyabz*, as it would be in Russian. Some words pronounced with a long *i* in Iranian Persian, such as *pīš*, *nīst*, and *nīk* are written with an *e* in Cyrillic and pronounced with a short *e* in Tajik Persian, as *peš*, *nest*, and *nek*. Certain quirks of transliteration into and out of Cyrillic, however, often do not reflect any change in pronunciation. Many words written with an *e* in Cyrillic are pronounced with the long *i* in Tajik Persian, such as the *mī* in present tense

verbs (*mīzanam*, not *mezanam*) and *bī* (“without”). The long *a*, written as **o** in Cyrillic and transliterated here as *o* is pronounced as in English *dog* and not as in English *no*. Thus, the Cyrillic **нон** (transliterated as “non”) and the Perso-Arabic نَن (transliterated as “nān”) are usually pronounced in a similar manner.

There are also differences in vocabulary. Certain words that have fallen out of use in Iranian Persian are still used in Tajik Persian, such as “kalon” (meaning “large, big, great”) or “lekin” (meaning “but”).<sup>ii</sup> Some shared words have what might be called stylistic differences: for example, the Iranian “motašakkeram,” pronounced *močakaram* (meaning “thank you,” “I’m grateful”) receives puzzled looks from Tajik speakers, but the very similar “tašakkur” or “tašakkur doram” is normal. Some words have different meanings—“za<sup>c</sup>if” means “weak” in Iranian Persian and “woman” in Tajik Persian. There are also different loanwords stemming from historical circumstances: Iranian Persian draws heavily on French (Iranian speakers frequently say “merci”) whereas Tajik speakers, of course, use many Russian words. The most distinctive feature of the form of Persian called “Buxori” is the use of Hebrew words and, previously, the use of the Hebrew script.

Often the designation of this tongue as “Buxori,” “Persian,” “Farsi,” or “Tajik,” is a matter of politics, identity, or lack of information, rather than linguistic features. Bukharians in Queens have varying amounts of fluency and familiarity with Persian, depending on their household, place of origin, and age. Bukharians from cities such as

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ii. Definitions for Tajik and Bukharian Persian come primarily from discussions with Bukharians and Gulkarov 1998.

Samarqand and Bukhara, where Persian is widely spoken among the general population, are often fluent Persian speakers. On the other hand, Bukharians who grew up in Tashkent are likely to be most fluent in Russian and to speak or understand only a little Persian. Bukharians from cities such as Shymkent (in Kazakhstan) might speak hardly any Persian at all. Older Bukharians are very likely to have Persian as their mother tongue; people who lived in a household with their grandparents are likely to have at least some fluency in Persian. Bukharians who spent or are spending their childhood years in New York might know very little Persian and probably speak Russian and English.

As can be expected, Bukharians also have differing conceptions about the language. Some Bukharians in New York consider Buxori to be a completely separate language from Persian, or an “ancient dialect”; this sometimes stems from difficulties that Bukharians have in communicating with Iranians in New York due to variations in pronunciation and vocabulary of the sort described above. On a few occasions, Bukharians have asked me to explain the difference between “Buxori” (or “Bukharian”), “Farsi,” “Tajik,” and/or “Persian,” indicating that they were aware of some similarities and differences between the languages.

### *Interview Transcription and Translation*

In discussions and interviews, Bukharians regularly switch languages. Often, this is “codeswitching” (see, e.g., Urciuoli 1995; Auer 1998), with each language having various associations. For example, Russian is generally considered to be appropriate for public discourse, and Persian is considered to be appropriate for poetry and the private sphere. At other times the use of different languages seems arbitrary, a simple matter of

trying to ease communication. In speaking with me, a Bukharian might try his or her best to communicate in English, even if he or she is not fluent.

I conducted interviews mostly in Persian and English. I provide interview transcriptions in English translation; however, I have tried to reflect the nuances conveyed by the use of various languages in the following ways. In long quotes taken from interviews, boldface type indicates the use of English. When the original statement uses foreign terms that bear special attention, the original utterance is italicized and placed in parentheses following the translation. Words in italics but not in parentheses were stressed by the speaker. Square brackets indicate phonetic spellings, omissions, or places where I altered the exact translation to make it more idiomatic. For example, the following utterance of Roshel Rubinov

Yak xīl mīdonad by heart Šaḥarīt, Minḥah, °Arvīt, by heart. Sometimes I see rabbi, no book. . . . Mushkil ast. I know one rabbi, Ben Ḥayim, if other rabbis have questions, they gonna come to him, ask . . . he says, take *this* book, *this* page, *this* paragraph. . . . dar fikraš, dar yod dorad!

appears in the dissertation as:

One type [of person] knows **by heart** Šaḥarīt, Minḥah °Arvīt, **by heart**. **Sometimes I see [a] rabbi [without a book]**. . . . It's difficult. **I know one rabbi, Ben Ḥayim, if other rabbis have questions, they [ask him]** . . . he says, take *this* book, *this* page, *this* paragraph. . . . He has it in his mind, in his memory (*dar fikraš, dar yod dorad*)!

Translations throughout the dissertation from writings in Persian, Hebrew, and Russian are my own.

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This dissertation explores the attitudes, history, and traditions of an immigrant community—the Bukharian Jews of New York City—through an investigation of their musical repertoire.<sup>1</sup> Melodies, poems, and rhythms are crucial topics as members of this community discuss their Bukharian Jewish identity, and individual choices about repertoire can offer insight into community values and priorities. “Repertoire” is used broadly throughout this study, referring not only to compositions but also to physical moves, gestures, and behaviors. I consider repertoire to be fundamentally tied to human activity and never something absolute or unchanging. Repertoire does not and cannot exist apart from practitioners, listeners, and readers; the decisions these people make when performing, teaching, learning, and interpreting; and the institutions that support them and their activities.

The Bukharian Jews are in an excellent position to teach us about the relationship of repertoire to identity, diaspora and migration, aesthetics, values, and tradition. Bukharians think of themselves as a distinct group and the issue of musical repertoire lies at the heart of this distinction. Repertoire performance, transmission, and discourse provide means by which Bukharians explore and perpetuate a sense of their own unique

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1. In English, the spellings and pronunciations “Bukharan Jews” and “Bukharans” are also common. I have chosen to use the “-ian” form because it is the preference among New York Bukharians themselves (e.g., the newspaper *Bukharian Times*). “Bukharan” is retained as an adjective describing nouns specifically related to the city or emirate/khanate of Bukhara, as in “the Bukharan court.” Thus, Bukharian Jews are not necessarily “Bukharan,” as many are from other cities and regions.

identity and locate themselves in New York’s multicultural landscape. As immigrants in Queens—the borough in New York City with the most foreign-born residents, hailing from over one hundred different countries—Bukharian Jews have numerous opportunities to consider their identity with respect to new neighbors and institutions.<sup>2</sup> In the United States, where identity is often wrapped up with culture, Bukharian musical repertoire is a strong component of Bukharian self-consciousness.

### **1.1. History of the Bukharian Community**

Jews have had a presence in Central Asia—that is, present-day Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan—for generations. The Jews of Central Asia claim to have been in the region since at least the first expulsion of the Jews by the Babylonians in the sixth century BCE, or more generally, “since ancient times” (Benyaminov 1992:11), “for 2,000 years,” or “for more than 2,000 years” (Pinkhasov n.d.).<sup>3</sup> Michael Zand offers reasonable evidence to support Jewish settlement in Khorāsān and Turkmenistan as early as 559 BCE (Zand 2000:532; see also Foltz 1999:30-31). Zand

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2. According to the 2000 census, 1,028,339 Queens residents were immigrants in 2000, accounting for 46.1 percent of the borough’s population. Well over one hundred languages are spoken in Queens, with 53.6 percent of the population age five and over speaking a language other than English at home. Brooklyn, the borough with the second-highest number of immigrants, had 931,769 foreign-born residents, constituting 38 percent of the borough’s population (www.census.gov; New York City 2004:12-13).

3. The standard date for the Babylonian Exile is 586 BCE, although the Babylonians also exiled Jews from Judea when Jerusalem was conquered in 597 BCE (Bickerman 1960:70). In 539 BCE, Cyrus of Persia defeated the Babylonians and allowed Jews to return to Judea, although most stayed in Babylon. The “2,000 years” of exile spoken about by Jews usually date from the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE by the Romans and its attendant catastrophes.

also mentions proof of the presence of Jews in Merv (today Mary, Turkmenistan) and Khorezm before the Arab conquests of the seventh century CE. From the tenth century on, the Jews of Central Asia lived in a feudal society that was predominately made up of Sunni Muslims, ruled by Turkic dynasties, and organized in khanates (Rowland et al. 1992). Like Jews in other parts of the world, these Jews shared much of the culture of their neighbors, including food, dress, customs, literature, art, and music, but they were also subject to various policies that separated them from their mostly Sunni Muslim neighbors—for example, they were restricted from wearing certain clothes (including anything more than a common rope around their waist), prohibited from riding on horseback, and confined to living in Jewish Quarters (Cooper 2000:12, 244-45). Their mother tongue was Persian, although they were and are multilingual—generally a strong feature of Central Asian society—, also speaking Uzbek, Hebrew, Russian, and/or English, depending on their circumstances. Their history is closely bound up with that of Iranian, and especially Khorāsānian, Jewry. The Jews in this region, now broadly called “Bukharian Jews,” were generally city dwellers, living in places such as Bukhara, Tashkent, Samarqand, Shahrisabz, and Dushanbe, and they were highly cosmopolitan and mobile traders (Cooper 2000:90-92). Foltz writes that Jews were traders along the Silk Road since at least the first century CE, their dispersal making them “ideally situated to participate in trade” between the Roman and Parthian empires (Foltz 1999:31-32).

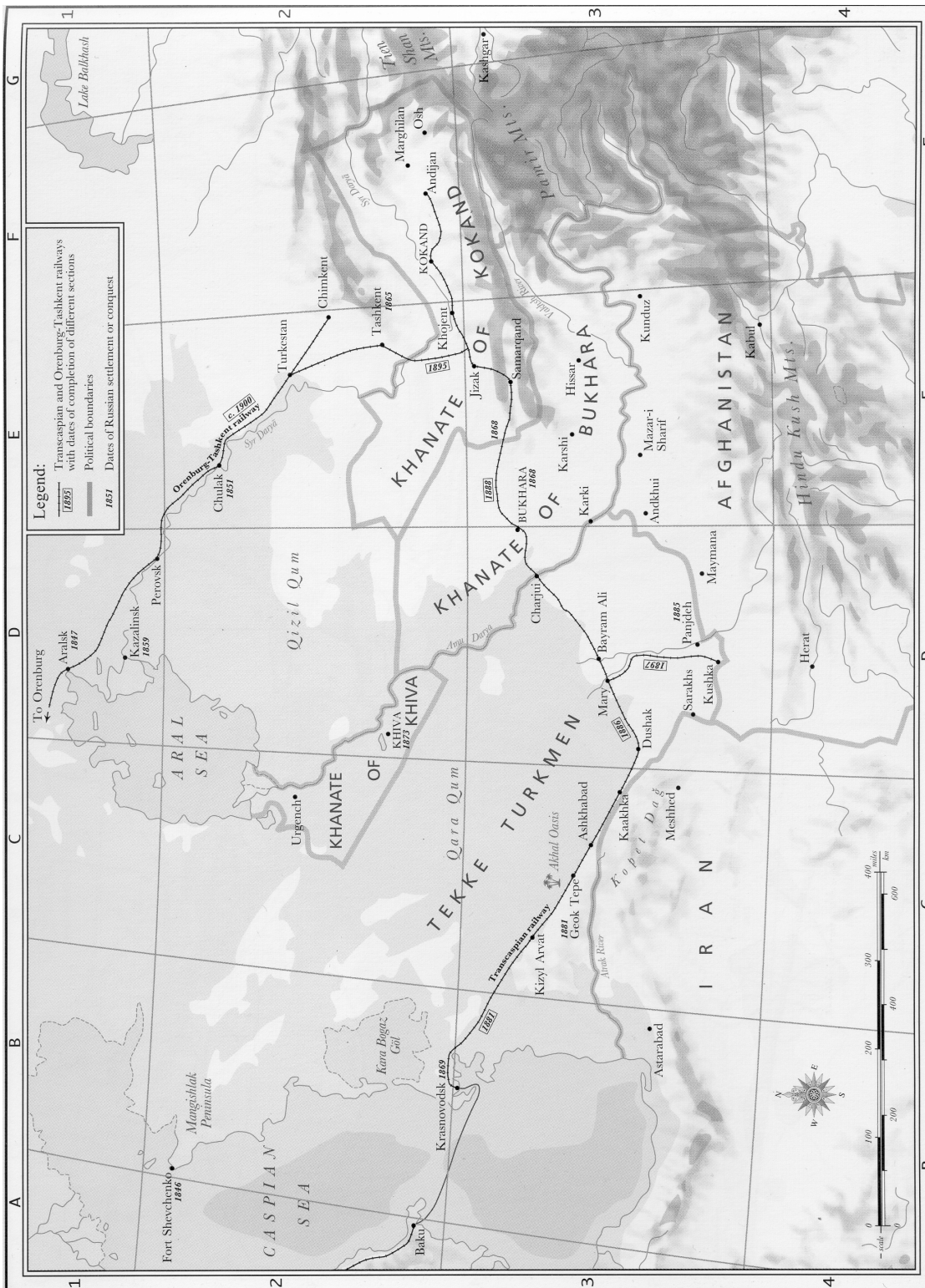
As Figure 1.1 shows, Bukhara, Khiva (Khorezm), and Kokand were the seats of the main Central Asian khanates of the nineteenth century. Each was ethnically diverse, but the Bukharan khanate, which included the cities of Bukhara and Samarqand and extended into the Pamir Mountains of present-day Tajikistan, had the greatest percentage

of Persian speakers (Rowland et al. 1992:196). Jews served as some of the most prominent musicians at the Bukharan court, performing the music that came to be known as the *Šašmaqom*.<sup>4</sup> Among these musicians were some *čola*-s, or Jews who had been forcibly converted to Islam according to policies instituted by the Mangit rulers (1747-1920) and who privately continued to practice Judaism (Levin 1996:92; Zand 2000:535). The most important *čola* musician was Ata Jalol (Levin 1996:92), sometimes credited as being the “founder” of the *Šašmaqom*. He was the teacher of Levi Babakhanov, affectionately known as Levicha, who served at the court of the last Emir of Bukhara, Alim Khan, and his predecessor, Ahad Khan (Levin 1996:99; Djumaev 1999). Levicha was openly Jewish and not a *čola*, and he has become a cultural hero to the Bukharian Jews.

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4. The Bukharan *Šašmaqom* (also called the Tajik-Uzbek *Šašmaqom* or the Uzbek-Tajik *Šašmaqom*) was formed in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries out of a synthesis between Persian and Turkish-Čağatay *maqom* traditions dating back to the Timurid era (fourteenth century) (Djumaev 1999:4; Levin and Sultanov 2000:910). The best sources to date for situating the *Šašmaqom* in a historical context of *maqom* theory are Jung 1989 and During et al. 1998:2335-39 (see also Djumaev 1997). The repertoire associated with the Khivan court is now known as the *Altı-yarım makom*, and that associated with the Kokand court as the *Čormaqom* (Levin and Sultanova 2002:909-13).

Figure 1.1. Map of nineteenth-century Central Asian khanates ("Transoxiana in the 13th/ 19th Century," Kennedy 2002:42). Reproduced with permission of Brill Academic Publishers.



From the middle to the late nineteenth century, the Russians systematically conquered and colonized Central Asia.<sup>5</sup> In 1866 the Russians annexed Tashkent, the future capital of Uzbekistan, and made the city their political center in Central Asia. This strategy was designed to undermine the prominence of Bukhara, as the Emir at the time, Mozaffar al-Din, had his own ambitions of expansion. The Russians took Khiva in 1873 and, after some resistance, the Kokand khanate was officially abolished in 1876. The Tekke Turkmen managed to defeat the Russian troops at Gok Tepe in 1879, but the Russians retaliated and eventually subjugated the Turkmen at Mary in 1884. The Khivan khanate was completely under Russian rule and intact only in name, but the Bukharan khanate remained marginally independent in an uneasy alliance with the Russians until the fall of Czar Nicholas II. Eventually, Emir Alim Khan fled to Dushanbe in 1920, and then to Afghanistan in 1921. In 1924, the Uzbek and Tajik Soviet Socialist Republics were established, and Central Asia was under Soviet rule until the dissolution of the U.S.S.R. in 1991.

Under Soviet rule, distinctions between Jews and Muslims intensified, partly due to a Soviet conception of discrete “nations” with roots in a specific “folk.” “Uzbek” and “Tajik” became ethnic designations, and “Jew” remained a separate category altogether; in the Soviet Union, a Jew from Uzbekistan had a nationality of “Jew,” not “Uzbek,” indicated on his or her passport. But despite a nationwide culture of anti-Semitism, it was not unusual for Jews to rise to moderately important stations and receive advanced

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5. The information in this paragraph was culled mainly from Allworth 1967, Hopkirk 1992, and Whitlock 2002.

academic degrees. Bukharians from different generations often speak Russian fluently and identify with Russian culture, particularly if they lived or grew up in Tashkent or other “Russified” cities. I met several Bukharians from Tashkent who spoke Russian as their mother tongue and spoke little to no Persian, in stark contrast to those Bukharians from Shahrīsabz, Samarqand, and Bukhara whose mother tongue is Persian. In New York, I have had conversations with Bukharians in their fifties who remember their lives in the Soviet Union with fondness and nostalgia. One such woman from Dushanbe, a sister-in-law of a performing musician, reminisced about the beauty of her home city and praised the Russians who came from Moscow during World War II and “built the city.” Several Bukharians in their twenties and thirties told me that they identified to a large extent as Russians and frequented Russian-Jewish nightclubs in Brighton Beach.

According to the memories of my interviewees, the quality of Bukharian religious practice varied in Soviet Central Asia according to location and time. In cities such as Shahrīsabz, Bukharians (especially older males) continued to regularly attend synagogue. Many Bukharians proudly expressed to me that they always kept kosher, observed the Sabbath, fasted on Yom Kippur and other fast days, and celebrated holidays. On the other hand, Bukharians who wished to pursue government positions or academic degrees, and those living in cities with a strong Soviet presence such as Tashkent, might hide their Jewish practice, refrain from attending synagogue, and/or be less religiously observant altogether. Religion also waxed and waned along with the tolerance of government authorities. Overall, Bukharian Jews lament the difficulties of practicing Judaism in the U.S.S.R. while stressing that they were able to keep some amount of religious continuity throughout the Soviet era.

Emigration was difficult for all Jews under the anti-Semitic policies of the Soviet Union, and many Jews throughout the nation decided to leave with the loosening of restrictions brought on by glasnost in the 1980s. In the 1980s and 1990s, with “Uzbekification” and nationalistic policies such as the banning of the Russian language from schools, tensions between Jews and Muslims ran high. Jews sometimes became the victims of hate crimes, stemming from anti-Semitism and an association of Jews with Europe, the United States, Israel, and the Soviet and post-Soviet governments in Central Asia.<sup>6</sup> The slow migration from Central Asia to New York in the 1960s and 1970s accelerated in the 1980s and 1990s, and today there are tens of thousands of Bukharian Jews living in New York City, mostly in and around the Forest Hills, Rego Park, and Kew Gardens neighborhoods of Queens (estimates hover around 40,000 to 50,000).<sup>7</sup> Jewish agencies assisted greatly in enabling Bukharian emigration and resettlement. This is about half of all Bukharian Jews; most of the other half immigrated to Israel.<sup>8</sup> It is not

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6. In their 1993 World Report, Human Rights Watch documented some of the attacks on Jews in the former Soviet Union. “There have also been numerous reports of vigilante attacks on Jews in Uzbekistan. . . . Much of the continued harassment of Jews in 1992 appears to be due to long-standing resentment toward their privileged opportunities for emigration and purported enrichment abroad” (Human Rights Watch 1993). President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan’s cruel, ruthless, and inhumane policies towards Islamists—such as the international group Hizb ut-Tahrir, which has a strong following in Uzbekistan—has also fueled anti-Semitism. Hizb ut-Tahrir’s “rhetoric is typically and openly anti-Semitic. The group’s leaflets, distributed illegally in Uzbekistan, call Karimov a ‘Jewish kafir,’ or infidel. An Uzbek member of Hizb ut-Tahrir interviewed by TOL [Transitions Online] expressed regret that Hitler had not exterminated all the Jews” (Rotar 2005). For more information on Karimov’s policies of torture and religious persecution, see Human Rights Watch 1995:446-51.

7. “About 40,000” is the number in a January 2006 article in the *New York Times* (Moskin 2006), and “about 50,000” in Pinkhasov n.d.

8. Bukharian immigration to Palestine and Israel has a long history, although not

uncommon for Bukharians to have moved to New York after first living in Israel. There are also Bukharian immigrants in Europe, especially in Germany and Austria, and other U.S. cities, such as Atlanta and Denver, and there remains a small number of Bukharian Jews in Central Asia itself.

When speaking Persian, most of my Bukharian interviewees used the verb *muhojirat kardan* (“to emigrate”) to describe their experience. However, when speaking English, several interviewees characterized themselves as “refugees.” It is important, for the purposes of this dissertation, to note that these Bukharians felt forced out of Central Asia because of the anti-Semitism that they experienced both under the Soviets and under the regime that came in their wake. At the same time, many Bukharians have maintained business and personal contacts in Central Asia, and some are quite supportive of authoritarian governments such as Islam Karimov’s in Uzbekistan. During my research, Bukharians often had long and heated debates with each other about the state of affairs in Central Asia, United States, and Israel, no doubt intensified by the events of 11 September 2001 and the massacre in Andijon, Uzbekistan on 13 May 2005. After Andijon, for example, one man, his brother, and his son-in-law argued about whether the killing of protesters in the town square was a necessary step towards eradicating terrorist extremism in Uzbekistan, or an unjustifiable act of a government intent on keeping its populace subjugated. Discussions such as this generally went unresolved.

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always in such substantial numbers. Jews from Central Asia began settling in what came to be known as the “Bukharian Quarter” or “Bukharian Neighborhood” (*šəxūnat ha-būxārīm*) in Jerusalem in the 1880s.

The phrase “Bukharian Jews” (Russian *buxarskiye yevrei*, Persian *yahūdī-on-i buxori*) seems to have first been used in the eighteenth or nineteenth century, gaining widespread currency as a blanket designation for all Persian-speaking Jews from Central Asia, including those that were from neither the city of Bukhara nor the territory of the Bukharan khanate. Alanna Cooper makes a convincing argument that Jews from Central Asia raising money for settlement in Palestine began calling themselves “Bukhar[i]an Jews” in the late nineteenth century in response to a competition for resources (Cooper 2000:144-60); the term allowed the Jews from Central Asia to avoid being subsumed under the Sephardic category and to collect money as a distinct group. Israeli society is unique in that Jews are a majority; hence the Hebrew noun *būxārīm* (“Bukharians”) often suffices, replacing the compound structure of “Bukharian Jew” (in which “Bukharian” is an adjective qualifying the noun “Jew”). In New York City during the period of my dissertation research (2002–2006), “Bukharian Jew” and “Bukharian” were both in use, referring to both Jews from Central Asia and their descendants.

Bukharians themselves differ on the origins and meanings of the term. One Bukharian author writes that they are called “Bukharian Jews” because the first Jewish settlement in the region was in Bukhara (Benyaminov 1992:14). Cooper also reprints the statements of Datkhaev, who claims that Timur was the first to use the term (2000:362); this argument has been repeated by Peter Pinkhasov (n.d.). Cooper reports other meanings of “Bukharian” to Bukharians, some relating to origin or ethnicity: to be Central Asian and originally from Iran (Cooper 2000:358), to be specifically from the city of Bukhara (2000:359), or to have a distinct physical appearance (2000:360). During the Soviet era, substantial numbers of Jews from Russia moved to Tashkent and other Central

Asian cities, but in line with the concept of a Bukharian ethnicity, they would generally retain a separate identity as “Russians” or “Ashkenazim.”

The Bukharian Jews trace their ancestry to the earliest Jewish diaspora—the dispersal of the Jews starting with the Babylonian exile—, coming to Central Asia directly from ancient Persia and Babylon. According to this history, they are neither Sephardim nor Ashkenazim. The Sephardim, who were officially exiled from Spain (Sepharad) in 1492 and settled mainly in North Africa, Italy, and Turkey, and the Ashkenazim, who settled in Germany (Ashkenaz) and northern France in the sixth century and spread to Poland-Lithuania, Russia, and Eastern Europe, are the two dominant groups of diasporic Judaism.<sup>9</sup> They have distinct forms of religious ritual, practice, and law, and their relations have often been strained. Jewish communities with other rites, such as the Bukharian Jews, have increasingly adopted either Ashkenazic or Sephardic norms and behaviors. Although the history is unclear, Bukharian Jews have practiced the Sephardic rite since at least the nineteenth century.<sup>10</sup> Zand, in line with other authors (Altschuler and Müller 1971:1474; Wahrman 1991:10), writes that in 1793 a Moroccan-born emissary named Rabbi Yōsēf Mamān came to Bukhara from Palestine in 1793 and enacted a number of reforms among the “virtually isolated” community,

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9. *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, s.v. “Sephardim” and “Ashkenaz.”

10. Although most Bukharian Jews distinguish themselves from Sephardic Jews on the basis of their migratory history, on one or two occasions I did encounter Bukharians in New York characterizing the community as Sephardic. This dual Bukharian/Sephardic identity seems to stem from Bukharian religious practice, which is now Sephardic, and/or descriptions of the community as Sephardic in recent articles and media (see, e.g., Wishna 2003). To further complicate matters, a small minority of Central Asian Jews is in fact ethnically Sephardic.

including the “replacement of the Khorasani rite with the so-called ‘Spanish rite’” (2000:535). However, Cooper (2000, 2004) challenges the story of Mamān and the idea that the Bukharian Jews were actually “isolated,” framing historical accounts about the Bukharian Jews in terms of a debate about Jewish identity and authority. A more accurate history might indicate that the Jews in Central Asia consistently maintained Jewish practice and stayed abreast of developments throughout the diaspora, although the Sephardic rite and various customs were introduced by emissaries from Palestine.

Several aspects of the brief history detailed above are central to the activities of the Bukharian musicians discussed in this study. First, as Walter Feldman argues, “no other Islamic music was as dependent upon Jewish performers and teachers as was the Shashmaqam” (Feldman 2005). Thus, Bukharian Jews feel an ownership of, and responsibility for, the Šašmaqom that supersedes the repertoire’s associations with Muslim practices. Second, Jewish belief, ritual, and practice are a central feature of Bukharian life. According to my interviewees, even during the Soviet era, Bukharian Jews observed holidays and dietary restrictions. Third, religion and ethnicity are tied together in Central Asia. At least since the Russian conquest, Jews in Central Asia have been considered part of a distinct ethnic group or nation, separate from the Sunni Muslim

Uzbeks and Tajiks.<sup>11</sup> Fourth, and connected to their diasporic consciousness, is the fact that Bukharian Jews were mobile, multilingual, and cosmopolitan in Central Asia.

## 1.2. Repertoire and Otherness

In their definition of repertory, Ian D. Bent and Stephen Blum write, “The concept of repertory entails a fundamental sense of ‘otherness’, of difference. . . . Thus, ‘my/our’ repertory implies an awareness of ‘his/her/their/your’ repertory” (2001:197). This idea is especially pertinent to the musical repertoire of the Bukharian Jews, who maintain and negotiate several layers of “otherness” simultaneously. After all, the very concepts of “Jew,” “Bukharian,” and “Central Asia” are dependent on a sense of otherness.

“Central Asia,” for example, presupposes a concept of Asia, a distinct continent with boundaries and set apart from other continents. The adjective “central” further modifies the region to be distinct from “East Asia,” “South Asia,” “West Asia,” or “Southeast Asia.” “Central Asia” can be usefully compared to the very similar “Middle East,” a geographically vague and political term that emerged in the twentieth century (Davison 1960). The Arabic “land beyond the river [Oxus],” *māwarā’ al-nahr*—“Transoxania” or “Transoxiana” in English—is also a term of otherness, with the Arabs

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11. Shi‘a Muslims in Central Asia are “Ironi,” “Forsi,” or “Marvi” (depending on the status and history of the particular community) and constitute an “ethnic-religious” minority with an extremely important role in the musical life of Central Asia, like Bukharian Jews (Fātemi 2005a:221-88). Some are descendants of slaves brought from Khorāsān via Merv (Fātemi 2005a:223; Levin 1996:122). Others may have come as soldiers as a result of Nader Shah’s conquests in Transoxania (Fātemi 2005a:221-23).

as the subject and the “land beyond the river,” which they were to conquer in the seventh century, the object.

“Jew,” “Bukharian,” and “Central Asian” are just a few of the terms and labels applied to, and invoked by, Bukharian Jews. These words represent various overlapping aspects of Bukharian Jewish identity, which are pertinent to different circumstances. Furthermore, each of these distinctions has had a strong impact on scholarship pertaining to the musical activities of Bukharian Jews. The following section discusses the background of these terms, some of the situations in which they apply, and the relationships of otherness which they imply.

In Soviet Central Asia, official state policies instituted ethnic or “national” divisions based on the concept of *xalq* (meaning “folk,” “people,” “nation”).<sup>12</sup> The Jewish *xalq* was considered to be a nation mutually exclusive of the Uzbek (Sunni Muslim, Turkic, nomadic) *xalq* and the Tajik (Sunni Muslim, Persian, urban) *xalq*. “Jew” was a primarily ethnic designation throughout the entire U.S.S.R., as Cooper explains:

In the Soviet Union, to “be Russian” did not mean “to be a citizen of Russia” and to “be Uzbek” did not mean “to be a citizen of Uzbekistan.” Rather it meant belonging to the Russian national group or to the Uzbek national group. So too, being Jewish did not mean “being a believer in the Jewish faith” (which one could accept or reject), but rather, being part of the primordial and enduring national group.

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12. Synonyms for the term *xalq*, also used frequently by Bukharian Jews, are *millat* (Persian, from Arabic) and *narod* (Russian).

In America, where citizenship is emphasized over nationality, an Italian immigrant can become an American, and a Jew can simultaneously be an American and a Jew. In the USSR, an individual was either a Jew or a Russian. Not both, and not a “Russian Jew.” Likewise, an individual was either a Jew or an Uzbek. Not both, and not an “Uzbek Jew.” (Cooper 2000:344)

Individual Bukharian Jews were sometimes recognized as exponents of Uzbek or Tajik culture, even receiving the title “People’s Artist” (e.g., Ezro Malakov and Muhabbat Shamaeva for Uzbekistan and Shoista Mullojanova for Tajikistan), but they were still not considered “Uzbek” or “Tajik.”

This conception continues today in New York. My interviewees regularly distinguished themselves from “Uzbeks,” “Uzbek people” (*xalq-i Uzbekī*), “Tajiks,” and “Tajik people” (*xalq-i Tojikī*) when remembering life in Central Asia or discussing Bukharian repertoire. I never once heard a Jew from Uzbekistan refer to himself or herself as an “Uzbek” or “Uzbek Jew.” The diasporic mindset of Bukharian Jews intensified the difference of the Jewish nation in Central Asia, as the land of Israel is the homeland (*vatan*) opposed to Central Asia, which is part of the *golut* (diaspora, exile). However, I did hear Bukharians express strong and deep affinities with the language and music of their native countries.

The concept of *xalq*, which attaches unique and distinctive characteristics to exclusive “nations” or “peoples,” has had a major impact on Central Asian music scholarship, especially regarding Jewish participation in the Šašmaqom repertoire. As

Djumaev (1993:47-49, 2005), During (1994:127, 1998:108-10), Levin (1984:80, 1996:46-47), and others have mentioned, the Šašmaqom was published in both Turkic-language and Persian-language editions as exclusive monuments of Uzbek and Tajik culture, respectively. The “publication of the *Bukharan Shashmaqom*, initiated by Abdurauf Fitrat . . . symbolized the legitimatization of the Bukharan *Shashmaqom* as an inseparable part of Uzbek national musical culture” (Djumaev 2005:175). The Šašmaqom repertoire was published as the “people’s music” of Uzbekistan, using the word *xalq*, in Yunus Rajabi’s *Uzbek xalq muzikasi [Uzbekskaya narodnaya muzyka]* (Rajabi 1959). The first words of the introduction to Belyayev’s Tajik edition of the Šašmaqom refer to the repertoire as “classical music of the Tajik people” (*muzika-i klassikī-i xalq-i Tojik*), and Persian texts by unknown poets are also designated as *xalqī* (“folk” as an adjective) (Belyayev 1950:9). Support for the Šašmaqom in Central Asia remains strong. Most recently, the Aga Khan Music Initiative in Central Asia (AKMICA) has funded an Academy of Maqom in Tajikistan, run by Abduvali Abdurashidov, dedicated to cultivating a “pre-Soviet” style of maqom performance (characterized in this case by performance in suites and the use of only tanbūr, sato, dutor, doira, and voices).<sup>13</sup> Students at the academy earn government-issued diplomas.

The association of the Šašmaqom with the Uzbek or Tajik nation has marginalized the substantial Jewish contribution to this repertoire. Theodore Levin drew attention to this fact, noting that even though Jews made up a small percentage of the

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13. The group can be heard on Academy of Maqâm 2006. The group does have both female and male singers, which would be uncharacteristic of pre-Soviet performance practice, but the women and men always sing separately, never as a mixed chorus.

population in Central Asia, less than .2%, according to the 1989 Soviet census (Levin 1996:92),

Several Jewish family lineages dominated the performance of *Shash maqâm* and other kinds of classical, or “heavy,” music in Transoxania from the late nineteenth century to the last quarter of the twentieth . . . . Other well-known musicians, including Ata Jalâl, credited with being the “founder” of the *Shash maqâm*, were *chalas*—Jews who converted under coercion to Islam but privately preserved elements of Jewish belief or practice. But despite the key role played by Bukharan Jews and *chalas* in the living transmission of Transoxania’s art music tradition, they have been given scant attention in official accounts of Uzbekistan’s national culture. Viktor Beliaev’s authoritative 1962 survey, “History of the Musics of the Peoples of the USSR,” which neatly correlates musical culture with then-extant Soviet political entities, makes no mention of Bukharan Jews in its survey of Central Asia. During my year of study with Professor Karomatov at the Tashkent Conservatory in 1977-1978, he never mentioned Bukharan Jews in connection with the *Shash maqâm* or any other musical repertory. Other people discussed that connection in whispers. (Levin 1996:92)

The fact that Soviet scholars and teachers neglected to mention that many famous maqomists were Bukharian Jews is unfortunate, but unsurprising.<sup>14</sup> Official Soviet policy downplayed the connection between religion and culture. Belyayev ([1962] 1975) not only fails to mention Bukharian Jews but also almost completely skirts any mention of Islam.<sup>15</sup> Soviet ideology associated “folk” music with the peasantry, which excluded the cosmopolitan, urban Jewish communities (Slobin 1986b:254).<sup>16</sup>

A Soviet conception of distinct nations, each with its own music and rooted in the peasant “folk,” continues to marginalize the Jewish contribution to the Šašmaqom and other Central Asian repertoires on a scholarly and official, public level. To my knowledge, no Jewish connection to the Šašmaqom or other Central Asian repertoires was made in English-language scholarship until Mark Slobin’s “Notes on Bukharan Music in Israel” (1982a). Some post-Soviet scholarship has responded to Soviet national divisions by emphasizing a pre-Soviet shared Muslim culture over artificial “Uzbek” and

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14. As will be discussed later in this chapter, Bukharian scholars were a small exception to this norm. Işhoq Mavashev, a Bukharian scholar writing during the Soviet era, did write about the connections between Jews and Central Asian repertoires. Slobin also cites one article by Ya. I. Kalantarov (1963), in Russian, which makes these connections; the last name, common among Bukharian Jews, suggests that the author was himself Bukharian (the “kalontar” was the chief administrator of the Jewish community in Bukhara [Zand 2000:535]).

15. In another pertinent example, Blum (2001a:364) mentions that Belyayev and Uspenski’s study of music in the Fergana valley went unpublished because it contained too many dervish songs.

16. Two notable exceptions to the Soviet norm were Klyment Kvitka, who discussed “professional folk music” in his dissertation of 1924 (Blum 2001a:364), and Moshe Beregovski, whose studies of Jewish music included secular melodies and reflected the diverse repertoire of Jewish professionals (Slobin 1982b, 1986b).

“Tajik” distinctions. For example, in describing twentieth-century Uzbekistan, Alexander Djumaev described how in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, before the Soviet Era, “‘cultural values’ were not yet linked to or divided among concrete nations [i.e., Uzbek or Tajik]. Instead, culture was considered the common property of Muslims (*ahli Islom*), a Muslim community (*musulmon jamiyati*), or ‘the Islamic nation’ (*millati Islom*) . . .” (Djumaev 2005:168). He explains how, in post-Soviet Uzbekistan, composers, performers, and scholars are reintroducing Islam as a creative element (2005:180). In substituting Muslim culture for Soviet distinctions, Jews remain absent from the narrative. A complementary attitude explains that Jews had such a strong presence in Šašmaqom performance because “[b]eing a musician was one of a handful of possible professions permitted [Jews] under the restrictions that were imposed. The special social status of musicians in the Islamic context might have especially encouraged [Jews] to choose this vocation” (Toda 2001:175). This analytical framework, in which the Šašmaqom is either Muslim, Uzbek, and/or Tajik, relegating Jews to the sidelines as talented guests in a musical house owned by others. Bukharian musicians have expressed to me, without prompting, their dissatisfaction with these explanations.

Bukharian Jews have led the way in writing themselves into the history of the Šašmaqom and Central Asian music and musicology. The Bukharian musicologist Işhoq Mavashev wrote about the accomplishments of Levi Babakhanov in 1960, for the journal *Šarq-i surx* (Nektalov 2005; Benyaminov 1992:73). A Bukharian musicologist now living in Queens, Rafael Nektalov, has created a fund to continue and preserve the works of Mavashev, and has written his own study of the important Bukharian maqomist Gavriel Mulloqandov (Nektalov 1993). In New York and Israel, Bukharians have added

to the literature on Jewish involvement in Central Asian repertoires by taking advantage of an increased ability to publish articles and books. Nektalov regularly publishes articles on the Jewish masters of the Šašmaqom in his weekly community newspaper, *Bukharian Times*. Bukharians have published histories and portraits of their community, such as Meyer Benyaminov's *Bukharian Jews* (1992), which detail the accomplishments of Bukharian musicians with respect to Central Asian repertoires. Benjamin Yusupov, a Bukharian composer living in Israel, wrote a thesis on the life and performance style of the legendary Bukharian singer and teacher, Barno Işhoqova (Yusupov 2000). Bukharians also proudly proclaim their role as Šašmaqom performers in lectures and speeches, as was evident at a symposium celebrating the life and work of Mavashev, organized by Nektalov and held on 18 December 2005.

The Soviet notion of the Jews as a separate “people” must not be regarded as something simply imposed “from the outside.” Among Jews, there has been a longstanding notion of a “Jewish people” (*‘am Yisrāēl*) as distinct from all other nations. Peoplehood is an underlying issue in the religion, related to the Abrahamic covenant—the *bərīt mīlāh*, in which a male child is circumcised after eight days (see Genesis 17)—and the idea of matrilineal descent,<sup>17</sup> and also connected to the classic Jewish concept of diaspora, in which Jews consider themselves to be living in dispersed exile from their

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17. An alternative to the biological Abrahamic covenant is presented by the Mosaic covenant (see Exodus 19), in which the Jewish people agreed to their laws and beliefs of their own accord (“Moshe came, and had the elders of the people called, and set before them these words, with which YHWH had commanded him. And all the people answered together, they said: All that YHWH has spoken, we will do. And Moshe reported the words of the people to YHWH” [Fox 1995:366]). The Mosaic covenant importantly allows for conversion to Judaism.

true homeland, *ereṣ Yisrāēl* (“the land of Israel,” which is not necessarily defined by the borders of the modern Israeli nation-state). In the Hebrew Bible there already exists the idea of the Israelites (*bənē Yisrāēl*) as a distinct nation (*gōy*).<sup>18</sup> By the time of the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE and the ensuing (second) diaspora, “Jew” (*yəhūdī*, from the name of the remaining tribe of Judah) emerged as a term in opposition to the gentile, or non-Jew (again, *gōy*). Jews in the contemporary United States, including Bukharian Jews, use the words “Jew” and “non-Jew” and the Hebrew equivalents *yəhūdī* and *gōy* (also *lō’-yəhūdī* in Modern Hebrew), invoking this dichotomy.

Thus, for Jews and Jewish communities worldwide, it can be said that there always exists a “fundamental sense of ‘otherness,’” often in distinction from many different groups simultaneously. This Jewish fundamental sense of otherness, I believe, lies at the root of an idea of distinctively Jewish behavior, belief, language, music, texts, and food. Such a conception is relatively unproblematic when concerning aspects of Jewish life that are truly distinct, such as those related to religious practice: the Hebrew language, the Torah and Hebrew Bible, dietary restrictions, and Jewish ritual. “Jewishness” is more problematic when applied to certain biological, “ethnic,” and/or cultural characteristics, which may be (and often are) shared by diasporic Jews and the greater society in which they live. A distinction can be perceived and constructed to separate Jewish and non-Jewish musical repertoires which otherwise might seem to be identical; Ellen Koskoff, for example, has shown how Ḥassidic *nigunim* might be

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18. *Bənē Yisrāēl* literally translates as “children of Israel,” Israel being another name for the patriarch Jacob, whose sons are considered to be the fathers of the twelve tribes.

melodically identical to the secular materials of their gentile neighbors, but become distinctively Jewish for Ḥassidim when performed with the proper intention and received with the proper spirit (Koskoff 2001:72-79, 160-69).

Jewish otherness is the product of argument and debate over Jewish identity, charged with questions of authenticity and authority. Within a broad sense of Jewishness, one finds further senses of otherness stemming from differences in custom, geography, and history. In New York, a tension exists between Bukharian Jews and the dominant Ashkenazic Jews, who have much more power in U.S. Jewish institutions. One young Bukharian Jewish woman told me that she felt a lot of “antagonism” between Bukharians and Ashkenazim. Bukharian culture, which shares many aspects with the culture of Muslim Central Asians, is at times startlingly different from that of the Ashkenazim, which is connected in many ways to Eastern European culture. Younger Bukharians, with their higher access to formal Jewish learning in predominately Ashkenazic institutions, have told me that their generation “knows more” about Judaism than their parents and grandparents, although they still respect their elders’ devotion to Judaism under the policies of the Soviets.<sup>19</sup> Another young Bukharian woman, who attends Touro College in Manhattan, said that she felt that the other students (i.e., Jews, but not Bukharians) “don’t even really think we’re Jewish, because we come from a Muslim country.” The commonly invoked trope of Bukharian “isolation” in Central Asia is one way of

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19. On the other hand, several Jews from western Russian cities (e.g., Moscow and St. Petersburg) have told me that the Jews of the eastern republics (i.e., Central Asia) were considered to be the most observant and religious of any Jews in the Soviet Union.

neutralizing any challenge that Bukharian Judaism presents to the dominant center/periphery paradigm and ideas of Jewish unity and authenticity (Cooper 2000:41).

Bukharians can also position themselves as more observant and authentic than other Jews. For example, Ezro Malakov, a prominent Bukharian singer, insisted that the proper way to chant the Book of Esther (*məgillāt Ester*, read aloud on the holiday of Purim) is the Bukharian way, out of all of the different methods found in Jewish communities. The popular Bukharian singer Yuhan Benjamin was quoted in one article as saying, “The Bukharan community is the closest to what original Judaism is . . . . Only Bukharian Jews follow the Old Testament” (Wishna 2003). I have also heard Bukharian Jews say that “American” Jews (i.e., Ashkenazim) have fallen victim to assimilation (*assimilyaşıya*). Sometimes, aspects of difference are less loaded, such as the comment that one Bukharian made regarding his observation that Bukharians had more rituals devoted to the remembrance of deceased ancestors than did other Jews.

At other times, issues of difference and “otherness” are suppressed in favor of recognition of similarity and unity. So although “Bukharians” are not “Ashkenazim,” both are “Jews.”<sup>20</sup> In an informal conversation with me, Yuhan Benjamin compared the Jewish people to a *plov*, the Bukharian rice and meat dish. In *plov*, all of the ingredients, such as meat, spices, rice, and fruit, come together to make one dish but retain their unique and individual tastes. Individuals stress sameness or difference depending on the situation, negotiating their own personality or community in relation to a larger group.

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20. This too has precedent in Jewish belief. In the Hebrew Bible, the general term “Israelites” originally applied to the conglomeration of the twelve distinct tribes.

Each Bukharian Jew lives a negotiation of expressing his or her personality while simultaneously being part of the Bukharian Jewish community, and the results of these negotiations place the Bukharian Jewish community as a unique entity within the larger contexts of the Jewish people, New York, and the United States.

Scholars of Jewish music have often themselves been Jews, and a Jewish sense of otherness has arguably impacted the ways that they compile and interact with their data. Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, who studied Jewish repertoires comparatively, presented the music of diverse Jewish communities as stemming from a common source in Ancient Israel. The “employment of particular scales, motives, modes, rhythms, and forms, based on definite musical principles . . . run through the music like a golden thread” (Idelsohn [1929] 1967:492). In 1929, Idelsohn mused on the essential nature of Jewish music in terms echoing the Soviet conception of *xalq*:

Every nation that possesses its own soil, that has made a history for itself and that has created an individual atmosphere must, according to the established premises in musical science, have its own folk-song. Inversely, a folk-song must spring from a nation. But are the Jewish people a nation? For two thousand years, they have been rent from the physical homeland that cradled their youth; they have been scattered over the entire earth; they have been influenced by almost every climate, culture, and nation, constituting a small minority in each country. On the basis of these determining factors, the Jews may hardly, in the commonly accepted sense, be adjudged a nation. And yet through circumstances peculiar to

them—circumstances that know no parallel in history—the Jews have never been divorced from the land where they developed from nomadic tribes into a nation. The topography, the atmosphere, the very soil of Palestine, was molded into their faith, their thought, their spiritual culture, and folklore. Through these intangible, yet very real, roots, they never ceased to draw nourishment from the vale of Sharon, and to drink inspiration from the dews of Hermon. (Idelsohn [1929] 1967:357)

Idelsohn studied and notated melodic treatments of Jewish texts shared by all Jewish communities, seeking to “demonstrate, through recordings, transcription, and analysis, that an essential continuity was present” (Shelemay 1995:25; cf. Bohlman 2001:293).

The only substantial scholarship on Bukharian music before the 1980s is a section in the third volume of Abraham Zvi Idelsohn’s ten-volume *Hebräisch-Orientalischer Melodienschatz* (Idelsohn 1922), which owes much to his conceptions of Jewish otherness. Following his interests and project, Idelsohn’s notations of melodies sung by Bukharian Jews, based on fieldwork conducted in Palestine among Bukharian immigrants, are limited to Biblical cantillation and liturgy (Idelsohn 1922). In line with his belief that Jews remained a nation (fundamentally religious and “distinctive” [Idelsohn (1929) 1967:358]) apart from the people among whom they settled, he does not mention Bukharian participation in performing the Šašmaqom or any other Central Asian repertoires. Idelsohn and Edith Gerson-Kiwi (who wrote two pages on Bukharian wedding music and dance [1950]) discussed Muslim elements in Bukharian music, but not Jewish contributions to Muslim repertoires or musical interaction.

In reality, “Bukharian music” is neither only Šašmaqom nor only liturgy. Rather, it is a complex of overlapping items based on a continually changing sense of otherness. In New York, just as one encounters a general “Bukharian” identity which embraces diverse Central Asian backgrounds, a standard repertoire of “Bukharian music” has emerged that includes repertoire from diverse Central Asian regions and styles. Bukharians in New York have also conceptualized and added to a body of music and poetry that is considered uniquely Bukharian Jewish, as distinct from repertoires of other Jewish communities. These Bukharian repertoires can overlap, as in ideas about the Šašmaqom. As Slobin writes, “. . . from Bukhara to Morocco, as is well known, Jewish musicians took on the role of ‘official’ carriers of Islamic court musics. Yet some Bukharan Jewish musical families I interviewed felt that all the music they play is Jewish, being simply ‘borrowed’ by Muslims” (Slobin 1995:21). Scholarship has only recently begun to reflect the diversity of Bukharian Jewish music making. Two CDs released by Smithsonian Folkways—*Bukhara: Musical Crossroads of Asia* (1991), produced by Theodore Levin and Otanazar Matyakubov, and *Central Asia in Forest Hills, New York: Music of the Bukharan Jewish Ensemble Shashmaqam* (1991), produced by Levin—were major contributions to the study of Bukharian Jewish music, with audible examples of Jewish–Muslim cultural interaction and the diversity of both Jewish and Muslim performers’ repertoires. Levin’s book, *The Hundred Thousand Fools of God: Musical Travels in Central Asia (and Queens, New York)* (1996) expanded upon the ideas expressed in those recordings and explicitly drew connections between the Bukharian Jews and classical Central Asian repertoires. Levin’s book is also the only full-length study that discusses Bukharian participation in the contemporary pop (*estrada*) music

played in Soviet and post-Soviet Central Asia, which I call “party repertoire,” because the primary performance context for it in New York City is weddings and other celebrations.

Bukharians also discuss a unique “Bukharian” way of appreciating, learning, adapting, and performing the music of their “others,” a seeming paradox that is at the core of much recent debate about Jewish identity and culture. Several Bukharians whom I interviewed stressed that, unlike other groups of people or “nations,” Bukharians liked all kinds of music and could speak and sing in many different languages. According to this definition, music of any type and from any place can potentially become uniquely and distinctly “Bukharian” simply by virtue of it being played by Bukharians, while still remaining “other.” Other members of Jewish communities share this attitude. Slobin’s “Dilemma #2” out of four for studying Jewish music is:

. . . the mirage of Jewish music evaporates as you gaze at it, replaced by the vision of a group of Jews singing whatever they like, from any local source. Yet they remain a people apart with an internal sense about music deeply separated from their neighbors at the same time that they share musical repertoires, memories, and tastes with non-Jews. (Slobin 1995:20)

This dilemma can be linked to survival strategies of diasporic Jews. On one hand, Jews have had to adapt and thrive as minority communities in different times and places. Eclecticism, multilingualism, and cosmopolitanism have often been the result (Slobin 1986a:6-9), one quintessential example being the case of the Bukharian Jews. In this light, the adoption of Ashkenazic and Sephardic rituals and customs into general Bukharian practice can also be regarded as a move of eclecticism. On the other hand,

Jews have had to maintain some sense of uniqueness if there were to be any Jews at all. Balancing adaptation (or assimilation) with separateness is a fundamental issue at stake in the choices Bukharians make and the attitudes they have about their musical repertoire.

In New York City, these inherited conceptions of Jewish and Bukharian otherness are combined with ideas of multiculturalism, which dovetails in many ways with the idea of *xalq* found in Soviet Central Asia. Multiculturalism promotes a “salad bowl” (or *plov*) worldview, where groups of different backgrounds can live in diverse societies, interacting with and learning from each other while maintaining their own distinct traditions.<sup>21</sup> The laudable intent of multiculturalism, to acknowledge and celebrate the fact that different groups of people have different cultural traditions and identities—none of which is *a priori* superior to another, and all of which should be equally respected in the public sphere (see, e.g., Taylor et al. 1992)—, also means that a group of people must be able to present their own culture as something unique.<sup>22</sup>

Bukharian Jews in New York City have positioned themselves as a distinct group with a distinct music and culture, filling at least two multicultural niches. First,

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21. It has been provocatively suggested that the Jewish background of figures such as Franz Boas, Emma Lazarus, Israel Zangwill, and Nathan Glazer disproportionately contributed to the development of multiculturalism and ideas of cultural pluralism (Frank 1997; Shapiro 1992). Certainly, multiculturalism is an attractive ideology in line with the desire of many Jews in the United States, who wish to maintain a distinct identity while participating in a greater “host” culture and being treated as equals. Edward Shapiro boldly stated, “No other ethnic group has been as concerned with defining their relationship to America” (Shapiro 1992:150).

22. “Respect for differences, the idea of the right to be different, the notion of a ‘multicultural’ society—all these, while generating noble-sounding expressions, may actually furnish an alibi to a ghetto ideology, an ideology of exclusion” (Augé [1994] 1998:99).

“American” Jews have extended multiculturalism to an idea of Jewish multiculturalism, introducing synagogue programs and curriculum that promotes understanding of Jews from diverse backgrounds.<sup>23</sup> As Jews that lived alongside Muslims, Bukharians present a model for Jewish–Muslim interaction in a world that increasingly portrays members of the two religions as irreconcilable, immortal enemies (even though Bukharians themselves hold a wide range of opinions regarding Jewish–Muslim relations). Second, projects such as Yo-Yo Ma’s “Silk Road” ensembles and concerts present a picture of a multicultural Central Asia characterized by trade and exchange. As described in a press release for Smithsonian Folkways’ *The Silk Road: A Musical Caravan* (2002), the Silk Road “represented civilization’s first great period of globalization and resulted in an unprecedented cross-pollination of art, technology, fashion, and ideas,” and in the liner notes, Yo-Yo Ma calls the Silk Road “a crucible for cultural intermingling.” Literature for the 2002 Smithsonian Folklife Festival (*The Silk Road: Connecting Cultures, Creating Trust*) stated:

Following the events of September 11, it seems clear to us that it is ever so important for people and societies the world over to take account of their neighbors, to come to know them and learn of and from them, to engage them in positive ways. Insularity and xenophobia, the fear and

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23. For example, I myself have been invited to Ashkenazic synagogues and institutions to expose congregants to Bukharian Jewry. An article on one such event stated, “Throw out your idea that Jewish music means only klezmer music. Bukharian Jewish music will remind you that the Jewish culture comes in many different looks and sounds” (Friedman 2005).

dehumanizing of “others”—even one's own neighbors—are recipes for disaster in a complicated world. (Kurin and Parker 2002)

In these terms, multiculturalism is a humanistic antidote to death and destruction. Bukharians have participated in these projects, now as Central Asians with an important role in Silk Road history, rather than as a specifically Jewish community.

Finally, relationships between Bukharians and their others have constituted a major part of my own interactions with Bukharian Jews. This study is a product of these interactions and reflects my own attitudes and “sense of otherness.” My relationships with interviewees, teachers, colleagues, friends, and masters entailed negotiating differences and finding common ground. In initial interactions, I was often asked the same questions: “Are you Jewish?” “Are you Bukharian?” “Are you Ashkenazic?” “Where are you from?” “Where are your parents from?” “Why are you learning this music?” Answers to these questions established the playing field of “us” and “them.” I was, like them, Jewish, but unlike them, “Ashkenazic” or “American.” Yet I contradicted their notion of “American” Jews because I had a moderate command of Persian and had been learning an instrument central to Bukharian musical history, the *tanbūr*, a long-necked lute. Conceptions of difference and sameness would often ebb and flow in the same situation. For example, after one lesson with Roshel Amin, one of my *tanbūr* teachers, I asked him several questions regarding differences I had noticed between the Ashkenazic rite and the Sephardic rite as performed by Bukharians. At one point, Amin grew tired of my emphasis on difference and reminded me of the sameness underlying both rites, saying there is “one God, one Jewish prayer service, one Hebrew language,

one Jewish people” (*yak Xudo, yak təfillāh, yak zabun-i Ivrit, yak mardum-i yahūdī*). For Amin, these elements are fundamental to what makes a Jew a Jew, and in some ways, everything else is of minor importance. The melodies may be different from one Jewish community to another, but the texts are the same, and only Jews pray in Hebrew. And historically, the belief in one God also distinguished Jews from other peoples.

Marc Augé writes, “. . . no society exists that has not defined, more or less strictly, a series of ‘normal’—that is, instituted and symbolic—relations between generations, first-born children and their siblings, men and women, allies, lineages, age groups, free persons and captives, indigenous members and foreigners, and so on” (Augé [1994] 1998:xvi). “Normal” relations of Bukharian society had a major impact on my research. For one significant example, gender roles are particularly complex and changing quickly in New York. Certain activities are sexually segregated. Adult men and women, for example, do not sit together in Bukharian synagogues, and women do not sing aloud.<sup>24</sup> Other aspects of Bukharian life have less strict, but still powerful, gender divisions. For example, although it was not a rule, men would often attend synagogue with other men while women stayed home and prepared a celebratory or ritual meal. Women and men would frequently abide by loose conventions in social situations, so although women would not be *prohibited* from socializing with men, they might limit their interactions.

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24. In normative Orthodox Jewish practice, women do not sing in the presence of men, in accordance with a prohibition called *qāl išāh* (“woman’s voice”), which was first formulated in the sixth century (for more information on musical ramifications of *qāl išāh*, see Heskes 1992 and Koskoff 2001:120-40). Conservative, Reform, and Reconstructionist forms of Judaism do allow women to pray aloud, sing, and chant Torah, but only very recently have these denominations become a factor at all for Bukharian Jews.

Women also generally do not play certain instruments. Women might play the *dutor* (a kind of lute), or play the *doira* (frame drum) as *sozanda-s* (see Chapter 2), but I have never seen a women play the tanbūr or *ǧijak* (spike fiddle); however, Ezro Malakov told me that it was possible for a woman to play any instrument. Girls *tend* to study dance at Malika Kalantarova’s school while boys *tend* to study music at Roshel Amin’s school, but Kalantarova’s son, Artur Gulkarov, is a rising dance star, and one teenage girl, Virginia Zavolunova, studies voice with Amin. In some musical situations, women and men participate equally. In non-religious musical ensembles, such as maqom groups, women and men sing together in mixed choirs, and some of the most celebrated and legendary Bukharian singers of the twentieth century—Shoista Mullojonova, Barno Iṣhoqova, and Muhabbat Shamaeva, for example—have been women. My data reflect the fact that I socialized mostly with men, was able to pray in the men’s section of the synagogue, and studied tanbūr. My experiences in the Bukharian community have been directly related to the social norms that I perceived.

My decision to focus this dissertation on repertoire is also largely a result of the ways in which I negotiated issues of sameness with Bukharian Jews. Besides finding common ground in religion (Jewishness) or gender (maleness), my closest relationships emerged with other musicians. My ability to remember compositions and play music, and my base knowledge of Central Asian musical principles established a discursive area in which certain topics could be discussed with confidence, authority, and specialized vocabulary. Our discussions and interactions centered on music and musical repertoire, techniques, transmission, other musicians’ abilities and skills, the atmosphere of various

venues, and aesthetics. When musicians spoke with each other in rehearsals, recording sessions, and performances, similar issues regularly arose.

### **1.3. Musicians and Institutions**

My field research for this dissertation began in February 2002 and continued through February 2006. During this period, at an average rate of one event every ten days, I interviewed professional musicians and students, studied tanbūr (starting in Fall 2003), attended concerts and life-cycle events, assisted at recording sessions, and participated in religious services (including the High Holidays of 2004 and 2005). In these different contexts I also had valuable informal conversations, especially with musicians' relatives. All of my research was conducted in New York City, with the exception of ten days in Israel (May 2003) and one event in Maryland (November 2005).

#### *1.3.1. Brief Portraits of Bukharian Professional Musicians of Queens*

This study is mostly concerned with the activities of Bukharian professional musicians. A “professional” is any musician who regularly performs for hire, even if music is not his or her primary source of income. A “professional” can also be any musician who is an acknowledged master, an issue that I explore in Chapter 5. Among Bukharians, professional musicians are essential for successful celebrations, and they are also important cultural representatives and ambassadors. Brief biographies for the main figures in this study are provided below.

### 1.3.1.1. Ezro Malakov

Ezro Malakov was born in 1938 in Shahrissabz, Uzbekistan. In 1976 he moved to Tashkent, where he worked as a singer in the national radio and TV orchestras and recorded several albums. In 1992, he came to Queens in 1992, where he sings as a ḥazzan at an important Bukharian synagogue, Congregation Beth Gavriel. He performs with two major Bukharian ensembles, Ensemble Shashmaqam and Ensemble Maqam. He is currently working on a substantial publication entitled *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns*, which contains notated transcriptions and audio recordings of over one hundred Bukharian religious songs. Malakov learned much of his repertoire from his mother, Yeshua Borukhova, the granddaughter of the chief Rabbi of Shahrissabz in the early twentieth century, Mullo Abo Daroz. One of Ezro Malakov's brothers, Menahem Malakov, is also a noted ḥazzan.<sup>25</sup>

I assisted Ezro Malakov with making recordings and checking transcriptions for *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns* during my fieldwork. Much of my information on rehearsals, recordings, and the art of setting poems is based on the experiences I had while working on this project. Furthermore, through this work I met the other musicians who became essential to my research, such as Roshel Rubinov. Being associated with Malakov greatly aided my fieldwork, as he is a formidable presence in the Bukharian community.

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25. For more on the life of Ezro Malakov, see Nektalov (forthcoming).

### 1.3.1.2. Roshel Rubinov

Roshel Rubinov was born in 1966 in Shahrisabz. From 1983 to 1987 he attended the Mirzo Tursunzoda Art Institute in Tajikistan, where he studied the Šašmaqom repertoire with Neryo Aminov, Barno Işhoqova, Shoista Mullojanova, Nison Shoulov, and Abduvali Abdurashidov. In 1995, he immigrated to Queens. He is presently one of the busiest Bukharian professional musicians. The group in which he performs, Mazal Tov, plays about four celebrations per week. Rubinov writes Persian poetry in the classical forms and meters, having studied poetry with Abubakr Zuhuriddinov in Tajikistan and Ilyos Mallaev in New York. He also works as a barber, and has recently purchased his own barbershop.

Along with Ezro Malakov, Roshel Rubinov is the most important figure in this dissertation. I studied tanbūr with him from April 2004 through December 2005. Most of the ethnographic information regarding repertoire and theory—for both music and poetry—comes from my interviews and lessons with Rubinov. Because of his extensive practical experience as a performer, composer, and poet, his academic endeavors, and his strong command of English in addition to Persian, Uzbek, and Russian, Rubinov was in a unique position to help me understand Bukharian repertoire from a wide variety of perspectives.

### 1.3.1.3. Roshel Amin

Roshel Amin is a son of one of the most celebrated composers and Šašmaqom performers of the twentieth century, Neryo Aminov. Amin grew up in Tajikistan and learned his repertoire directly from his father. He primarily sings and plays the tanbūr and

sato, and his brother, Imanuel, plays the doira. In 2002, Amin began teaching at the newly founded Traditional School of Bukharian and Shashmakom Music, located on the sixth floor of the Queens Gymnasia, a Jewish day school sponsored by the Bukharian Jewish Congress. I studied tanbūr with him at this school from October 2003 to May 2004. He is a significant source of information for the inner structure of the Šašmaqom repertoire (discussed in Chapter 4) and the details of the master–student (*ustoz–šogird*) method of transmission (discussed in Chapter 5).

#### 1.3.1.4. Ilyos Mallaev

Ilyos Mallaev was born in 1936 in Mary, Turkmenistan, and grew up in Kattakurgan, Uzbekistan. He moved to Tashkent in 1951, and soon after began working in professional ensembles, including that of the dancer Tamara Xonum (“Ms. Tamara”) and the national radio orchestra of Uzbekistan. He travelled widely with these groups, spending three years in Moscow in the 1950s and visiting the United States in the early 1960s. He became known for his poetry, for playing, compositions, and vaudeville entertainment style. He came to New York in 1992 with his wife, the singer Muhabbat Shamaeva, and their children. In Queens, he leads Ensemble Maqam, which performs Šašmaqom, folk, and original repertoire. The members of this group are celebrated Bukharian musicians and singers: Shamaeva, the dancer and singer Tamara Kataeva, Ezro Malakov, Yosef Abramov, and Matat Baraev.

Most Bukharians with whom I have spoken consider Mallaev to be the most accomplished living Bukharian poet. He composes poetry in classical meters and forms, and writes in both Persian and Turkic languages. Ilyos also wrote a play with music about

the life of Levi Babakhanov, *Levicha Hofiz* (“Levicha the Singer,” Russian title: *Peves yego prevosxoditelstva*, or “His majesty’s singer”). The production at the Queens Theater in the Park for three nights in February 1999 featured most of the major Bukharian performers in New York, including Avrom Tolmasov, Roshel Rubinov, Işhoq Kataev, Ezro Malakov, Muhabbat Shamaeva, and Abukhai Aminov.

#### 1.3.1.5. Muhabbat Shamaeva

Muhabbat Shamaeva was born in 1944 in Bukhara. She moved to Tashkent and joined the Yunus Rajabi Radio Uzbekistan Ensemble in 1963. In Central Asia, Shamaeva was a very famous singer who recorded hundreds of songs for the national archives. She holds the title “People’s Artist of Uzbekistan.” She married her fellow entertainer Ilyos Mallaev in 1965, and they immigrated together in 1992. In Queens, she is a featured performer in Ensemble Maqam. She is one of the most popular Bukharian singers in New York, and is featured on several recordings. Their children, especially Raj and Nargis, are ascendant on the Bukharian music scene.

#### 1.3.1.6. Avrom Tolmasov

Avrom Tolmasov was born in 1956 and raised in Samarqand, Uzbekistan. He moved to Israel in 1978. In 2002, he moved to New York City. He is widely considered to be one of the greatest Bukharian singers alive, and is highly regarded in New York, Central Asia, and Israel. As a Tolmasov, he is a member of a prominent Bukharian musical dynasty. He learned the Šašmaqom from his father, Gavriel Tolmasov, and his father’s uncles, the legendary Mikhoel Tolmasov and Isroel Tolmasov, who were

students of Levicha. In addition to being a renowned tanbūrist, he plays guitar, sitar, soz, and other instruments. He is famous for his vocal range, virtuosic instrumental technique, gripping style, and versatile repertoire. Tolmasov's nephew, Roman Tolmasov, is also an accomplished musician.

### *1.3.2. Institutions*

Jewish practice is integral to Bukharian life in New York City, and fundamental to Jewish practice is the community meeting place of the synagogue. One of the most central synagogues for Bukharians in Queens is Beth Gavriel on 108th Street, where Ezro Malakov serves as ḥazzan. Simḥa Elishaev is the main sponsor of the synagogue, and he also leads prayers along with Daniel Pinḥasov and Rabbi Imanuel Shimonov. The main sanctuary at Beth Gavriel is slightly below ground level. The room holds a few hundred people, and is crowded on Saturday mornings and festivals. In the manner of Sephardic synagogues, the ḥazzan-s and prayer leaders stand at a pulpit in the center of the room and face Jerusalem (east). On the wall across from the pulpit is the rostrum, where the Rabbi sits or stands, and the Ark, which houses the Torah scrolls. Women and men are separated, as in other Orthodox synagogues. The women's section at Beth Gavriel is at the back of the room, separated by a screen. Fluorescent lights illuminate the room and a few Persian rugs cover the floor. Between 2002 and 2006, congregants have paid for a new floor, Ark, and pulpit. In addition to the main sanctuary, services are held in a smaller room on the second floor. Teenagers seem to prefer this room.

Another major Bukharian synagogue in Queens is the Bukharian Jewish Community Center, which opened on Rosh Hashanah 2005 (5766 by the Jewish

calendar). The congregation is located near the intersection of 71st Avenue and Queens Boulevard, the hub of Forest Hills. Services here are led by Rabbi Işhoq Yehoshua and Ḥazzan Mordekhai Raḥminov. The main sanctuary is quite large and impressive, with padded chairs and a women's section in an upper balcony. The building also has rooms for parties and events, and houses the offices of the Bukharian Jewish Congress of the USA. Here and at Beth Gavriel, worshippers wear suits and dresses, but there is no uniform besides head coverings and the prayer shawl (*tallit*) worn by men during morning services. Many men wear dark suits and/or dark blue shirts, and some wear a hat over their skullcap (*kipah*) in the manner of Ḥassidic Jews.

School competes with synagogue as the most important institution in Jewish life, and the two are often combined, as suggested by the Yiddish word *shul*). Queens Gymnasia is a Jewish day school located on Woodhaven Boulevard, attended primarily by Bukharian children. Lev Levaev, a Bukharian Israeli billionaire with strong links to the Lubavitcher Ḥabad movement, is the sponsor of the building. On the sixth floor, Roshel Amin has classrooms and an office for his music school. Also on the sixth floor is the Bukharian Jewish Museum, curated by Aron Aronov, which houses artifacts and elements of Bukharian Jewish life brought from Central Asia, such as Torah scrolls, books, embroidered and dyed clothing, wall hangings, pictures of important people, and musical instruments (see also Belasco 2002 and Brawarsky 2001).

#### **1.4. Chapter Overview**

Chapter 2 describes the different repertoires that Bukharians regularly performed during my research, and presents a typology of three main repertoires—maqom, Jewish, and party—based on observations of performances and the statements of musicians. Each repertoire provides a vehicle for the exploration and articulation of a different side of Bukharian life in New York City, focusing on live performance contexts.

Chapter 3 concerns the ways in which Bukharians use media in musical contexts. Audio recordings and musical and poetic notations are essential spaces for Bukharian creativity and repertoire perpetuation. In New York City, Bukharians have taken advantage of increasingly affordable home recording equipment and avenues for publishing, actively producing their own CDs and books. Bukharians' choices regarding media are crucial factors in how repertoire stays relevant within the community. Bukharians also make recordings for record labels with more general audiences, and these projects further demonstrate how repertoire can be adapted to the demands of different situations.

Chapter 4 examines issues of structure and composition at work in Bukharian repertoire, and more specifically, maqom. This section focuses on the ways that a few Bukharian professionals understand the theoretical principles and frameworks underlying music and poetry and then elaborate these structures in practice and performance. By choosing to engage certain inherited musical principles, Bukharian musicians are defining Bukharian music in terms of tradition and continuity.

Chapter 5 discusses issues of transmission. Based primarily on my experiences in Queens learning to play the tanbūr, I discuss the ways Bukharian musicians acquire

skills, concentrating on instrumental technique, memory, and cognitive style. Recordings and notations are again an object of inquiry, because they are crucial in pedagogy. Cognitive style is an important concept for this dissertation, since it suggests that proper ways of hearing and interpretation can be learned. The chapter ends with an overview of the aesthetics surrounding the professional musician or master.

Chapter 6 situates Bukharian repertoire within a broader context of tradition. Tradition is understood to be a mode in which ideas about community, ethics, and values are maintained and transmitted. As such, performance of repertoire is a vital element of Bukharian tradition, dependent on the activities of musicians as well as institutions. Bukharian repertoire is a key component of continuity not only over time, but also over space, as Bukharians use repertoire to stay united and sustain an idea of community despite multiple diasporas and dispersal over wide geographic distances.

A glossary is provided for easy reference of foreign terms. Appendix A is an annotated list of Internet resources with relevant audio examples for readers who may not have easy access to the items in the discography. Appendix B provides images and descriptions of the tanbūr, doira, and tor.

## CHAPTER 2. TERMS, FUNCTIONS, AND PERFORMANCE CONTEXTS

This chapter provides an overview of the kinds of pieces that make up the repertoire of Bukharian professional musicians in contemporary New York City. A diverse and multifaceted repertoire enables professional musicians to perform for various kinds of audiences and situations. When choosing what repertoire to perform, musicians consider factors such as the average age and hometown of the audience members, prestige of the venue, intentions of concert promoters, and their own preferences and abilities.

Based on performance contexts, terms musicians use, and scholarly literature, I group repertoire items into three main categories: standard repertoire, Jewish repertoire, and party repertoire. For each category, I describe musicians who perform that repertoire on the current New York scene, the performance contexts in which it is currently played, and descriptive terms, musical styles, and specific compositions that are related to the larger category. These categories overlap, and musicians continually add to, subtract from, and modify their repertoires. Bukharian musicians and audiences offer differing opinions on the value of repertoire items and the direction that the community's music should be taking. This discourse of argument and negotiation demonstrates that Bukharian music is a living tradition: "Traditions, when vital, embody continuities of conflict" (MacIntyre 1984:222).

Standard repertoire includes items both formally and informally referred to as *maqom*. Musicians frequently distinguished *maqom* as being uniquely heavy and serious (*vazmin*), substantial (*kalon, buzurg*), difficult (*muškil*), and traditional. Sometimes, this

repertoire is simply called “Bukharian music,” in contrast to the many pieces Bukharians perform and listen to that they consider to be foreign. Today, maqom includes canonical Šašmaqom items; “classic,” “lyric,” or “art” pieces; *xalqī* and folk pieces; and new pieces composed in a maqom style and intended for performance in maqom contexts. More and more, even items from rarefied wedding and religious rituals (the *sozanda* repertoire, *ašula-i kalon*, and *yakkaxonī*) are performed alongside other maqom pieces. The items in the standard repertoire come from diverse performance contexts—from Šašmaqom played at the Bukharan court to *sozanda* pieces performed at female-only wedding functions—but are increasingly performed together at cultural presentations and on classical music stages as the original performance contexts change or disappear.

Jewish repertoire includes those items that are specific to Jewish functions and contexts. This category contains items that remain strongly associated with and tied to Jewish holidays, synagogues, and prayer: items with Hebrew texts or overtly Jewish themes, performance styles such as *ḥazzanut*, and melodies associated with religious times and places (*nigūnīm*, *šīrīm*). Some of these melodies are drawn from the maqom repertoire and recontextualized for Jewish situations.

Party repertoire includes items performed at today’s *tui*-s, festive celebrations of happy life-cycle events.<sup>1</sup> Although the *tui* was the primary or only performance context for many items in the standard repertoire, and although some standard repertoire items

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1. Central Asians, including Bukharians, use the Turkic-language term *tui* (often transliterated as “toy”) to refer to a festive party celebrating a happy life-cycle event, the most important of which is the wedding (see Fātemi 2000; Levin et al. 2001). Bukharian Jews may also use the Persian word *bazm* or the Hebrew word *simḥah*, the latter of which can refer to both the communal celebration of the event and the event itself.

are still performed at tui-s, most pieces played at a Bukharian tui are different enough from the standard repertoire to warrant a separate category. The party repertoire includes songs glossed as “pop” and songs that seem to be identified primarily by their foreignness or otherness—that is, by their language or country of origin.

Finally, although the words “music” and “musician” are used in this chapter in a general English-language sense, including singing and singers alongside music played on instruments and instrumentalists, Bukharians primarily use the words *muzika* and *mūsīqī* to describe music played (*navoxtan*) on instruments. The verb “to sing” is instead *xondan*, which also means “to read.” A cappella singing is called *bī mūsīqī*, “without music.” This distinction squares well with prohibitions against music in the synagogue on the Sabbath, as the ban only applies to instruments when “music” is understood in this sense. Bukharians sometimes use the English word “music” in this instrumental sense or to refer to melodies.

## **2.1. Maqom: A Standard Repertoire**

In this chapter, the concept of “standard repertoire” is employed as an analytical construct. My understanding and use of the term “standard repertoire” is analogous to the meanings implied by “standard” in jazz: “a composition . . . that becomes an established item in the repertory; by extension, therefore, a song that a professional musician may be expected to know” (Witmer 2002). These compositions constitute a core set of pedagogical materials for professional training and musical proficiency. Musicians are expected to know these compositions, and at the same time, it is through performance by musicians that items become standards. And like the standard repertoire of jazz, the

standard Bukharian repertoire is associated with an ambiguous “golden age” (the nineteenth-century Bukharan court rather than 1920s and 1930s Tin Pan Alley), although in reality, the materials that make up the standard repertoire are drawn from a variety of times and places.

Standard repertoire is an appropriate term for maqom because it suggests an openness related to human creative activity. Although maqom changes slowly and carefully, performers and audiences do continue to add to, subtract from, and modify the repertoire. The standard compositions in maqom are familiar to musicians and audiences, which means that an artist is expected to put his or her own spin on the materials through new interpretations, arrangements, and treatments. As Witmer explains with respect to jazz standards, “part of the impact of a performance based on a standard derives from its being familiar to the listeners, who are better able to appreciate skillful arrangement and inventive improvisation because they know the original work” (Witmer 2002).

Although the Bukharian standard repertoire is connected to the *Šašmaqom* corpus as presented in seminal publications of the twentieth century, ensembles that perform “maqom,” “Šašmaqom,” or “classic” music may actually only play or know a small number of canonical *Šašmaqom* compositions. New York “maqom” ensembles play items from the *Šašmaqom*, other Central Asian maqom repertoires, *xalqī* (“folk”) songs, and nineteenth and twentieth century Central Asian lyric songs. Into the category of “standard repertoire” I also group some repertoires and genres, like the music of the *sozanda* (female wedding entertainer) or the genre of *ašula-i kalon* (“great song”), which are now frequently performed in the same contexts as “maqom” despite originally being part of separate and different practices.

The solidification of maqom as a standard repertoire among Bukharians in New York City is related to their situation as immigrants. As a “sense of ‘otherness’” increases, so does an awareness of “our” music as opposed to “their” music (based on Bent and Blum 2001:197), and in New York, the new senses of “our music” and “their music” have resulted in a solid standard repertoire that effectively demonstrates the breadth and depth of Bukharian musical culture—which explains the inclusion of a select number of pieces from a wide range of repertoires—to outsiders as well as to Bukharians themselves. Performance contexts demonstrate the importance of “us and them” in relation to maqom. Bukharians perform maqom standards for primarily non-Bukharian audiences at Carnegie Hall, the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, public libraries, universities, and non-Bukharian synagogues. Maqom pieces can be heard at Bukharian concerts and parties held at restaurants and schools in Queens to celebrate Bukharian culture. At events where most celebrants are young and raised in New York, such as weddings and bar mitzvahs, maqom is usually performed as two or three selections near the end of the party, primarily for the benefit of older Bukharians born in Central Asia or Šašmaqom connoisseurs.

### *2.1.1. Maqom Ensembles, or Ensembles that Perform Standard Repertoire*

A maqom ensemble conventionally has a core of a melody instrument, a doira, and a singer. For Šašmaqom, the melody instrument is ideally a tanbūr, which may or may not be played by the singer. A foundational rhythmic cycle is played on the doira. Maqom ensembles can be augmented with other instruments, such as the sato, ġijak, violin, čang, or tor, and/or additional singers. The voice(s), tanbūr, and other melodic

instruments perform the same melodic line in the same range, but differences in ornamentation, inflection, and timbre create harmonic texture. In contemporary Bukharian practice, the tanbūr is sometimes replaced with another instrument or omitted altogether. Some musicians, such as Roshel Amin and Roman Tolmasov, have also started to perform as solo instrumentalists in the style of Turgun Alimatov, the well-known Uzbek master of the tanbūr, dutor, and sato.

On the New York scene from 2002 to 2006, there were three active ensembles dedicated to performing standard repertoire: Maqam (sometimes Ensemble Maqam or the Ilyas Malayev Ensemble), Ensemble Shashmaqam, and the Roshel Amin Ensemble.<sup>2</sup> The personnel of these groups is somewhat variable, as some performers sing in more than one group. The tendency of musicians to invoke “maqom” in the names of these active and widely touring ensembles creates a complicated semantic web for New York and even international audiences, arguably connecting “maqom” with the New York Bukharian Jewish community and the diverse standard repertoire that they perform more than with the court music of Muslim Central Asia. The performance contexts, repertoire, personnel, and audiences of “maqom” ensembles are interrelated—as more work develops for these groups, more musicians assemble themselves and perform programs in such configurations; as audiences emerge for maqom groups, so do performances; and as “maqom” groups add items to their repertoire and perform them regularly, those items acquire the potential to be considered “maqom” by other musicians and audiences.

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2. Maqam, Shashmaqam, and Ilyas Malayev are different spellings for maqom, Šašmaqom, and Ilyos Mallaev that appear consistently in the English-language materials of these groups.

The core personnel for Maqam is Ilyos Mallaev (music director and tor), Muhabbat Shamaeva (vocals), Yosef Abramov (vocals, tor, and soz), Ezro Malakov (vocals), Tamara Kataeva (vocals and dance), Ochil Ibragimov (ğijak and vocals), and Matat Baraev (doira). On the Ensemble Maqam recording *Bukharian Jewish Folk Music* (1998), the ensemble is augmented by Avrom Tolmasov (vocals, tanbūr), Roshel Rubinov (vocals), Işhoq Kataev (vocals), Shoista Mullojanova (vocals), and Ilya Khavasov (vocal); Yosef Abramov does not appear. A slightly different group recorded *At the Bazaar of Love* as the Ilyas Malayev Ensemble: Mallaev (tanbūr and vocals), Malakov (vocals), Shamaeva (vocals), Rubinov (tanbūr and vocals), Khavasov (vocals), Kataev (vocals), plus Roman Narkolaev (violin), Abukhai Aminov (vocals), and Osher Baraev (doira). Misha Baraev (sato) and Malika Kalantarova (dance) have also performed with the group.

Ensemble Shashmaqam was started by Shumiel Kuyenov (doira) and Firuza Yagudaeva (dance). Yagudaeva moved to New York in 1976, and Ensemble Shashmaqam began performing at events and concerts in the early 1980s (most of the members of Ensemble Maqam did not move to New York until the early 1990s). Some of the other artists that have performed with Ensemble Shashmaqam are Abukhai Aminov (vocals), Yosef Abramov (tor and vocals), David Davidov (tor), Boris Kuknariiev (accordion), Ezro Malakov (vocals), Osher Baraev (doira), Shoista Mullojanova (vocals), Borukhai Davraev (vocal), Fatima Kuinova (vocal), Işhoq Baraev (doira), Mikhail Abramov (accordion), Yasha Kakuriev (clarinet), and Tohfaxon Pinhasova (vocals).

The personnel for the Roshel Amin Ensemble is: Roshel Amin (tanbūr, sato, vocals), Eduard Mallaev (čang), Boris Aulov (doira), and Zuhra Safarova (dance).

### 2.1.2. *Contemporary Performance Contexts for Maqom*

One of Roshel Amin's favorite stories is about a *tui* (party) held sometime around the 1950s at which he, his brother, and his father performed. In the story, he emphasizes the ability of the audience at the time to understand maqom, and his feelings towards the repertoire:

Fifty or sixty years ago, there was singing at a *tui* with this *tanbūr*, in front of one thousand people. They understood [maqom]. I went with my father to the *tui* in Panjrud [a town in Tajikistan]. . . . With these books—*Šašmaqom* books—in front of us, we sang. The people listened. They said that there is nothing like maqom music, *Šašmaqom*. We played for them **only just** maqom. With [our] maqom, sick people became well [and] without worry.<sup>3</sup>

This story is important because it contrasts the performance contexts of maqom in contemporary New York with the way musicians remember performance contexts in Central Asia. For three musicians, armed only with one *tanbūr*, one *doira*, and their voices, to perform nothing except maqom at a *tui* in today's New York would be absurd, or even impossible. Discussing this matter, Roshel Rubinov sarcastically said in English, “you want to play a wedding with just one *tanbūr* and one *doira*? Good luck to you! . . .

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3. Translations from interviews are my own. Boldface in long quotes indicates the use of English by the speaker (see the Note on Transliteration and Translation).

They'll say, get out [of] here, what are you doing here . . . ." Another day, he elaborated on this subject:

Today, people don't really study Šašmaqom. People here don't really want it. They want pop music; **they want to dance. Today everything is completely changed.** [An older person born in Central Asia comes to the party and] **asks me, please, sing one song, . . . Uzbek song, Tajik song, Bukharian song. . . Listen to me. I'm a businessman. I see two hundred people, young people, young guys—for one [person] I'm going to lose two hundred customers? What do you think? I'm very smart . . . I know what to do. I tell him, "alright, wait, I'll sing" . . .** Near the end, **if I have room**, if it's possible, for three or four minutes.

Avrom Tolmasov expressed a similar view:

It's not easy to play a tui. It's hard. Because there's five hundred people there. Five hundred, many people, each one wants to hear something different. Today people don't sing these songs (*ašula*) that people don't understand. Every nationality (*millat*) has their classic music, but today people don't listen to it. Iranians [also] don't listen to it, they don't understand their true music (*muzika-i haqqiqa*). . . . Eighty percent don't understand classic music (*muzika klasik*).

The primary performance contexts for maqom today are not tui-s but cultural presentations and concert venues. Bukharians in New York often hold events at local

community spaces where they celebrate their culture and prominent individuals with musical performances, skits, dances, and speeches. These events are usually held on Sundays—after the Sabbath but before the work-week—and can last longer than eight hours. School auditoriums, catering halls, and restaurants are popular venues. One exceptional event was the staging of Mallaev’s play with music (in Persian and Russian), *Levicha Hofiz* (“Singer Levicha [Babakhanov]”), based on the life of the last Bukharian Jewish singer at the Bukharan court. Roshel Rubinov played the part of the younger Levicha, and Avrom Tolmasov the older Levicha. Numbered among the rest of the cast were Mikhoel Zavul, Işhoq Kataev, Muhabbat Shamaeva, Ochil Ibragimov, Tamara Kataeva, Ezro Malakov, Abukhai Aminov, Matat Baraev, and Firuza Yagudaeva. Most of the songs performed in the play were of the maqom repertoire, including “Ufar-i muğulča-i buzruk,” “Saraxbor-i buzruk,” “Soqinoma-i ʻiroq-i buxoro,” and “Soqinoma-i savt-i kalon.”<sup>4</sup>

Bukharian musicians also perform standard repertoire at concerts presented in a spirit of cultural exchange. In 1998, Yo-Yo Ma started the Silk Road Project, a large-scale endeavor of concerts, festivals, and recordings intended “to illuminate the Silk Road’s historical contribution to the cross-cultural diffusion of arts, technologies, and musical traditions, identify the voices that best represent its cultural legacy today, and support innovative collaborations among outstanding artists from the lands of the Silk Road and the West” (Carnegie Hall 2002). On 7 May 2002, Mallaev’s ensemble

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4. Information on *Levicha Hofiz* comes from a video of the 20 February 1999 performance.

performed on a Silk Road Concert at Carnegie Hall, and as part of the “Silk Road Neighborhood Concert Series” of 2002 and 2003, the group performed at libraries throughout New York City with free admission. Mallaev’s ensemble also performed at the 2002 Smithsonian Folklife Festival (*The Silk Road: Connecting Cultures, Creating Trust*), a ten-day event presented in partnership with the Silk Road Project. Bukharian groups sometimes perform as representatives of Jewish–Muslim cultural interaction: through the World Music Institute, the Roshel Amin Ensemble and Ensemble Maqam performed at Symphony Space on 19 February 2005 as part of the *Cultural World of Islam* series, and Mallaev’s group also played at Alice Tully Hall on 23 February 1997 alongside Afghan Muslim musicians and a mixed Persian Jewish/Muslim ensemble in a concert sponsored by the Queens Council on the Arts and entitled “Musical Bridges: Jewish and Muslim Traditions of Asia.”

Bukharian musicians also perform maqom for non-Bukharian Jewish audiences. Jews in the United States—overwhelmingly Ashkenazic—are increasingly interested in the music of non-Ashkenazic Jewish communities, and sometimes sponsor Bukharian-themed concerts or events. In New York, from 1998 to 2002, the Center for Traditional Music and Dance sponsored an ambitious series called *Nashi Traditsii* (Our Traditions), which brought together performers from different communities of Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union—Bukharians, Mountain Jews (mostly from Dagestan), Georgian Jews, and Russian Ashkenazim (see Alpert 1998). Ensemble Shashmaqam performed at these yearly concerts, which were held in venues ranging from a nightclub/restaurant in heavily Russian-Jewish Brighton Beach to the Kaye Playhouse at Hunter College.

### 2.1.3. Šašmaqom and Maqom

The Šašmaqom (“six maqoms,” or “six suites”) repertoire is music that was developed and performed at the Bukharan court. The six suites are, in order: Maqom Buzruk, Maqom Rost, Maqom Navo, Maqom Dugoh, Maqom Segoh, and Maqom ‘Iroq. The repertoire, which is over 250 pieces, was redacted and codified by Yunus Rajabi (Levin 1996:47-48), and published in several editions over the course of the twentieth century. The Šašmaqom repertoire has taken on strong associations with Bukharian history, heritage, and cultural achievement. Originally performed only by men, women began participating in the Šašmaqom during the Soviet era. Among Bukharian Jews, women are well represented as Šašmaqom singers, but not as instrumentalists.

Part of what defines the Šašmaqom is its suite form. Each composition in the repertoire has a place in a large ordered scheme governed by rhythmic and melodic qualities (for more on this structure, see Chapter 4). “Talqin-i bayot,” “Nasr-i bayot,” and “Ufar-i bayot” are examples of Šašmaqom repertoire that can be found in the codified suites—each of these pieces is in the maqom suite called Navo. In New York, however, Bukharians rarely perform Šašmaqom repertoire in suites. Sometimes, three or so pieces (*šu‘ba-s*) will be connected and presented in their proper order, but usually, individual pieces are treated as autonomous compositions. In tandem with this trend (which started in the Soviet era), the meaning of “maqom” as “suite” has become somewhat antiquated. Only in some circumstances—mostly for recordings—do Bukharians presently perform material only from the canonical Šašmaqom repertoire and in the form of a suite.

Because Šašmaqom items are usually played apart from suites, the term *Šašmaqom* is starting to overlap with the more general term *maqom*. Today, some

Bukharians use the terms *Šašmaqom* and *maqom* interchangeably to describe pieces in the canonical suites and pieces adhering to the same structural principles and presented in the same style as the *Šašmaqom* repertoire proper. For example, I have heard Neryo Aminov's "To bod-i sabo," Gavriel Mulloqandov's "Qurbon olam," and Hoji Abdulaziz Aburasulov's "Qoščinor" called "Šašmaqom" and "maqom," although they do not appear in *Šašmaqom* publications and are not parts of suites. When I asked Roshel Rubinov to list some of the *maqom* repertoire that Mazal Tov might play at a tui, he listed "Soqinoma-i ʻiroq[-i buxoro]" and "Ufar-i ʻiroq-i buxoro" (both from *Maqom Buzruk*), as well as "Qurbon olam," Hoji Abdulaziz's "Uššoq-i samarqand," and "Panj panja [barobar nest]," an increasingly popular composition in the *Šašmaqom* style with words by Rubinov and music by Avrom Tolmasov. Compositions from other court repertoires, such as the Fergana-Tashkent *Čormaqom* ("four maqoms"), might also be included.

In this usage, "maqom" and even "Šašmaqom" have the broad implications of a standard repertoire, and can even be considered as acquiring an adjectival sense for describing a musical approach or style. This "maqom" is one consistent tradition encompassing stylistically and structurally similar pieces, some of which eventually appeared in *Šašmaqom* publications, and some of which did not (for example, "lyric songs" by known composers and "xalqī" songs of unknown origin). New songs are often based upon old songs, further blurring lines among the categories of *Šašmaqom*, *maqom*, lyric, and *xalqī*.

But even as *maqom* is acquiring expansive and general meanings, for those familiar with the repertoire, "Šašmaqom" retains its associations with the canonical suites, seminal publications, and "great music" status bestowed on the repertoire during

the Soviet era. When asked specifically about certain pieces, Roshel Rubinov, Roshel Amin, and other musicians would *not* refer to compositions as “Šašmaqom” if they were not part of the canonical suites. Imonuel Rybakov, a maqom enthusiast in his early twenties, told me unequivocally that Šašmaqom was *only* to be used for items in the suites.

There are also differing attitudes about the openness of the Šašmaqom repertoire. According to Amin, the Šašmaqom notated and presented in Belyayev’s edition is “original,” authentic, and complete. When speaking about this repertoire, he regards it as a canon, discouraging additions or alterations. Ilyos Mallaev, on the other hand, respects the Šašmaqom repertoire but is skeptical about the definitiveness of the canon. He engages the repertoire creatively and does not take the order or presentation of the suites for granted. For example, he theorizes that there is a “seventh maqom,” based on his observation that Maqom Dugoh has two saraxbor-s—“Saraxbor-i dugoh” and “Saraxbor-i oromijon”—whereas all the other maqom-s only have one. This line of reasoning is strongly based in practice, as the function of each saraxbor is to introduce the pertinent and distinctive melodic elements and relationships of the entire maqom suite. Furthermore, he notes, there are pieces that seem like they belong in the Šašmaqom, but which are not in a specific suite. Among these he numbers “Čapandoz-i gulyor,” “Shahnoz-i gulyor,” and “Tulkun-i buxoro.” He has expressed interest in recreating this “seventh maqom,” provided he can find a sponsor. Mallaev’s thought process is intriguing. Some pieces in the publications, such as “Bebokča” and “Sinaxuruš,” found at the end of Maqom Buzruk in the Belyayev edition (1950), seem to be stand-alone compositions that had not yet been incorporated into the overall scheme of the suite.

Probably, performer-composers would create pieces in the Šašmaqom style and they might become part of the repertoire over time, acquiring a relatively fixed location.

Some other terms connected to maqom and Šašmaqom are *klasik* (“classical”), *vaznin/vazmin* (“heavy”), “traditional,” *muškil* (“difficult”), and *toza* or “clean.” As these adjectives suggest, music in this style is considered serious music. Avrom Tolmasov explained to me, “there is nothing like Šašmaqom . . . it’s like symphonic music, it’s like jazz . . . it’s very serious” (*nyet kak Šašmaqom . . . monand-i simfonia, monand-i jazz . . . xele vazmin*). Roman Tolmasov and Roshel Juraev also compared maqom to jazz. To acquire a deep knowledge of maqom repertoire requires years of dedicated learning, although there are various approaches. Roshel Amin learned from his father, Neryo Aminov, by memorizing one line at a time. Ilyos Mallaev told me he learned mostly from recordings (see also Eisenberg 2002). Roshel Rubinov first studied recordings and then learned from master teachers at a music conservatory in Tajikistan. Some musicians know a handful of important maqom pieces and learn more for specific occasions.

Certain accoutrements, some of which are shown in Figure 2.1, can increase the heaviness or seriousness of a maqom performance. For example, a performer often wears the formal ceremonial coat called *joma*, which is sometimes adorned with Jewish symbols, and the embroidered skullcap called *kalapūš-i zarin, zardūzī* (“gold-embroidered”) or *qalpoq*. When addressing Bukharian audiences, performers might also make the occasion more formal and serious by speaking in Persian rather than Russian. Instruments can also imply seriousness. At the court, musicians would perform

Šašmaqom on the tanbūr or sato (long-necked lutes<sup>5</sup>) and the doira (frame drum) (Seroussi et al. 2001:88). Today, tor (double-chested short-necked lute), violin or ğijak (spike fiddle), clarinet, keyboard (usually a Roland G-600), and darabukka might be used. The tanbūr and sato have the strongest associations with the history and tradition of the Šašmaqom, and are considered highly appropriate for playing serious music. Maqom played on instruments such as keyboard and clarinet is not considered light or frivolous but modern, and players of these instruments often dress in suits or sportjackets.<sup>6</sup> As shown in Figure 2.2, contemporary ensembles often mix old and new.

Figure 2.1. Ensemble Maqom (from left to right: Matat Baraev [doira], Yosef Abramov [soz], Tamara Kataeva, Muhabbat Shamaeva, Ezro Malakov, Ilyos Mallaev [tor]), dressed in joma-s and zarduzī-s.




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5. The tanbūr and sato are slightly different instruments, and both can be played by plucking or bowing.

6. In my experience, these instrumentalists are always men. Women rarely perform in modern dress.

Figure 2.2. From left to right: Osher Baraev (doira), Boris Kuknariev (accordion), Shlomo Kalontar (Roland G-600), Roshel Rubinov (sato).



Maqom and Šašmaqom are also thought of as spiritual. Amin considers the Šašmaqom to have healing properties. He said, “If I come home tired, I take the tanbūr or sato, and I play. I become very, very light (*sabuk*). Not heavy (*vaznin*), I become light.” This quote demonstrates the interesting, and sometimes paradoxical, bundle of meanings carried by *vaznin* and *sabuk*. The maqom repertoire is heavy—serious and difficult—, but it is also light—uplifting and transcendent. Amin explained:

Maqom, Šašmaqom, everything in it is extremely beautiful. When I listen to it, it fills (*foiz mīgirift*) my soul (*nəšāmā-i man*). . . . Šašmaqom is like a narcotic. It gives one a long life (*‘umr-i daroz*). This is artistic (*san<sup>c</sup>atī*), **art**, which gives a person a very long life. Why? This man becomes without sadness or worry (*bī ġam*).

#### 2.1.4. *Lyric and Art Songs*

One term applied to standard repertoire items written by known composers (*bastakor-s* or *kompozitor-s*) in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is *surud-i lyric* (“lyric song”). These songs are learned and performed alongside Šašmaqom repertoire. One example is Doni Zokirov’s “Ey, Sabo.” As these and other songs become more and more familiar, the names of the composers may or may not be associated with the melodies. For many performers, even learned ones, the pedigree of certain compositions is unknown. In such a case, the compositions might be characterized as *xalqī*, which can be translated as “folk” or “people’s” (Russian *narodnaya*) music (compare the “folk song” status of some Stephen Foster and Irving Berlin songs in the United States).

#### 2.1.5. *Xalqī and Folk Music*

Some standard repertoire songs were described to me as *xalqī*. “Čul-i ‘iroq” is a representative example; both Aminov and Rubinov called this song *xalqī*. Xalqī melodies, like lyric songs, were described by my teachers as adhering to the same structural principles as Šašmaqom pieces. The main difference between *xalqī* melodies and lyric songs seems to be that the composers of *xalqī* melodies are unknown, while the difference between *xalqī* melodies and the Šašmaqom is that *xalqī* melodies are not part of the canonical suites.

Bukharians also sometimes refer to *xalqī* melodies as either “Uzbek music” (*muzika-i Uzbekī*) or “Tajik music” (*muzika-i Tojikī*) according to the nationalistic concept of *xalq*. Djumaev lists fifteen pieces as “the principal tunes that form the fundamental layer of a national [Uzbek] musical identity. . . . *Tanovar, Munojot, Navo,*

*Ushshoq, Chuli Iroq, Segoh, Ajam, Nasrulloi, Chorgoh, Eshvoi, Qaro quzum, Bayot, Gir'ya, Q'oshchinor* and *Qalandar*. Not only are the tunes of these melodies known to connoisseurs of national music, but also the associations they bear are believed to be fitting to the national identity” (Djumaev 2005:178-79). In addition to “Čul-i ˆiroq,” I have heard Bukharians refer to several of these tunes—e.g., ”Segoh,” “Tanovar,” and “Čorgoh”—as “xalqī.” “Nasrulloi,” on the other hand, is part of the Šašmaqom and I have always heard it described as such.

The English terms “folk” and “folklore” have different connotations than *xalqī* among Bukharians. Significantly, “folklore” is found in Russian (*folklor*) and Hebrew (*fōlqlōr*, as in *širei fōlqlōr*, “folklore songs”), but “folk” is not. Various Bukharian Jewish wedding songs, including “Šast-u šast-u čor,” “Yor yor,” “Boi boi,” “Mahvaš-i nozuk,” and “Dar kuča budam,” are frequently called “folklore,” as are *yakkaxonī* and *haqqonī* (described in section 2.1.6.). Sometimes I have heard “folklore” and “folk” used to separate Šašmaqom and non-Šašmaqom items, as in “these people only know folklore, not Šašmaqom”; this may be a reaction to a diminishing sense of distinction between these pieces and styles (I have not, however, detected any negative connotation in the term *xalqī*). In very general usage, “folk” and “folklore” can also apply to the general standard repertoire, in contrast to pop styles.

#### 2.1.5.1. Sozanda Repertoire

The repertoire of the *sozanda* merits special attention. In the city of Bukhara, a *sozanda* is a professional female wedding entertainer. A *sozanda* can perform alone or in a group. She sings, dances, and accompanies herself on *doira* or other percussion

instruments, such as *qayraq* stone clappers (Sābetzādeh 2000:73-74). Her repertoire is distinct, associated with specific moments of the traditional wedding ceremony, which involved several events held prior to the *huppah* (wedding canopy) (Levin 1996:115-22; Sābetzādeh 2000). The *sozanda* repertoire is performed in suites which increase in tempo, and the compositions employ rhythmic cycles and classic poetic meters, demonstrating a connection to other maqom repertoires (Fātemi 2005a:242-65). According to Levin, *sozanda*-s were “until recently, . . . overwhelmingly Bukhar[i]an Jews” (Levin 2002:899; see also Fātemi 2005a:229 and Sābetzādeh 2000:73), and they performed at both Jewish and Muslim weddings. The most prominent *sozanda* in the late twentieth century is a Bukharian named Tohfaxon Pinḥasova, who currently lives in Denver. Tamara Kataeva, who performs with Ilyos Mallaev in New York, also worked in a *sozanda* ensemble in Tashkent.

In New York, the role of the *sozanda* in the Bukharian wedding has diminished, and now the *sozanda* repertoire is performed in standard repertoire contexts and called “folklore.” According to my interviewees, only a very old-fashioned family would still have a *sozanda* perform at their wedding or hold the various conventional pre-*huppah* events. One example of a contemporary live performance of *sozanda*-s (the ensemble featured Tohfaxon Pinkhasova, Tamara Kataeva, Firuza Yagudaeva, and a student of Pinkhasova’s, Travis Fontaine Jarrell) was a staged reenactment of a Bukharian wedding of the past, held on 8 December 2004 at the 92nd Street Y in Manhattan. At the event, organized by Walter Zev Feldman, the events of the wedding were explained to the audience from the stage and in program notes (Feldman 2004). *Sozanda* performances can also be heard alongside other standard repertoire items on *Bukhara: Musical*

*Crossroads of Asia* (1991), an album produced by Theodore Levin and Otanazar Matyakubov for Smithsonian Folkways.

#### 2.1.6. *Forms Related to the Sufi Zikr*

A few items related to the Sufi *zikr* religious ceremony (as practiced by some in Central Asia) are in the Bukharian standard repertoire: *ašula-i kalon*, *haqqonī*, and *yakkaxonī*. I am making the connection between Sufism and these genres based solely on previous scholarship, as no Bukharian Jews that I interviewed ever made (and some denied) any such connection. This denial is unsurprising given the strained relationship of Jews and Muslims in the twentieth century. However, Idelsohn wrote in 1922 that the Bukharian style of chanting of *Nišmat kol hai* on Saturday morning was derived from the *zikr* (Idelsohn 1922:49), and later research describing performance styles and genres used in the *zikr* corroborate this connection (Levin et al. 2001:183). While it is neither my intention nor my interest to decide whether Jews or Muslims “invented” these styles or who derived what from whom, I believe the connection should be investigated and acknowledged. It seems that both Muslim and Jewish creative practices in Central Asia owe a great deal to interaction and exchange.

##### 2.1.6.1. Ašula-i Kalon/Katta Ašula

*Ašula-i kalon* (“great song” in Persian, also *katta ašula* in Uzbek and *šir gādōl* in Hebrew) is a style of singing in which two or more singers alternate in rising tessituras in a competition of sorts. The singers perform a cappella or over a tremolo drone. The piece finishes with all the participating singers singing together. Figure 2.3 shows the tessituras

of a typical *ašula-i kalon*, sung by Ezro Malakov and Roshel Rubinov on 16 January 2003.

Figure 2.3. Ezro Malakov and Roshel Rubinov, *ašula-i kalon*

MALAKOV 0'00" - 0'22" [22"]      0'22" - 0'41" [19"]  
 TANBUR

0'41" - 0'58" [17"]      0'58" - 1'14" [16"]

RUBINOV 1'14" - 1'29" [15"]      1'29" - 1'43" [14"]

MALAKOV 1'45" - 2'03" [18"]      RUBINOV 2'04" - 2'18" [14"]      2'18" - 2'31"  
 TANBUR

MALAKOV 2'31" - 2'53" [22"]      RUBINOV 2'55" - 3'06" [11"]

MALAKOV 3'08" - 3'30" [22"]      DUET 3'32" - 3'53" [21"]

One characteristic feature of *ašula-i kalon* is the use of a dinner plate to alter the singer's vocal timbre. The singer holds the plate vertically to the side of his or her mouth and waves it to create various changes. I have seen *ašula-i kalon* performed both with and without the plate, but Roshel Rubinov considers the plate to be an essential characteristic of the genre.

According to Djumaev, the poems used in *ašula-i kalon* are spiritual poems in classical meters (Djumaev 2002:944). Ezro Malakov corroborated this information when he told me that singers use classic poems of Jami, Ferdowsi, Nava'i, and Bedil for *ašula-i kalon*—the poems of Bedil, for example, are known as spiritual and Sufi-inspired. It is

likely that Malakov mentioned these names because he associates them with classical, spiritual Persian poetry, and not because he knows the exact authors of the poems he uses in singing *ašula-i kalon*. One poem that Malakov frequently sings when performing *ašula-i kalon* is “Šabi ba kui tu časmi,” which he attributes to the poet Sayyida [Nasafi, the “greatest poet of the 17th century” (Bečka 1968:509)]. Roshel Rubinov sang “Qani” to demonstrate the genre.<sup>7</sup> According to Malakov, the purpose of *ašula-i kalon* is to demonstrate the singer’s vocal range and power.

I have heard *ašula-i kalon* sung alongside other standard repertoire. Abukhai Aminov performed an *ašula-i kalon* in duet with Andy Statman (playing clarinet) at Kaye Playhouse on 19 May 2002, and Ezro Malakov and Roshel Rubinov recorded one on 16 January 2003 (above) at a session for *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns*. At Beth Gavriel during the Šaḥarīt service of Shabbat, Ezro Malakov and the other prayer leaders usually sing the *Nišmat kol ḥai* prayer in the style of *ašula-i kalon*.

#### 2.1.6.2. Haqqonī

*Haqqonī* (from *haqq*, a Sufi name for God meaning “truth”) is specifically sung in memory of the dead. Levin writes, “A haqqonī is sung in the home just before the body of the deceased is removed to the cemetery. At both Jewish and Muslim burials, women traditionally sing for and among women, and men for and among men” (Levin 1992:367). Ezro Malakov explained that the purpose of *haqqonī* is to commemorate or

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7. A performance of “Qani” by Jurabeg Nabiev is available on Disc 2, Track 2 of *Asie centrale: Musiques classiques* (1993).

honor the dead, such as one's mother or father. He sings the text "Yak gule," a poem by Noseh, for haqqonī. Malakov also allowed that other poems, including texts by Ilyos Mallaev, would be appropriate for haqqonī provided that the lyrics are very serious and addressed (indirectly or directly) to the deceased. These memorial poems are called *marsiya*-s, and Roshel Rubinov applied that term to the haqqonī musical genre as well.

### 2.1.6.3. Yakkaxonī

According to Djumaev, yakkaxonī was "usually performed during the breaks between the principal parts of the [zīkr] ritual or upon the conclusion of the entire cycle of the *zīkr*, while the participants rested" (Djumaev 2002:944). According to Ezro Malakov, yakkaxonī is typically sung at tui-s and gatherings (*ma<sup>c</sup>raka*-s). Yakkaxonī can be sung by more than one singer in alternating fashion, like *ašula-i kalon*, and sometimes there is semantic overlap between the two terms: both can be used to refer to a sung performance style with alternating singers and rising tessituras. Malakov explained that in yakkaxonī, singers trade poetic verses and demonstrate their knowledge. *Yakkaxonī*, literally "individual singing," specifically refers to the solo singing by one who knows more lines than anyone else, and is hence left alone at the end of the session. Texts are folk poetry of four-line stanzas (called *čorband* by Malakov). Transcribed in Figure 2.4 is the beginning of a performance of "Dar kuča budam" on 16 January 2003 by Malakov, who referred to the performance as a "yakkaxonī."<sup>8</sup> "Dar kuča budam" is sung by Barno

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8. Malakov started this performance of "Dar kuča budam" with the phrase "Obloime, Xudoime," which means "my God." (Malakov and Levin [1991] both explain that "Oblo" is a variation of "Allah.") Levin writes that the performance of "Obloim" he recorded (sung by Abukhai Aminov and Firuza Yagudaeva) is a haqqonī, but unlike "Dar

Işhoqova on *Asie centrale: Traditions classiques* (1993) and called a “Bukharan Jewish drinking song set to Tajik popular poetry” by Levin (1993:53).<sup>9</sup> The same song is called “Bukharian Jewish wedding song” on Ensemble Maqam’s *Bukharian Jewish Folk Music*. This melody sounds similar to one melody-type that Malakov applies to the Sabbath hymn “Yāh ribōn ʿālam” (available on Malakov 2000), inviting comparison with his singing of *nišmat kol ḥai* in an *ašula-i kalon* style.

Figure 2.4. Ezro Malakov, *yakkaxonī*

Ob - lo - i - me \_\_\_\_\_ Xu - do - i - me

Dar ku - ča bud-am      seb ro ba dast - am \_\_\_\_\_ do - di \_\_\_\_\_

Mo - nand - i ru - hat \_\_\_\_\_ surx - u sa - fed - am do - di

In va' - da - i tu      čī bud ki bar man \_\_\_\_\_ do - di - ey \_\_\_\_\_

po - yam      ba za - min \_\_\_\_\_ na mi - ra - sad az ŷo - di

kuča budam,” the text following “Obloim” on Levin’s recording is suitable for remembrance of the dead.

9. The performance is Disc 2, Track 15.

## 2.2. Jewish Repertoire

What I am calling “Jewish repertoire” concerns the singing of specifically Jewish texts. In the Bukharian community, these can be Hebrew texts from the Bible (*Tanax*), Aramaic texts from the Zohar, other Hebrew or Aramaic liturgical and paraliturgical texts (such as poems called *piyyutim*), and Persian paraphrases of any of the above. Bukharian Jews have also written and continue to write Persian-language texts with Jewish themes; these texts are unique to the Bukharian community, unlike the other aforementioned Jewish texts. In New York, Jewish repertoire is undergoing a sort of renaissance, as Bukharians are not only free to explore their particular Jewish heritage but also encouraged to do so.

In the synagogue, most music is a cappella singing, by men, in performance styles called *nusah* and *hazzanut*. *Halaxah* (law governing Jewish religious practice) prohibits the playing of instruments on the Sabbath and other holidays, and it is on those days that singing occurs (weekday prayers are generally declaimed or silent). *Halaxah* also prohibits women’s voices from being heard by men in the synagogue and certain other circumstances. *Nusah* is a performance style of applying melody-types and melodic patterns to Jewish liturgical texts. Every Jewish community has its own way of singing *nusah*. Cantors (*hazzanīm*) and prayer leaders (*ba’alei tefillah*) are generally expected to know how to perform their community’s *nusah* expertly, and to be able to articulate and pronounce the holy Hebrew and Aramaic texts correctly. *Hazzanut* is an expert rendition of *nusah*.

Ezro Malakov is not only a performer of standard repertoire, but also a respected *hazzan* working at Congregation Beth Gavriel, a major Bukharian synagogue centrally

located on 108th Street in Forest Hills (“Bukharian Broadway”). Menaḥem Malakov, Ezro’s brother, is an equally esteemed ḥazzan, known for his deep knowledge and authentic performance of Jewish texts. (Yuhan Benjamin once told me, “you want to be a professor? This guy [Menaḥem] is like one thousand professors!”) Mordekhai Raḥminov sings at the Bukharian Jewish Community Center on Queens Boulevard. Some of the Rabbis in Queens, like Imanuel Shimonov and Iṣḥoq Yehoshua, are also known for their skillful singing of Jewish texts.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to nusah and ḥazzanut, Jewish repertoire contains songs intended for group singing. Roshel Rubinov generically referred to these songs as *nīgūnīm* (Heb., “melodies”), although he also applied this term on occasion to virtuosic solo singing of Jewish texts. This repertoire, especially in reference to the songs sung on the Sabbath, is also broadly called *šīrīm* (Heb., “songs”) by Ezro Malakov, Rafael Nektalov, and others.<sup>11</sup> There are songs associated with Jewish holidays: “Purim Purim Ionu” for Purim, “Suko va lulov” for Sukkot, “Eḥad mi yodea”/“Yakumin ki medonad” for Pesah, and “Simḥo no mipi El” for Simḥat Torah. These songs are designed to be sung by anyone, and some (like “Eḥad mi yodea”) are especially for children. The Sabbath is an especially

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10. The Bukharian community in Israel also has notable ḥazzanim, among them Igal Ben Ḥayim, Eliyahu Lodaev, and Amnon Davidov.

11. Bukharian Jews, except for those heavily involved in Lubavitcher Ḥassidism, do not sing the wordless melodies of Ḥassidim, also referred to as *nīgūnīm* (Koskoff 2001; Shiloah 1992:196-199). Bukharian aesthetics place an extremely high value on poetry and the proper singing of words; it is hard to imagine a Bukharian Jew agreeing with the general Lubavitcher opinion that “wordless nigunim are more spiritual than those with texts and are better able to connect with the divine realm” (Koskoff 2001:10). Perhaps for this reason, there is no apparent distinction among Bukharians between a *nīgūn* (melody) and a *šīr* (song).

rich time for singing songs, both in synagogue and at the home after meals. “Dərōr Yīqrā,” “Ləxāh Dōdī,” “Yōm ləyōm,” “Yigdal,” “Yədīd Nefeš,” “Şur mišelō,” and “Ki ešmərəh Šabbāt,” are some of the songs sung in honor of the Sabbath. Bukharian Jews sing these texts to a variety of melodies. Israeli and Ḥassidic melodies, for example, are popular among some New York Bukharians.

Jewish repertoire is sung at Jewish holidays and religious events, including simḥa-s like weddings, bar mitzvahs (also called *təfillin bandon-s*, “*təfillin* tying”) , and bərit mīlāh-s. At Simḥat Torah, Bukharians (like other Jews) have a festive celebration in honor of the renewal of the yearly cycle of reading the Torah from beginning to end. The Bukharian celebration, called a *sefer tui* (“Torah [book/scroll] party”), links maqom, Jewish, and party repertoires. This event is like other tui-s, with plentiful food and drink, and music and dance drawn from the gamut of Bukharian repertoire. At the *sefer tui*, each Torah is considered a “bride” and someone is honored with being its “groom” (*xaton*). The *xaton* is allowed to hold the Torah and a song called *xatonī* is sung for him. People sometimes give donations to the synagogue of as much as \$30,000 for this honor.

Jewish repertoire is sometimes performed outside of the liturgical context. When maqom groups are invited to perform concerts at non-Bukharian synagogues, the program of mostly standard repertoire might be supplemented with some Jewish repertoire. On one such occasion (11 November 2005), Ensemble Maqam performed at Temple Isaiah, a Reform congregation in Columbia, Maryland interested in learning about Jewish cultural diversity (the year before, the Abuyudaya Jews of Uganda performed at the synagogue). In addition to Ensemble Maqam’s program of standard repertoire, Ezro Malakov sang a section of the Saturday morning service in the Bukharian

nusaḥ and led the audience in “Simḥo no mipi El.” In another example, Ezro and Menahem Malakov performed a concert of selections from the Jewish liturgical calendar for a concert entitled “Lift Every Voice: Celebrating Cultures Through Song,” at Town Hall in Seattle on 3 March 2002.

### 2.2.1. Jewish Texts set to Maqom Melodies

Maqom melodies with Jewish themes in Hebrew or Persian constitute an important sub-repertoire that is unique to the Bukharian Jews. This is an especially noteworthy repertoire because it combines the serious, *vaznin* quality of maqom with the unique religious values and sense of otherness embedded in Jewish texts.

This is a relatively small repertoire. Books such as *Sefer kevōd Šabbāt* (Ḥayimov 2001) contain the twenty or so texts set to maqom and standard repertoire melodies. These are liturgical and paraliturgical texts, including well-known piyyutim originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic to which Persian paraphrases were later added. Israel Najara’s “Yōm ləyōm” is sung to “Muḡulča-i dugoh” and “Muḡulča-i segoh,” “Dərōr Yiqrā” is sung to “Čapandoz-i gulyor,” and “Yəhālel Nīv” is sung to “Nasr-i čorgoh.” Persian paraphrases of Hebrew texts, such as “Madh guyand” (on “Yəhālel nīv”) and Shimon Ḥakham’s “Mo ro zi xob-i ḡaflat” (on “Šadai hokeš”) are also sung enthusiastically to Šašmaqom melodies (“Navruz-i sabo” and “Ufar-i savt-i kalon,” respectively).<sup>12</sup> They are sung in the same contexts as other Jewish repertoire items.

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12. Shimon Ḥakham (1843-1910) was an important Bukharian poet and translator. He translated the Hebrew Bible and other religious texts into Bukharian Persian (Fischel 1971:1146).

Because they are maqom, they are difficult and sung by professional singers (*hofiz-s*). Ezro Malakov has actively recorded this repertoire, released on his multi-CD *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns*. Selections from this repertoire also appear as transcriptions in scholarship (see Seroussi et al. 2001:68; Slobin 1982a; Toda 2001).

On the contemporary Bukharian scene, Ilyos Mallaev is the poet who has done the most to expand this repertoire, having written a book of explicitly Jewish-themed texts, in Persian, intended to be sung to maqom melodies (Mallaev 2003). Mallaev addresses the appearance of the Torah (“Vasf-i Turo”), the coming of the Messiah (“Omadan-i Mošiah”), Jewish holidays (“Id-i Purim,” “Id-i Pesah”), and the city of Jerusalem (“Yerušalayim”). Mikhoel Zavul’s “Nigahdorot Xudo bošad” (Zavul 1999:95) is a religious poem that has been set to a maqom melody<sup>13</sup> and adopted into the standard repertoire. Roshel Rubinov has also written poems (e.g. “Panj panja barobar nest”) that are religious in tone, but which have a more universal content than Mallaev’s; also, Mallaev’s poems are usually set to established maqom melodies, but Rubinov’s poems tend to be set to newly composed melodies in the maqom style. Although recent poems by Mallaev and Rubinov are not performed in a liturgical context, they do appear on recent religious CDs such as *Ereš Isroel* (Beth Gavriel 2003), produced for Congregation Beth Gavriel and given away at their 2003 Simḥat Torah celebration. I have also heard Malakov sing some of these songs in paraliturgical contexts. At a bərīt milāh held at Beth Gavriel, Malakov sang a poem of Zavul’s as a yakkaxonī next to the paraliturgical texts

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13. Ezro Malakov called the melody *xalqī*, and Roshel Rubinov said that the melody is by Gavriel Mulloqandov, originally used for a poem called “Az qadar gardam.”

“Mo ro zi xobi ġaflat” (Ḥayimov 2001:23), “Yōm ləyōm,” and its Persian paraphrase “Ruz ba ruz guyam šukur” (Ḥayimov 2001:15-16).

### 2.3. Party Repertoire

The dominant repertoire performed at *tui-s*—weddings, bar mitzvahs, and other parties—is described by some musicians as “light” (*sabuk*, in contrast to *maqom*, which is “heavy”), “pop,” *estrada*,<sup>14</sup> or simply “new music.” The music heard at *tui-s* covers a wide range of styles and genres, and is geared towards youth and mass appeal. Unlike standard repertoire, which Bukharians increasingly unify and homogenize under the term *maqom*, the repertoire heard at *tui-s* is presented as diverse and cosmopolitan. Rather than use “light,” or “pop,” Bukharians generally classify party repertoire items by language or country of origin.

One of the most popular bands hired for *tui-s* in New York is “Mazal Tov,” featuring Albert Narkolaev (clarinet), Roman Narkolaev (keyboard), Roshel Rubinov (guitar and vocals), Yakov Rubinov (percussion), Ilya Khavasov (vocals), and Ariel Karshigiev (percussion). They loudly amplify their instruments. Mazal Tov plays at Bukharian weddings, non-Bukharian Jewish weddings (Iranian Jewish weddings, Russian Jewish weddings), and Muslim (Uzbek and Tajik) weddings. For each audience, they adjust their repertoire; for example, Rubinov told me that they always play “Tui muborak” at Muslim weddings (see also Sultanova 2005:140). They often supplement

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14. Federico Spinetti defines *estrada* in Tajikistan as “electrified, Western-derived music” (2005:205) and translates the word as “pop music” (2005:187). This is consistent with my experience in Queens.

their band with other singers, percussionists, and dancers. Although the core members of the band are Bukharian Jews, some of the additional personnel are not. Galina Paliy, who sings with the group on occasion, is a Russian Jew, and two of the dancers are Russian but not Jewish.<sup>15</sup> The additional personnel helps the group perform in different circumstances—Galina told me that they like to have her sing the English-language songs, preferring her pronunciation.

In New York, a tui is often held in a venue specifically designed for such occasions, including catering halls (Leonard’s of Great Neck, the Astoria World Manor) and restaurants with ballrooms (Da Mikelle Palace, Royal Palace).<sup>16</sup> *Plov* (rice pilaf), *kabob*, *samusa* (stuffed pastry), *bičak* (stuffed pastry with pumpkin), and other Bukharian food staples are abundant, along with plenty of vodka. Of course, the lavishness of the party depends to some extent on the income of the family throwing the party, although this is not as important as one might expect. The tui is important to the community as a whole, and many might contribute to a celebration for a family with modest means in order for musicians and food to be included (Levin 1996:281-82; Bellafante 2004). Families can save money by holding the celebration on an “off night,” such as a Tuesday, or having a shorter party.

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15. Galina Paliy was trained as a cantor at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion School of Sacred Music.

16. Catering halls and restaurants also seem to be the standard in Israel. At a təfillin bandon that I attended in Tel Aviv on 29 May 2003, the celebration was at a complex, almost like an office building, with many ballrooms for catered events.

At today's tui-s, usually only three or four standard repertoire songs are played. Younger Bukharian audiences are not as familiar with the standard melodies, are less fluent in Persian (or do not speak it all), and associate maqom with listening as opposed to dancing. Some link maqom to mourning and cemeteries. Roshel Rubinov told me that only in rare cases would his band play mostly maqom at tui-s. These would be parties for older celebrants (forty-five years old or more) born in Central Asia, especially if they were from towns with a strong presence of maqom, such as Shahrīsabz or Kattakurgan. The members of Mazal Tov also create new arrangements of standards to make them more appealing to younger audiences. Roshel Rubinov and I discussed his new arrangement of a popular song, "Tamanno" (Rubinov dated the original as thirty to forty years old):

**[This is the] same music, but a new arrangement. New arrangement, new style. Something new. People need something new for their ears. You know, all the time old style, tanbūr, doira, . . . young people, they need something new. With keyboard, with guitar, with clarinet, you play classic music, they're going to listen.**

Bukharian tui bands have developed a unique dance music repertoire. The members of Mazal Tov play an important role in this music as composers, arrangers, and performers. Nargis and Raj Mallaev, children of Ilyos and Muhabbat Shamaeva, are also a part of this scene, as is Yuhan Benjamin. Tui band instruments like guitar, keyboards, drum machines, clarinet, and darabukka are typical, as are 6/8 and 4/4 rhythms. These new songs might be in Persian, like Roshel Rubinov's "Arūs-i zībo"; in Russian, like Ilya

Khavasov's "My Samarqand"; in Turkish, like Khavasov's "Olurum"; in English, like Nargis' "1001 Nights"; or instrumental, like many played by Albert Narkolaev on clarinet. Although the music is quite different from maqom, a similar approach to 6/8 rhythms can be found in ufar pieces of the Šašmaqom and, importantly, in wedding songs like "Yor yor" and those performed at the end of sozanda suites.

Perhaps the most striking quality of the party repertoire is its overt diversity and cosmopolitanism (the standard repertoire is arguably just as diverse, but it is not presented as such). Roshel Rubinov often categorizes and describes repertoire played at parties based on the language of their lyrics or their country of origin—e.g., Indian, Russian, Uzbek, Tajik, Arabic, English, Uyğur. According to Avrom Tolmasov's student Shlomo Kalontar (speaking in English), Tolmasov was "the first person to put in Bukharian music Persian, Afghanian, Azerbaijanian, Armenian, everything, after him everyone started to sing it, before it was only Shashmaqom—that's it. All the different nationalities he put, India, everything." Yuhan Benjamin foregrounds diversity on his website, [www.yuhanny.com](http://www.yuhanny.com), which opens with a flash-media animation sequence of a Star of David followed by a Cross, Crescent moon, and statue of Buddha. In his posted biography, Benjamin's eclecticism is portrayed as a way of bringing peace to people of diverse backgrounds:

. . . [Yuhan's] father would name his new born son, Yuhan, "Peace Maker" in hopes it would instill a kind of legacy for peace for them and their neighbors.

Growing up, Yuhan could hear it from house to house, within its

streets, those seductive “mugam” Middle Eastern melodies spilling out of clarinets. 6/8 dance rhythms pulsating from round “doyra” drums, oriental echoes emanating from the southeast, romantic flamenco and Italian music heard at local parties, pain filled Russian songs, and Turkish folk singers whose strong hypnotic influence would later be heard on his unique vocal style. But at age eleven, for the first time, Yuhan listened to the renowned sounds of “The Beatles,” following; Stevie Wonder, George Benson, Gino Vanelli, Billy Joel, Deep Purple, Pink Floyd, and UFO that in an instant, would envelop him completely.

. . . By the time he reached the age of twenty-one, [he] had already toured most southwestern Russian Republics, including appearances on radio and television. An unusual accomplishment, to sing to rooms full of obvious cultural differences, but by now, he amassed the in-depth knowledge and natural instincts needed to combine and perform those styles successfully.

Arriving in New York City, in what he calls “the best city in the world,” Yuhan wasted no time. Has over the years established a large following touring with an incredible orchestra backed by toxic beats, tantalizing show equipped with exquisite dancing, and uplifting vocals sung in streams of languages. (Yuhan 2006)

Dance and dress at celebrations often reinforce associations with foreignness and exoticism, as when professional dancers and participants at tui-s perform choreographed

routines to Bollywood hit songs in costume, or belly dance in revealing outfits to Arabic-language songs.

The tui repertoire reflects the diverse groups of people with whom Bukharians interact in Queens, the most “multicultural” borough in New York City. Institutions in Queens foster communication and dialogue between cultures; Forest Hills High School, which has a large contingent of Bukharian students, has a yearly “World Expo” in which school clubs of different nationalities perform music and dance from their particular areas. Many Bukharian teenagers in New York listen to U.S. popular music styles such as rap and rock. For example, at a family gathering, two of Ezro Malakov’s grandsons were listening to 50 Cent.<sup>17</sup> Bukharian youth parties, such as “A Night in Bukhara III” held at Queens College on 1 December 2005, feature DJs playing contemporary U.S. and European pop. Nargis’ album *Desert Rain* (2001) features a rap (on “Ayelet”) and DJ remixes (or “megamixes”) are heard on albums by Roshel Rubinov and Albert Narkolaev. Playing to the tastes of young Bukharians, Mazal Tov covers popular Top 40 songs: at one wedding in 2002, they performed Christina Aguilera’s “I Turn to You,” Ricky Martin’s “She Bangs,” and Jennifer Lopez’s “Let’s Get Loud.” Mazal Tov also plays songs drawn from the generic American or American-Jewish wedding repertoire, such as the Eagles’ “Hotel California” and “Hava nagila.”

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17. Even though young Bukharians listen to Top 40, I have also been struck by the celebrity of local Bukharian popular singers like Yuhan Benjamin, Avrom Tolmasov, and Roshel Rubinov. Yuhan Benjamin was the master of ceremonies at a concert for Roshel Amin’s music school (23 October 2005). Some of the young performers (they were around twelve years old) could hardly believe their eyes, and asked for his autograph. Benjamin signed his name, remarking, “who do you think I am? 50 Cent? I’m a quarter!”

The appreciation of diverse musics, and the ability to perform them, are points of pride for Bukharian Jews. According to Toda, “[Ilyos] Mallaev is proud to consider that only Bukharian Jews, unlike any other nation and other Jews, are able to master precisely the musical tradition of any other group, and indeed they are able to render the music of Tajiks and Uzbeks more authentically and representatively than those groups themselves” (Toda 2001:181). In an interview with Roshel Rubinov, he expressed a similar attitude:

ER: Bukharian Jews like . . .

RR: All music. Indian, Arabic, Uzbek, Russian, Kyrgyz, Tajik, they like all music.

ER: **Interesting.**

RR: **Yeah, because, actually** I don’t see any people (*xalq*) like Bukharian Jews. Because Bukharian Jews . . . like different music. Uzbek, Tajik, Indian, Turkish, Russian, different, different. . . . Some people only like their own music. **Finito. Only sing today English songs, that’s it, or only sing today Russian songs.** Bukharians are different. Different music, whatever music is nice, if it’s good, they like it. . . . **[When] you come to [a] Bukharian party, you see very good wine on [the] table. Very good wine, very good vodka, very good whiskey, very good cognac, very good food, very good musician, and that’s it. Everything [should be very good, excellent. If it’s] not excellent, stay home.**

## 2.4. Conclusion

Repertoires are fluid, defined by the activities and discourses of their practitioners. In the case of the Bukharian Jewish community, performers choose certain items for particular situations, balancing what they perceive to be the needs of their audiences with their own preferences and skills. These factors are constantly in flux, as are available performance opportunities, and Bukharian professional musicians must adjust their repertoires accordingly. In addition to picking from already learned items, these musicians create and learn new arrangements of established items as well as entirely new melodies and texts.

The tripartite organization presented in this chapter is based on my observations of professional musicians' choices and the terms used by musicians. It reflects the performance contexts, situations, and available choices for Bukharians in New York City, which are markedly different from those in Central Asia. For example, the divisions of maqom repertoires based on language and canonical publications were a major feature of scholarship and music-making in Central Asia, but these distinctions seem to be less pertinent in the United States. Even as musicians and connoisseurs continue to discuss repertoires in terms of categories of "Uzbek music," "Tajik music," "xalqī," and "Šašmaqom," they perform, study, and describe selections from these repertoires side-by-side under the banner of "maqom." Nationality issues surface in certain contexts, but with an increased freedom to choose and present music, other distinctions become more relevant, such as "heavy" (*vaznin*) vs. "light" (*sabuk*).

For Bukharian Jews, the opportunities and public sphere of the United States are strikingly different from those of Soviet Central Asia. Ilyos Mallaev commented on the

contrast between Central Asian and American performance contexts and creative opportunities that he himself experienced. In Uzbekistan, he told me, he wrote music for solo voice and orchestra, symphonic music, and *xalqī* music of different nationalities and their respective styles (*šiva-s*, such as Afghan style and Iranian style). When comparing New York and Uzbekistan, he said:

I found acceptance for my work in America. . . . There [in Uzbekistan] I didn't create these books [of poetry], or [compact] discs, or this play about Levicha. All of these things I did here [in America].

The role of vaudevillian and comic entertainer was one open to Jews in the Soviet Union and one in which Mallaev found much success. In the United States, he occasionally tells jokes and does impressions for Bukharian audiences, but his role has significantly changed to that of master poet and maqomist. In interviews, he is eager to discuss his activities in the United States and less forthcoming with details about the Soviet Union, pointing to the restrictions and difficulties he faced as a Jew before immigrating.

Ezro Malakov, like Mallaev, has also produced different work here than in Uzbekistan, responding to changing contexts and opportunities. In the United States, Malakov has concentrated on perpetuating Bukharian Jewish repertoire both as a *ḥazzan* in a busy community synagogue and with his ambitious recording and notation projects. In Soviet Uzbekistan, where religious repertoire was suppressed and relegated primarily to the private sphere, he sang with the national radio orchestra, made records, and appeared in films. Currently, Malakov's passion for performing and perpetuating Jewish

repertoire is greatly encouraged, with substantial support and patronage coming from both within and without the Bukharian community.

The categories and contexts presented in this chapter can help us understand some of the ways that the Bukharian community has adapted to life in New York City, a city with almost limitless options for listening and making music.<sup>18</sup> Standard repertoire provides a locus of tradition, identity, and active engagement with the Central Asian past. Jewish repertoire is connected to the religious life and attitudes of Bukharian Jews. In the party repertoire, Bukharians celebrate their experiences as cosmopolitan and modern world citizens. All three repertoires together combine to make a set of choices for different personalities and events, a diverse range of performance possibilities to match the New York Bukharian community's multifaceted identity.

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18. For example, Bukharians also work in some creative areas that I have omitted, such as "Western classical" composition and opera singing.

### CHAPTER 3. MEDIA

Bukharian musical repertoire appears in many different forms: recordings, Western notation, written and printed texts, and scholarship. Recordings are a particularly vibrant area of Bukharian creativity and enterprise, as Bukharian musicians are not only active producers of recordings made for audiences within the community but also performers on recordings made for and by non-Bukharians. Notations have been equally important, including preservational initiatives to notate Bukharian repertoire in Western staff notation, and books of poetry and religious texts (both printed and handwritten). Scholars have also included transcriptions and recordings of Bukharian repertoire in their publications.

Media and the live performance contexts described in the previous chapter are interdependent in many ways. For example, ensembles create recordings to drum up business for live engagements, and they sell recordings at concerts for audience members who wish to have multiple experiences with the ensemble's music on subsequent occasions. Singers and instrumentalists may learn or perform repertoire from Western staff notations, they may aim to record their repertoire in such a form in order that others might learn and perform the music in turn. If we expand our understanding of "notations" to include poems and religious texts, which contain vast amounts of musical information for Bukharian performers, the importance of printed matter greatly increases. Furthermore, the repertoire represented in media mirrors the categories of live performances, as recordings and books are usually devoted to either standard, Jewish, or party repertoire.

But although recordings and notations can be compared to weddings, parties, concerts, and other live performance contexts, they can also be contrasted. When making recordings, a host of unique considerations arise, and choices must be made regarding studio techniques, production aesthetics, and the final format or formats. Once created, recordings can be used in a wide variety of ways. Teachers and students use recordings as pedagogical aids, party bands use them to expand their repertoire, dancers create choreographed routines to them, and other artists sample and modify them for their own recordings. Recordings can transport performances to listeners throughout the Bukharian diaspora, almost instantaneously with the emergence of mp3s and websites. Notations, like recordings, can transmit repertoire over distances and over time, and both forms of media require distinct sets of interpretive skills.

### **3.1. Recordings**

The trend of grassroots, cottage recording industries that Peter Manuel described in the North Indian context (Manuel 1993) can be identified in many subcultures and communities. With the increasing accessibility of recording equipment, diminishing costs of production, and the proliferation of MiniDiscs, CD-Rs, mp3s, the Internet, and home studios, local and small-scale recording industries have become a major fixture in many communities. It is now not only possible, but also a relatively simple process for groups completely out of the mainstream to establish their own small-scale recording industries.

The Bukharian community has exploited these technologies to the extent that in Queens one can find recordings produced by Bukharians, sold in Bukharian stores, listened and danced to at Bukharian events, and distributed throughout the Bukharian

diaspora, all under the radar of mainstream record labels, distributors, or retailers. Bukharian recordings are available at central locations such as stores or synagogues on 108th Street in Rego Park, but mp3s and websites such as [www.bjew.com](http://www.bjew.com) have made sharing Bukharian music over expansive geographic distances instantaneous. CDs and MiniDiscs are sent through the mail, and travelers and visitors bring recordings with them to loan, give, or play.<sup>1</sup> But as opposed to the local industries engaged in an antagonistic, symbiotic, and/or dependent relationship with the mainstream media (e.g., the scenes described in Wallis and Malm 1984 or Manuel 1993), the Bukharian micro-industry seems to interact very little, if at all, with the international industry as a whole (both “majors” and “indies”) or the “world music” industry discussed by Feld (1996) and Taylor (1997). It is true that some Bukharian musicians are active in the world music scene, especially the “Silk Road” projects promoted by Yo-Yo Ma, Theodore Levin, and others, but these activities (even if some of the same musicians are involved) constitute a largely separate sphere from the recordings produced for and consumed by Bukharians.

Recordings are a dynamic and vital component of Bukharian musical culture. On recordings, artists show their familiarity with important pieces in the standard repertoire, applying their personal styles to widely known melodies. Musicians play favorite songs and perform tributes to create links and associations between themselves and artists or other important figures of the past, and to foster a sense of community around a repertoire

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1. For example, during one visit to Ezro Malakov, he shared with me a new CD of selected Psalms played by a Moroccan Jewish ensemble in Israel and brought to him by a visiting friend, selections from a new 16-CD set of Bukharian *ḥazzanut* (performed by Eliyahu Lodaev) that someone had sent him, and a recently acquired CD of himself performing with the Radio Uzbekistan orchestra twenty years ago.

associated with Bukharian tradition. The amount of information conveyed in an audio recording is prodigious; students and connoisseurs can infer such details as the movements of performers, the age of the recording, and the location where the recording was made. As a pedagogical tool, recordings have unparalleled potential, as students can endlessly repeat even the smallest sections until they can replicate the motions made and add the compositions or stylistic elements to their personal repertoire. The ability to learn and acquire repertoire from recordings has also made them important media for preservational initiatives.

Artists use recordings to introduce new compositions. The highly mobile and portable quality of recordings, combined with the possibility of learning music through repeated listenings, increases the chance of newly recorded compositions becoming integrated into the repertoires of ensembles and individual artists. Audiences also gain familiarity with new repertoire by listening to recordings, enhancing their appreciation of future performances.

Recordings are snapshots of the music that is played and heard in a community at a given time, and recordings being made in New York are particularly interesting for the ways that they capture the attitudes and priorities of Bukharians in their situation as immigrants in a newly multicultural environment. And recordings are special kinds of artifacts in that they are often consumer products, and thus demonstrate ideas musicians have about the needs and desires of their listeners.

### 3.1.1. *Repertoire Represented on Recordings*

Many recordings produced in Queens show the musicians' familiarity with the maqom repertoire that is known to knowledgeable, generally older Bukharian audiences. By performing these selections, musicians are able to work with and against the audience's prior experiences, expectations, and associations with the compositions, making the melodies a foil for showcasing the musicians' personal styles. A successful rendition of a standard item, such as "Uššoq-i samarqand," or "Čapandoz-i gulyor," may become imitated by others—Shoista Mullojanova's "Uššoq-i samarqand," for example, seems to be based on a version recorded by Zaynab Palvanova.<sup>2</sup> On recordings, Bukharians regularly subject familiar melodies to new arrangements or new treatments, as musicians aim to keep the standard repertoire interesting and relevant to audiences. The most common method for treating a known melody is to sing a new poem to it, but there are other possibilities, such as providing a new instrumental arrangement, singing in a higher range, or changing the usual tempo.

Performing unfamiliar compositions (of the past, not newly composed pieces) is one strategy for musicians who wish to demonstrate their deep knowledge of repertoire. The ability to perform little known choices increases a musician's reputation as being a tradition-bearer, seriously committed to learning, and generally being *vaznin* ("heavy," "serious"). The recordings of Avrom Tolmasov (e.g., Tolmas 1997) often contain relatively obscure or difficult standards from the Šašmaqom ("Nasrulloi," "Čapandoz-i

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2. Mullojanova's version is Track 16 on her album *I'm Singing for You* (2004). Palvanova's version is track 11 on the Ocora compilation *Ouzbekistan: Les grandes voix du passé (1940-1965)* (1999).

uššoq”) or Uzbek art songs (“Kuigai”) alongside new songs (many using poems of Roshel Rubinov, such as “Panj panja barobar nest,” or of Ilyos Mallaev, such as “Ohista, ohista”). But it seems to me that generally, familiar and standard compositions are the cornerstone of recordings made in Queens. Perhaps it is the case that as a particular sense of “otherness” grows in the New York Bukharian community, so does the need for a core repertoire in which the community can locate its identity. As a case in point, Roshel Amin, who claims to know the entire Šašmaqom, only recorded familiar, commonly performed repertoire on his CD. Outside of Queens, it seems easier to find musicians recording a greater breadth of pieces. For example, Ari Babakhanov, who currently resides in Germany, has recorded such pieces as “Saql-i bastanigor,” “Muxammas-i uššoq,” and “Savt-i čorgoh” (Babakhanov 1998), which are rarely heard in Queens.

Bukharian musicians have made several important recordings of faithful renditions of maqom melodies with their conventionally associated Persian- and Turkic-language poems for Ocora, Smithsonian Folkways, and Shanachie. These recordings have been produced by conscientious and diligent scholars, including Theodore Levin, Otanazar Matyakubov, and Jean During. Ocora’s *Asie centrale: Traditions classiques* (1993), recorded in Central Asia, features some Bukharian Jews that are today very prominent on the New York scene, such as Ilyos Mallaev, Matat Baraev, and Roman Narkolaev.<sup>3</sup> Smithsonian Folkways’ *Central Asia in Forest Hills, NY: Music of the*

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3. Ocora in particular has released recordings of Central Asian court music repertoire, although many of these performances are not by Bukharian Jews. A notable example is Jurabeg Nabiev’s abridged version of Maqom Navo (1997). (One of Nabiev’s teachers was the celebrated Bukharian singer Barno Işhoqova.) Inédit has also released an abridged performance of Maqom Dugoh. One interesting aspect of both releases is the influence of the producers and musical directors on the performances. Both CDs

*Bukharan Jewish Ensemble Shashmaqam* (1991) and *Bukhara: Musical Crossroads of Asia* (1991) also contain clear-cut, stirring examples of “Uššoq-i kalon” (performed by Ezro Malakov, Mahmujan Tojiboev, and Zakir Bobotonov), “Talqin-i bayot” (performed by Yosef Abramov and Shumiel Kuyenov), and “Nasr-i čorgoh” (performed by Abukhai Aminov and Yosef Abramov). Performances of ašula-i kalon and the sozanda repertoire can also be found on these recordings. On recordings, just as in live performance contexts, selections from maqom repertoires and genres are generally performed as individual compositions rather than in suites (with the exception of the sozanda repertoire).

The most ambitious project to record Bukharians living in Queens performing the Šašmaqom repertoire that they have become famous for maintaining is Shanachie’s *At the Bazaar of Love* (1997). This CD, an abridged version of Maqom Buzruk, features Ilyos Mallaev (under whose name the recording was made), Roshel Rubinov, Ezro Malakov, Roman Narkolaev, Ilyusha Khavasov, Muhabbat Shamaeva, and Abukhai Aminov. Theodore Levin, the most well-known scholar of the Šašmaqom and Bukharian community, produced the recording. The performance is as inspired as any that I have heard of the maqom repertoire, and Mallaev is able to demonstrate his active and creative engagement with tradition by including two of his own ġazal-s (e.g. “Suhbat-i dono”

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intersperse vocal and instrumental pieces, somewhat like contemporary performances of Iranian classical music—in the Šašmaqom, it is customary to only include instrumentals at the beginning of a performance, and then follow with the much longer vocal section (Prentice 2004:187). Jean During, in the liner notes to the *Maqām Navā* CD, mentions that “when we suggested interspersing these [instrumental] pieces with interlude-like vocal sections to the performers, they thought it an excellent idea” (During 1997:16).

[Mallaev 1999:54] set to “Talqin-i uzzol” and “Tamošo kun” [Mallaev 1999:117] set to the third tarona following “Nasrullai”). *At the Bazaar of Love* is, to my knowledge, the only example of Bukharian Jews in New York performing Šašmaqom as a suite on a commercial recording.

Recordings are also an important space for adding compositions to the standard repertoire. Compositions become part of the shared community repertoire by being treated like a standard item: that is, performed by numerous practitioners and subjected to new and varied treatments. Several recordings of a composition of recent or relatively recent origin enhance the position of that piece as a standard. One important example is Ilyos Mallaev’s “Yalalum.” This piece is frequently performed in concert by various musicians, and it has been recorded several times; two versions have been recorded by Muhabbat Shamaeva and Ilyos Mallaev (Shamaeva 2003; Ensemble Maqam 1998), and one by Ilya Khavasov (Beth Gavriel 2003), and each version is different. Besides Mallaev, the other musicians who have worked to add their songs and poems to the standard repertoire are Avrom Tolmasov and Roshel Rubinov, and, although they compose in a newer dance-oriented tui style, the brothers Roman and Albert Narkolaev.

Poems heard on recent recordings include those by classic Central Asian and Iranian poets on themes of love, beauty, and loss (the martyred poet Hilali [d. 1529] is one favorite); works by contemporary Bukharian poets—especially Ilyos Mallaev—on the same themes as well as tributes to individuals and places; religious poems in Persian and Hebrew; or love poems in Russian, English, Greek, Spanish, or other languages. Contemporary Bukharian poets such as Mallaev, Roshel Rubinov, and Mikhoel Zavul

continue to compose in the same classical poetic forms and meters found in the maqom repertoire.

Jewish repertoire is well represented on recordings produced in New York, owing much to the United States' policies of religious freedom. At the time of this writing, Ezro Malakov has completed five of seven compact discs devoted to Bukharian Jewish repertoire, all entitled *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns* (1998, 2000, 2003). These CDs are a companion to his notation project of the same name, discussed below. In addition, Ezro has organized recordings of Jewish repertoire paid for and supported by synagogues and Bukharian Jewish religious institutions, such as *Ereṣ Isroel* (Beth Gavriel 2003) and *Az qudrat-i Xudovand* (2003). The repertoire represented on these recordings is diverse, with both old and new texts on Jewish themes, and both maqom and new melodies presented in various instrumentations.

Numerous recordings produced by Queens-based artists reflect an attitude of eclecticism and cosmopolitanism, represented by a wide variety of languages and musical styles drawn from many cultures and geographic regions. Eclecticism is an important quality for Bukharian musicians to demonstrate for many reasons. For one, it demonstrates professionalism. Professionals are expected to exhibit an ability to work expressively and creatively in a range of styles and environments, and to offer something new, unique, and personal regardless of the kind of music being performed. Of course, expert and virtuosic performance in only one area of musical activity is valued more than mediocre performance in many areas.

Furthermore, eclecticism captures the Bukharian ability to adapt to multicultural surroundings and thrive in a variety of contexts, especially in New York. On *Širin jon*

(2003), Albert Narkolaev included a song in Arabic (aptly, if not prosaically, titled “Arabic”), compositions modeled after Armenian and Azerbaijani music, and a piece in English with a “new jack swing” beat (“Aiesha”). In the liner notes of Narkolaev’s album *Azizam* (2005), he writes, “The [i]nternational diversity of this album varies from Middle Eastern beats to Russian songs . . . the combination of various genres and styles of music brings this album to life and will fascinate the listener” (Narkolaev 2005). Next to the already cosmopolitan songs in Uzbek or Russian, Bukharians have incorporated English lyrics (the bilingual “Magic of I Love You” on Nargis’ *Desert Rain* [2001]), rock, “DJ Remixes,” and Latin music with Spanish lyrics (“Chiki te ne mia” on Muhabbat Shamaeva’s *Yalalum* [2003]) into their recordings, for example.

It is a reflection of the New York scene that most recordings produced in Queens exhibit such a wide range of styles; the less varied recordings of Bukharians tend to come from musicians living outside of the U.S., such as Ari Babakhanov. Even on the most consistent productions in the U.S., some effort is usually made to show that the artist can thrive in a variety of situations. For example, the inclusion of Roshel Rubinov’s arrangement of “Tamanno” on Roshel Amin’s otherwise entirely classical affair *Sado-i dil bo ovoz-i tanbūr* (“The Sound of the Heart with the Voice of the Tanbūr”) demonstrates Amin’s ability to play music associated with the modern Bukharian wedding band sound as well as the instrumentals in the style of Turgun Alimatov that he performs on the rest of the disc.

To be packaged and sold, CDs are assembled under a unifying concept or idea. In a divergence from the structure and approach of the United States music industry, which depends on marketing products according to genres created and/or maintained by the

industry itself, a wide variety of genres and styles are often represented on one Bukharian CD. For Bukharian performers, recordings are not primarily geared towards turning a profit; rather, they are a way for artists to advertise their abilities and creativity for live performances, extend the reach of their compositions, and generally add to their presence as cultural figures. For example, Yuhan Benjamin, perhaps the most in-demand Bukharian wedding singer and master of ceremonies, has made some of his songs available for free download on his promotional website (Yuhan 2006). Many CDs have a consistent mood of music for either listening or dancing. One record store owner, for example, described Avrom Tolmasov's *Girya* ("Weeping," 1997), which features balladic standard repertoire, as "music to sit back, drink vodka, relax, for old people." Other recordings are tributes to specific individuals who have passed away: one important CD was dedicated to Moshe Narkolaev, the father of Albert and Roman (Mazal Tov 2003). These recordings tend to have slower tempos and lyrics that comment on the individual or express feelings of loss. CDs of religious music can be diverse in style, demonstrating various production aesthetics, instrumentations, and rhythmic approaches from track to track, but united through the religious nature of the lyrics.

The purposes of recordings are wide-ranging. In addition to raising the public figure of professional musicians, recordings are used in pedagogical situations (described in Chapter 5), performances, and listening contexts both public and private. In performances, bands like Mazal Tov can easily expand their repertoire using MiniDiscs and other media with selections that they have not yet incorporated into their live performance repertoire. At weddings, choreographed dances by celebrants are often performed to such recordings, and the band can use recordings to keep music going while

they take breaks. The music at public dances, especially those for Bukharian youth, is often completely made up of recordings, played over a sound system by a DJ. CDs are also consumed and listened to by individuals and small groups on home stereo systems and personal devices like iPods.

### *3.1.2. Making Recordings*

A consistent stable of professional Bukharian musicians make up the personnel for most recordings produced in New York City. Many of the same musicians featured on Bukharian recordings made in Queens appear on different productions in various combinations. Playing on each other's recordings, performing each other's songs and poems, and sharing arrangements all foster a sense of community that reaches beyond geographical boundaries. Cliques, connections, and friendships within the community—many of which mirror working relationships already established in Central Asia—are also apparent. These connections can be found in personnel as well as in lyrics. In “Yalalum,” Ilyos Mallaev mentions himself, Muhabbat [Shamaeva], Shoista [Mullojanova], and Ezro [Malakov] by name; all were contemporaries in Tashkent and all have performed together in various configurations. Roshel Rubinov sings about “Avrom, ustoz-i man” (“Avrom [Tolmasov], my teacher”), underscoring the strong friendship of the two musicians. Rubinov and Tolmasov have appeared on many recordings together, and Tolmasov often sings Rubinov's poems.

As the presence of studio effects and the separation of instrumental arrangements from vocals implies, recent recordings being made in Queens are produced in a fashion not unlike that of modern Western popular music recordings, albeit on a much smaller

scale. The finished product is usually an assemblage of elements recorded at various times and under various circumstances. Portions of recordings are frequently created outside of New York; Ezro Malakov sometimes used vocals recorded in Israel and instrumental backing tracks created in Uzbekistan by non-Bukharians. This piecemeal approach applies to all styles and repertoires represented on recent Bukharian recordings. Instrumental backing tracks for new tui-style arrangements are often conceived separately and programmed into a synthesizer or sequencer, but I also witnessed many recording sessions for old-fashioned instrumentations (e.g., tanbūr and doira) where each part was recorded separately. For one session intended for Ezro Malakov's *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns* project, I recorded Roshel Rubinov playing standard repertoire on tanbūr while Ezro sat nearby conducting and mouthing the lyrics that would later be overdubbed. The overdubbing process lends itself well to Bukharian music-making, which thrives on new or modified poetry. When making recordings for the album entitled *Ereş İsroel*, preexisting arrangements and instrumental performances were brought on MiniDiscs to the home studio of Vladimir Davtian in Lefrak City on 19 March 2003, and Ezro Malakov and Roshel Rubinov overdubbed new vocal performances under Ilyos Mallaev's supervision. For one piece in particular ("Vasf-i Turo," sung to "Uššoq-i samarqand"), both Ezro and Roshel recorded a take. Roshel's performance appeared on the CD, with added ğijak and nai lines (played on a synthesizer) and reverb.

Bukharian musicians, producers, and audiences generally enjoy hearing studio manipulations such as reverb, compression, and delay. Synthesizers are often used to emulate familiar instruments but are also used for modest technological effects. This aesthetic is heard on "light" recordings of dance and party music as well as "heavy" ones.

Both Avrom Tolmasov's *Girya* and Roshel Amin's *Sado-i dil bo ovoz-i tanbūr*, highly serious recordings, use vast amounts of reverb and Tolmasov also uses electronic drums. On occasion one hears a dry (*xušk*) sound in which voices and instruments are recorded with little to no modification (as on a few tracks on *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns*), but more often than not “xušk” is used as a negative description, as by Rubinov: “no echo, no [compression], no nothing.” The aim of the reverb and delay, both of which are also used in performances via amplifiers and pedals, is to heighten the presence of the sound; in live situations, the gain on amplifiers is often increased past the point of distortion. Ezro Malakov expressed fondness for my modest recording setup, a Sharp MD-722 MiniDisc with slightly modified Audio Technica AT350 microphones; the small amount of compression and distortion that came with my inexpensive equipment seemed to give the recordings the “fresh” or “clean” (*toza*) sound that Malakov desired. Similarly, Roshel Rubinov prefers the sound of his older hand-held cassette recorder, which greatly compresses the sound, to his newer MiniDisc recorder that reproduces sound much more faithfully.

In the case of many productions that are new and not in a “heavy” maqom style, the composition is tied to the recording itself and the vast amount of information embedded in it. Such qualities as acoustic effects and instrumental timbres become attached to a recording, so much so that in live contexts instrumentalists may aim to reproduce those aspects of the recording as much as possible. Very close replications are possible with sharing synthesizer patches and backing tracks. Singers also may simply perform live over the backing track in a karaoke-like format. Instrumental backing tracks (referred to as “music,” “muzika,” or “mūsīqī,” like instrumental music in other spheres

of Bukharian music-making) might be used, with little to no modification, as the accompaniment for many different poems. The arrangement for Ilya Khavasov's "My Samarqand" provides the accompaniment for him to sing a religious poem of Mallaev's, "Pazmon šudam," on a different recording; Roshel Rubinov does the same with his "Lazgi" and Mallaev's poem "Az qudrat-i Xudovand." Instrumental tracks are also subject to modification, as can be heard on the remixes by DJ Mike that end numerous recent recordings.

Instruments heard on recordings produced in Queens include sato, tanbūr, ġijak, nai, doira, tor, rubob, synthesizer, drum machine and electronic drums, darbukka, daval, guitar, clarinet, and accordion. Some are associated with the feudal courts of Central Asia and the maqom repertoire: the tanbūr, sato, ġijak, nai, and doira.<sup>4</sup> Relatively recent imports for Bukharians, such as the tor and rubob, are also associated with maqom. On the other end of the spectrum, connected with cosmopolitanism and the New York tui, are new technologies such as synthesizers and drum machines, and musical instruments such as clarinet, accordion, and darbukka.

These instruments and their associations can be combined in interesting ways. Synthesizers are typically employed in ensembles performing maqom and standard repertoire, mirroring the melody or providing a very basic harmony (*garmonia*). In other contexts, synthesizers emulate instruments such as the surnai (a double-reed oboe). Drum

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4. Recordings of a religious nature, such as *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns*, also employ instruments for various arrangements, although singing "with music" and using electronic devices are prohibited on the Sabbath and many other Jewish holidays.

machines or electronic drums might be heard performing serious maqom rhythms such as *zarb-i qadim* or *zarb-i talqin*. Combining elements associated with the old and the new captures the Bukharian diasporic situation in New York, in which Bukharians are trying to remain firmly grounded in their past and history while they adapt to new pressures and demands.

On some recordings, Bukharians perform maqom without such instrumental combinations. This is a notable difference between the recordings produced within and for the Bukharian community and those intended for a wider audience. On *At the Bazaar of Love*, for instance, the instrumentation is entirely “old,” with only tanbūr, violin (played upright in the style of the *ğijak*), and doira. Not only are the keyboard, accordion, and clarinet eschewed but also the tor and rubob. Furthermore, these instruments are recorded dryly, free of distortion or supplementary effects. As with many other “folk music” recordings, the sound is “pure” and close-miked, giving the impression that the music was recorded direct and tinkered with as little as possible. The studio becomes invisible, and the listener may forget about overdubs, mixing, microphone placement, punch-ins, and other choices that are made behind the scenes. In contrast, the generous amounts of delay and reverb employed on most Bukharian-produced recordings bring studio techniques to the foreground, and the listener is invited to appreciate the technology that was employed to create the finished product.

In the Soviet era, recordings featured large orchestras of Central Asian instruments, modeled after Western orchestras. Bukharians in New York seem to have entirely eschewed this instrumentation, although many Bukharians have told me that they enjoy the style and continue to listen to recordings of these ensembles being produced in

Central Asia. Ezro Malakov, Shoista Mullojanova, and other Bukharians performed with these orchestras before emigrating to the United States, but when recordings in this style appear on newly released CDs, such as on Mullojanova's *I'm Singing for You* (2004), the format immediately indicates that the recordings were made decades before. The dearth of recordings with large instrumental ensembles of this sort may be not an entirely aesthetic choice. I was surprised when Malakov expressed to me an almost nostalgic fondness for the Radio Uzbekistan ensemble and what Malakov called the "natural" abilities of the musicians that constituted it:

ER: Is there a difference between recording in Uzbekistan and recording in America?

EM: A big difference. Because in Uzbekistan we had practice every day. . . . every day there with completely great musicians (*har rūz unjo bo musikači-ho-i butun buzurg*). We sang songs with eight, ten, twenty musicians. [The ensemble] had three ġijak-s, dutor, čang, °ud, qonun, . . . rubob, we sang with this large ensemble. Here, the kind of ensembles here, the groups are not smaller, [we have] the same modern ones when we sing in America . . . nai, qanun, ġijak, it's very good, but their playing is not like that of great players in Uzbekistan. Many things that I sang in Uzbekistan, all the players of Uzbekistan, Radio Uzbekistan played songs for me. They played [the instrumental melodies], I sang: poetry mixed with melodies, new songs, maqom songs, all the great players—there's a difference between the playing of the musicians in Uzbekistan and in

America. Of course there's a difference.

ER: —players of Uzbekistan—

EM: Are natural (*naturalni*). Natural. **Natural.**

ER: It's better?

EM: Of course it's better. They play naturally.<sup>5</sup>

In a way that is similar to that in which Bukharians combine old and new instruments and draw attention to the use of technology via studio techniques, CD images can demonstrate a combination of old and new, adaptability, and thriving in new situations. Often this is achieved through juxtaposition: Ilya Khavasov flanked by a backdrop of the Registan in Samarqand in one picture and superimposed over the Twin Towers in another. In Figure 3.1, an image from Roshel Rubinov's *Tamanno* (2002), Rubinov looks thoroughly modern and cosmopolitan holding his *soz*, and there is no pretense of authenticity, as his image is superimposed over a dramatic nightscape of the Manhattan skyline. Figure 3.2, the cover to *At the Bazaar of Love* (1997), indulges in juxtaposition of a different sort, as Mallaev, clothed in *joma* and *zardūzī* and holding his *tanbūr*, looks out from his balcony over the roofs of a Rego Park street. Just as the sound aesthetic of Bukharian recordings for Smithsonian Folkways and Shanachie downplays technology, so does the packaging. The image of Mallaev is a *verité* photograph; the camera disappears and we think we are looking at an undoctored snapshot. To this viewer

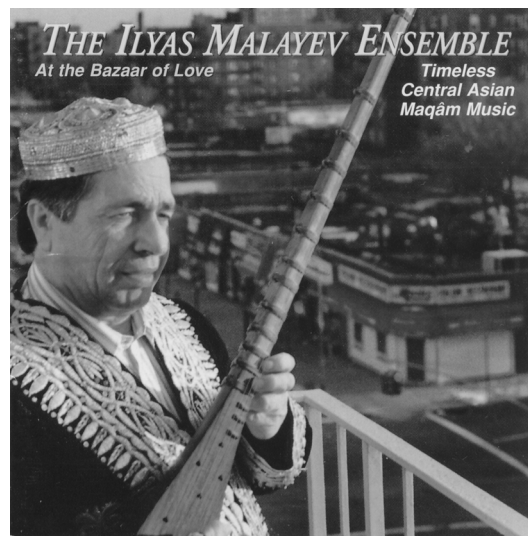
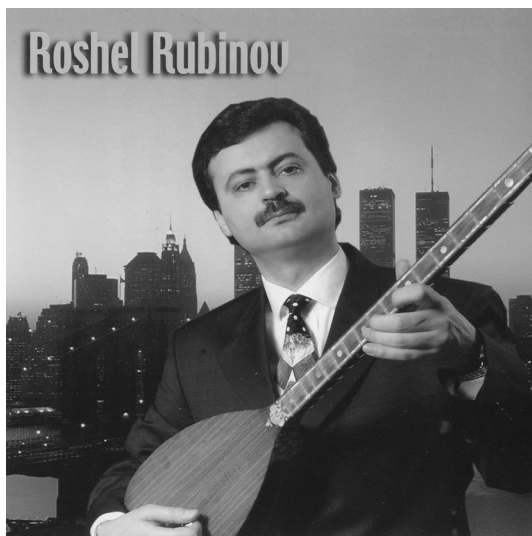
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5. On a few occasions I heard Bukharians express the sentiment that they were superior singers than Uzbeks and Tajiks (Muslims), but that Uzbeks and Tajiks were better instrumentalists. One told me that this notion was commonly accepted in Central Asia among both Jews and Muslims.

at least, the effect is different from the superimposed images on Khavasov's, Tolmasov's, and Rubinov's albums. Whereas Rubinov's picture, framed by the Twin Towers and Brooklyn Bridge, exudes confidence, Mallaev's picture in the decidedly undramatic setting of a modest Rego Park commercial strip evokes a fish out of water, a transplant. The back cover, in which Mallaev is dressed in black shirt, red jacket, and red bow tie amid the rest of the ensemble in joma-s, is more akin to the aesthetic found on Bukharian-produced CDs.

Figure 3.1. From Roshel Rubinov, *Tamanno* (left).

Figure 3.2. From Ilyas Malayev Ensemble, *At the Bazaar of Love* (right).



Packaging is the most explicit form of marketing, and CDs are marketed to specific audiences. Bukharian-produced recordings, with their smart combination of clothing styles and diasporic backdrops, are ideal for sale within the community. Conversely, non-Bukharian-produced recordings are packaged to appeal to non-Bukharian consumers, who might be interested in the culture of Central Asia as

something ancient, isolated, and wildly exotic.<sup>6</sup> This audience would seem to include other Jews in the United States. In one article, which circulated in a number of mainstream U.S. publications, Bukharian Jews were characterized as a “lost tribe,” and a picture of Ensemble Maqam had the caption, “A Bukharian folk ensemble (yes, there is such a thing) performs in New York” (Wishna 2003).

Professional Bukharian musicians currently have many options for recording their repertoire, these options being connected to the varied needs and desires of their audiences and patrons. The Bukharian musician must also think about making money and his or her own career. As Rubinov explained, Bukharians themselves want “something new”—reflections of their cosmopolitan, urban, American identities. Recordings made and sold in the community can also generate name recognition, gigs, and a steady income. Recordings made for larger record labels like Shanachie and Smithsonian Folkways have a broader reach and are also often connected to high profile performances at Carnegie Hall or the Smithsonian Folklife Festival. In turn, recording and performing in predominately non-Bukharian contexts raises the status of Bukharian musicians in their local community, which can lead to more work and income.

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6. An anecdote: at a recent gathering, I met a man (about twenty-five years old) who told me he had recently been to Uzbekistan. I asked him why he went, perhaps to tour the sights of Bukhara and Samarqand. He bristled at the thought that he was a “tourist.” “I was looking for adventure,” he said, and then told me tales of the exotic customs he had encountered (although he could not communicate in any shared tongue), such as sexually-segregated social situations.

### 3.2. Printed Matter: Musical Notations and Poetry

Both practitioners and scholars of Central Asian music have been interested in notating music at least since the nineteenth century, when there were efforts made to notate the Khorezmian maqoms with tanbūr tablature (Matyakubov 1990). The only serious past attempt at making a collection of notations of Bukharian Jewish religious music was done by Idelsohn among Bukharians living in Palestine, the results of which were published in the third volume of his *Hebräisch-Orientalischer Melodienschatz* (Idelsohn 1922).<sup>7</sup> The Šašmaqom repertoire in particular was notated and published throughout the twentieth century, with important religious, political, and linguistic ramifications. Numerous informants for these publications were Bukharian Jewish masters of the repertoire, such as Barukh Zirkiev (Blum 2001a:365), Ata Jalol (a *čola*, or forced convert from Judaism to Islam), and Mikhoel Tolmasov. The many editions of the Šašmaqom were used as Denkmäler to promote an exclusively Uzbek or Tajik cultural nationalism to the suppression of the other (Levin 1984, 1996; Djumaev 1993; During 1993). One of these publications contained only Uzbek/Turkic texts (Rajabi 1959), one Tajik/Persian texts (Belyayev 1950, 1954, 1957, 1959, 1967),<sup>8</sup> and one no texts at all, according to the missions and policies being enforced at the time: although Uspenski notated Persian texts as sung by the musician Ata Jalol, the scholar Abdurauf Fitrat, in

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7. Some scholars, including Johanna Spector, have made recordings of Bukharian religious melodies, many of which are currently housed at the National Sound Archives at Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

8. Both editions also include Russian translations of the texts.

line with his interest in Kemalism, forbade Uspenski to include them in his publication of 1924 (Djumaev 1993).

The relationship between musical notations as scholarly endeavors undertaken to preserve a repertoire and the uses of these notations in practice is complicated. Yunus Rajabi, a dutor player who was interested in collecting the Šašmaqom, synthesized his lessons with many teachers into a redacted version (Rajabi 1959) that became the basis for a later version edited by Faizulla Karomatov. The redaction is straightforward enough to be used as a prescriptive notation, and indeed it was the primary teaching tool at the Tashkent Conservatory (Levin 1984:34-37, 1996).

Scholarly and preservational undertakings often combine recordings and notations. Rajabi's conservatory ensemble recorded a 20-LP set of the Šašmaqom for Melodiya, the USSR record label; this set was used in pedagogy along with notations. Presently, by far the most important preservational endeavor of the Bukharian repertoire is the aforementioned *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns*, a joint notation and recording project undertaken by Ezro Malakov and Ari Babakhanov. In addition to the recordings described above, during my fieldwork in Queens Ezro was busy putting together the book of notations with Ari Babakhanov in Germany and a team of assistants in Uzbekistan. I myself recorded several tracks for the CDs and helped prepare notations, as Malakov does not read Western notation. The entire project presents a diverse cross-section of Bukharian religious musical activity as it is currently practiced in Queens, although only as performed by the most outstanding singers and musicians. Ezro Malakov and his brother, the ḥazzan Menaḥem Malakov, are the main resources for the

collection, drawing on the melodies that they learned from their mother, Yeshua Borukhova, which were those of her grandfather, Mullo Abo Daroz.

Malakov's models include the Šašmaqom publications, Idelsohn's *Hebräisch-Orientalischer Melodienschatz*, and Jewish music books such as *The Ultimate Jewish Piano Book* (Pasternak 1999) and Piri Eliyahu's *The Music of the Mountain Jews* (Eliyahu 1999). Malakov's publication only features Jewish repertoire, but he makes explicit links to the Šašmaqom by indicating the names of borrowed melodies where pertinent. *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns* has many audiences, including scholars, music students, and especially, other Jews, as the music of the Bukharians, despite its rich history, has been neglected in Jewish music studies, both scholarly and amateur. *The Ultimate Jewish Piano Book*, although it includes 118 arrangements from many Jewish traditions (and the editorial involvement of a Bukharian), has not even one representative Bukharian melody.

Malakov and others in the Bukharian community, such as the musicologist Rafael Nektalov, hope that *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns* will help prevent Bukharian religious musical practice from becoming completely transformed in New York City, as songs sung in worship or at religious celebrations increasingly begin to resemble the melodies used in Sephardic or Ashkenazic synagogues of the city. Nektalov once told me that Malakov's project was a chance to "clean our memories." Roshel Rubinov also explained that Malakov was reintroducing pre-Soviet Bukharian melodies to the general Bukharian worshipper through his recordings and work as a ḥazzan, implying a hiatus during the Soviet era. Malakov and other prominent Bukharian ḥazzans have been successful in bringing these tunes back into everyday practice, to the extent

that younger Bukharians, such as the budding prayer leader Yosef Munarov, simply described liturgical melodies based on maqom as “what we do,” without any reference to a break in tradition. *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns*, like the canonical Šašmaqom editions, is aimed at preservation, linked to performance practice, and intended to be a monument to cultural achievement.

Other musical notations of Bukharian repertoire circulate through and appear in scholarship beyond the canonical publications produced in the Soviet Union, either as reprints of other editions (as in the substantial excerpts of the Karamatov edition reproduced in Levin 1984; see also Jung 1989), or transcriptions (Levin 1984; Seroussi et al. 2001; Slobin 1982a; Toda 2001; Yusupov 2000). I have not encountered any Bukharians using these transcriptions or notations for performance or pedagogical purposes, although this has happened in similar contexts (e.g., Slobin 1982b has been used by klezmer musicians, and Kay Shelemay [1998] and Mark Kligman [1997] have both commented on the use of their work by Syrian Jews in Brooklyn).

Collections of poetry, such as *dīvon*-s of one poet’s works, are an extremely important element in musical creativity. Besides being crucial sources for lyrics, the books themselves mark a significant achievement. Like the Šašmaqom editions, publications of poetry allow authors a chance to praise and pay tribute to teachers and loved ones, and to be praised by them in turn. Roshel Rubinov’s *Ilhom-i dil* (2002), for example, has pictures of him with Ilyos Mallaev, Muhabbat Shamaeva, his family, Avrom Tolmasov, Neryo Aminov, Barno Işhoqova, and Mazal Tov. Mallaev’s *dīvon* (Mallaev 1999) has poems written in tribute to Avrom Tolmasov, Neryo Aminov, his father and mother, and others. Siddurim and books for religious use are also spaces for

tribute and acknowledgement, as they are frequently dedicated to deceased individuals. Dīvon-s might also demonstrate a poet's diverse skills. Mallaev's dīvon contains poems in Persian and Turkic languages, and in a wide variety of forms and meters.

As detailed in Chapters 4 and 5, written notations of poems convey a vast amount of musical information to those trained in Bukharian musical practices. Poems, especially those in Persian and Turkic languages, are used in pedagogy and public performance, serving as mnemonic devices and even as a form of music notation. Collections of Hebrew language texts are also crucial to Jewish performance and recording contexts, ranging from *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns* to the synagogue.

### **3.3. Conclusion**

Recordings and notations are essential elements of Bukharian musical repertoire. In Queens, Bukharians are exploring new ways in which media can transmit repertoire, increasingly using compact discs, mp3s, MiniDiscs, and other formats to exchange ideas and compositions. Recordings and notations are used to teach, learn, and improve one's skills, and they are an integral part of actual music and dance events. Performers use media to demonstrate their skills in various languages and styles, promote new compositions, and raise their profile.

The immigrant situation of Bukharians in New York is reflected in media in various ways. The very existence of a high level of activity in the realm of recordings and book publication is related to the open attitude towards media in the United States as well as the central role that media plays in the lives of New Yorkers. Websites like [www.bjew.com](http://www.bjew.com), with music download sections and forums on music and movies, have

heavy traffic, and most Bukharians with whom I interacted used current technology, trading burned CDs and listening to iPods. The repertoire represented in media also reflects life in the United States and the global Bukharian diaspora. Performers like Albert Narkolaev, Nargis, and Muhabbat Shamaeva fill compact discs with diverse languages and styles, and at the same time, Bukharians such as Ilyos Mallaev have been active in recording standard repertoire. Religious freedom has aided the production of Jewish repertoire publications, such as *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns*. These recordings and notations are often produced and distributed internationally, linking Bukharians in New York with those in Israel, Europe, and the rest of the United States.

## CHAPTER 4. ISSUES OF COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE

Bukharian composition is a process of combining components of progressively more elaborate structure. These compositional components are often grouped into distinct categories of rhythm, text, and melody. Contrasting drum strokes and pauses produce rhythmic patterns. Poetic texts are composed by combining phonemes into syllables, then syllables into words, words into lines, and lines into poems. Tones, intervals, tetrachords, and modes or scales yield melodies. The products of compositional processes, “compositions,” constitute repertoires that Bukharians learn, internalize, and put to different uses. Short compositions might be further combined into compound compositions, albums, and programs.

Composers and musicians must be prepared to engage compositional issues at every level of structure. A poet will adjust words to fit poetic meters and genres that operate as compositional frameworks. Singers coordinate poems to a background structure provided by rhythmic patterns played on the doira. Composers writing new melodies can use preexisting melodies as models or starting points. Compositional activities such as setting words to music require the ability to simultaneously coordinate text, rhythm, and melody on small and large scales.

Teachers and students often explicitly categorize music into rhythm, text, and melody. This division is reflected in the core instruments of a Bukharian ensemble: one instrument to perform the melody (such as the tanbūr), one to perform the rhythmic cycle (commonly the doira), and a singer to sing the texts (either a third person or the individual who plays the melody instrument). Roshel Amin encouraged me to learn

compositions in a specific order based on these categories: first *ohang* (melody), then *zarb* (rhythm), and finally, *še<sup>c</sup>r* (poem, pl. *aš<sup>c</sup>or*). Amin’s order was specific to my learning the tanbūr; if I were a vocal student, the *še<sup>c</sup>r* would be of prime importance. But although poetry, melody, and rhythm are thought of as separate concepts, in practice the three elements overlap to such an extent that they can be understood as forming a total framework of habits. Experienced performers and listeners understand that each element contains aspects of the others. Thus, when a musician performs an *ohang* on a solo instrument (even without implying a regular pulse), he or she is also explicitly and implicitly working with poetic meters and rhythmic cycles.

This chapter uses as a structural model the compositional principle of combining components of increasing complexity. The first section, “Building Blocks,” discusses the categories of rhythm, text, and melody separately. “The Rhythmic Cycle (*zarb*)” begins the section because rhythmic cycles provide the framework within which texts and melodies are coordinated. “Meter (*vazn*) in Poetry” explains how syllables of contrasting duration are combined into poetic feet and then how poetic feet are combined into poetic meters, which are used as rhythmic guides in performance. The section on rhythm and text concludes with a discussion of some of the ways in which composers and performers coordinate rhythmic cycles and poetic meters. “Melody and Mode” explores approaches to pitch, including the use of preexisting melodies as models and the sequencing of melodic formulae in the course of performance.

The second section investigates the coordination of rhythm, text, and melody in complete compositions. One type of compositional form, the *šu<sup>c</sup>ba*, is taken as representative, although there are many more options for Bukharian composers and

performers. A take-by-take analysis of a rehearsal in which one ensemble coordinates a poem (Mallaev's "Id-i Purim") and a melody from the Šašmaqom ("Qašqarča-i rok") demonstrates how performers engage compositions and compositional components at this level of structure.

The final section, "Compound Forms," describes how compositions are further combined into larger compound compositions, including suites, albums, and concert programs. I argue that the Jewish religious service is a large compound composition that can be interpreted according to the same principles as other compositions performed by Bukharians. The structure and order of the Jewish service is explained, followed by examples of the ways in which worshippers in one particular Bukharian synagogue elaborate this structure.

#### **4.1. Building Blocks: Rhythm, Text, and Melody**

##### *4.1.1. The Historical Context*

Categories of text, melody, and rhythm are part of a far-reaching tradition of music theory that includes writings in Greek, Arabic, Persian, Hebrew, and Indian and European languages. Greek theory was particularly important to theorists writing in Arabic in the Middle Ages (Farmer [1929-30] 1997:411-19). Theorists connected to Central Asia, such as al-Fārābī ("from Fārāb" in Transoxania), play major roles in this history. In these writings, discussions of the building blocks of music with separations into text, melody, and rhythm are legion. Plato writes, for example, ". . . song is put together out of three things, words, *harmonia* [organization of pitches], and rhythm"

(Barker 1984:130). The Nāṭya-Śāstra contains “statements about . . . combining notes (*svara*), time-cycles (*tāla*) and words (*pada*)” (Blum 2001b:190).

Those working in this tradition of music theory also generally thought of composition as a matter of coordinating sets of progressively more complex components. For Plato, *harmonia* was “fitting together,” “adapting,” or “adjusting” one thing to another (Barker 1984:163-64), and “Aristoxenus devised a set of terms with which to analyse speech (*lexis*), melody (*melos*) and bodily movement (*kinesis*), progressing in each case from points (letters, notes, cues) to conjunctures (syllables, intervals, figures) and groups (words, systems)” (Blum 2001b:190). “[Greek] Melic composition (*melopoiia*) together with rhythmic composition (*rhythmopoiia*) was the process of selecting and applying the various components of *melos* and rhythm to create a complete composition” (Mathiesen 2001:329). Bukharian composers and performers continue to engage these categories and concepts.

#### 4.1.2. *The Rhythmic Cycle (zarb)*

Rhythmic cycles, called *zarb*-s or *usul*-s,<sup>1</sup> provide frameworks to which texts and melodies are coordinated. Rhythmic cycles are intimately related to the frame drum *doira* (a word that itself means “cycle” or “circle”), as each cycle is a specific combination of two contrasting strokes: the low center stroke “bum” and the high rim stroke “bak.” Rhythmic cycles are still typically performed on the frame drum, although today they can


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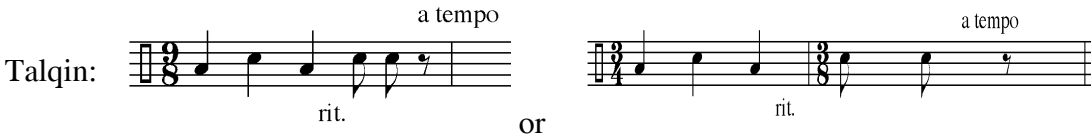
1. “Zarb,” from the Arabic root *ḍrb* (appearing in words related to stroking, beating, or hitting), is the name of a goblet drum in contemporary Iranian Persian (and “rhythmic accompaniment” in general). “Usul” is from the Arabic word for “principles,” “roots,” “causes” (al Faruqi 1981: 21; Farmer [1943] 1997:596; Tsuge 1974:4).


also be programmed into drum machines or played on synthesizers. As cycles, zarb-s are subject to rotations, meaning that they can be started in different places. Safi al-Din (d. 1294) visually explained this principle with circular representations of rhythmic patterns (Safi al-Din 2001:72-83). Abduvali Abdurashidov, an accomplished Tajik musician and music instructor, continues to teach zarb-s in terms of cyclical rotations (Abdurashidov 2002).

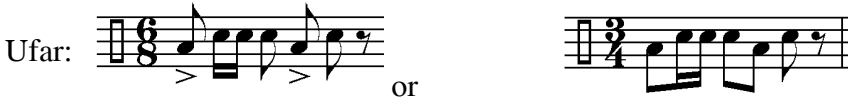
In the Šašmaqom repertoire, there are many recurring zarb-s with proper names. They serve as musical genres and are the primary means of distinguishing šu<sup>c</sup>ba-s (“branches,” or complete melodic compositions). Figure 4.1 shows some of the most common zarb-s: saraxbor, talqin, nasr, ufar, and muğulča. Every zarb has distinct associations and functions. For example, saraxbor is stately, formal, and considered to be very old (it is also called *zarb-i qadim*, or “old rhythm”). In contrast, ufar is a brisk, energetic 6/8 suitable for dance.


Figure 4.1. Five zarb-s

Saraxbor: 

Talqin: 

Nasr: 

Ufar: 

Muğulča: 

Musicians use “bum” for a low stroke and “bak” for a high stroke (or similar syllables, like “dum” and “tek”) as mnemonics to understand and remember rhythmic patterns.<sup>2</sup> The zarb called *ufar*, for example, can be recited as “bum-ba-ko-bak” to match the strokes “low-high-low-high” (as in Abdurashidov 2002:12) or as “bum-bum-bak-bum-bak” (as presented by Fitrat, without staff notation). Figure 4.2 demonstrates the rhythm of the doira strokes and the corresponding mnemonics.

Figure 4.2. Mnemonics for zarb-i ufar.

Abdurashidov: bum - ba - ko - bak  
Fitrat: bum bum bak bum bak

Silences are incorporated by saying “ist” (“stop”) or simply pausing. These mnemonics must be articulated orally to be rhythimized and correctly internalized, and mnemonic patterns can be used instead of proper names for identification (“bum-bak” instead of “saraxbor”).

In performance, the doira player may stick closely to the most basic pattern of the zarb, or that core pattern may be used as a background for elaboration. The function of the zarb is primarily to maintain a background framework to which melodies and poems are coordinated, so it is perfectly acceptable—and sometimes obligatory—for a zarb to be played without any variations or stylistic interpretations. The extent to which a *doirači*

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2. For examples of mnemonic representations of zarb-s from the Šašmaqom repertoire, see Matyakubov (1992:405-06) and Asʻadi (2000:20-22), both of which have copies of the zarb-s as represented in Fitrat (1927).

(doira player) chooses to vary the pattern is usually linked to the kind of zarb being played. As a rule, saraxbor is played straight, while ufar is heavily ornamented and serves as a vehicle for the doirači to showcase his or her technique.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes in ufar, all other instruments will drop out. Sections that feature the doira also commonly spotlight a dancer or group of dancers.

One rhythmic cycle that might be performed with mild ornamentation is zarb-i muğulča. For example, the doira player Matat Baraev usually plays muğulča with just two extra notes. Figure 4.3 compares Baraev’s pattern (from a performance of “Muğulča-i dugoh” during a recording session on 16 January 2003) with the simplest form of the zarb:

Figure 4.3. Matat Baraev version of zarb-i muğulča.

Baraev performance

Basic pattern

bak bak bak bak-a-bak-a bak bum

Once the slightly more ornate version was established, Baraev played the pattern without any variation.

When there is no doira present, the zarb can still be maintained explicitly by other instruments or implicitly in the minds of the performers. When singing alone, Ezro Malakov often conducts or conveys zarb rhythms with hand gestures, especially in gaps

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3. Bukharian women do play the doira, especially as sozanda-s, but doirači-s are men in performances of Šašmaqom repertoire.

following lines of poems. Tanbūrists often play important strokes of the zarb on the non-melody strings, as demonstrated in this example from a solo performance by Roshel Rubinov of “Nasr-i bayot”:

Figure 4.4. Roshel Rubinov, "Nasr-i Bayot."

In new compositions, some zarb-s are employed more frequently than others. The 6/8 ufar<sup>4</sup> is extremely common, especially with wedding-band and “pop” songs. Dancers are familiar with the rhythmic pattern and its associations with dance, and they often make gestures with their wrists, hands, arms, and/or feet on beats one and four of the 6/8. Composers exploit the 6/8 cycle by emphasizing different groupings of threes and twos in the accents and strokes of the zarb itself, as well as in the layered instruments and vocals.<sup>5</sup> The basic ufar rhythm has options for hearing twos and threes embedded in it.

The rhythm can be heard as both

4. For musicians, ufar in a general sense is synonymous with 6/8. When describing “zarb-i ufar,” Roshel Rubinov also used the Russian term for 6/8 (*šest vosmyx*).

5. The beaming in the following examples represents the different groupings.

Figure 4.5 shows a recent song of Roshel Rubinov's, "Arūs-i zībo" ("Beautiful Bride"), which is a good example of a composition in which 3/4 and 6/8 feels can be heard simultaneously. In the verse, two lines of which are shown in the transcription, the vocals emphasize groupings of two in a 3/4 feel, while dancers move on the first and fourth eighth note of every group of six, marking a fast 6/8. In the chorus, the vocals fall squarely in a 6/8 meter, but Rubinov's unusual choice to sing the words "arūs-i" and "domod-i" across barlines keeps the rhythm exciting and avoids a heavy-handed emphasis on groupings of three.

Figure 4.5. Roshel Rubinov, "Arūs-i zībo."

The figure displays a musical score for the song "Arūs-i zībo" by Roshel Rubinov. It consists of four systems, each with a voice part and a percussion part. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 6/8.

**System 1:**  
 Voice: from verse: ba šab-i bazm - i ta-rab 'a-rūs u do - mod o - yad  
 Percussion: A steady 6/8 rhythm consisting of eighth notes.

**System 2:**  
 Voice: bo gul - u sun - bul - i tar ham-ma peš-voz bar o - yad  
 Percussion: A steady 6/8 rhythm consisting of eighth notes.

**System 3:**  
 Voice: chorus: bi - o 'a - rū - si zī - bo bi - o 'a - rū - si zī - bo  
 Percussion: A steady 6/8 rhythm consisting of eighth notes, with accents (>) under the first and fourth notes of each measure.

**System 4:**  
 Voice: bi - o do-mo - di bar - no bi - o do-mo - di bar - no  
 Percussion: A steady 6/8 rhythm consisting of eighth notes, with accents (>) under the first and fourth notes of each measure.

Such rhythmic techniques are often heard in fast maqom songs, such as those performed at the end of *sozanda* and *Šašmaqom* suites. Figure 4.6 shows two examples for comparative purposes. The first example is from a recording of an abridged *sozanda* suite on *Bukhara: Musical Crossroads of Asia* (1991); the line given is a repeated ensemble response to the calls of Tohfaxon Pinkhasova. The second example is a similar responsorial line from a recording of the light standard “Mahvaš-i nozuk” on Ensemble Maqam’s *Bukharian Jewish Folk Music* (1998).

Figure 4.6. (a) Tohfaxon Pinkhasova and *sozanda* ensemble, “Soq-soq-i jon”



Figure 4.6. (b) Ensemble Maqam, “Mahvaš-i nozuk”



#### 4.1.3. Meter (*vazn*) in Poetry: <sup>°</sup>*Arūz*

For Bukharians, poetry is an essential part of music-making, and poets have frequently also been musicians. In a Bukharian context, the term “poetry” (*šē<sup>c</sup>r*) implies a poetic meter (*vazn*) based on a quantitative system called <sup>°</sup>*arūz*, rhyme (*qofiya* and *radif*), and a generic form (*šakl*). Rubinov sums up this relationship between instrumental music (*mūsīqī*), poetry (*šē<sup>c</sup>r*), <sup>°</sup>*arūz*, and the artist: “poetry and music are attached to each other, and knowledge of <sup>°</sup>*arūz* meter is essential for every musician and composer” (Rubinov

2002:7).<sup>6</sup> Avrom Tolmasov made a similar point, explaining that he uses poetic rhythm as a guide when composing melodies.

The *‘arūz* system was originally developed by Arabic poets, and adapted and employed by poets writing in Hebrew, Persian, and Turkic languages. Persian poets were especially active with the principles of *‘arūz*, transforming the Arabic meters and adding their own. In the current New York scene, the most notable poets working in Persian with *‘arūz* meters are Ilyos Mallaev, Mikhoel Zavul, and Roshel Rubinov. Although they are few in number, the output of these poets has had, and continues to have, a major impact on the activities of Bukharian musicians not only in New York but also throughout the diaspora.

*‘Arūz* poetry is quantitative (or “durational”), meaning that *‘arūz* meters are created by combining poetic feet composed of syllables of contrasting lengths, “short” and “long,” which can also be combined to make an “extra-long” syllable. Syllable length is related to the timbre of the vowel; in the following transliterations from Tajik Persian, *a* and *e* are short, *o* is long, and *i* and *u* are variable and depend on the context.<sup>7</sup> Short syllables have short vowels (“ba”). Long syllables can 1) have a long vowel (“bo”), 2) have short vowels but end in a consonant (“bad”), or 3) have long vowels and end in a consonant (“bod”).<sup>8</sup> Syllables with both a long vowel and a final consonant can also be

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6. “... še<sup>c</sup>r-u mūsīqī bo hamdigar paivast hast, donistan-i vazn-i *‘arūz* baroi har yak mutrib-u saroyanda šart va zarūr ast.”

7. See the Note on Transliteration and Translation for a more detailed discussion of the system used in this dissertation.

8. One exception to this rule is a long vowel followed by the letter *n* and another consonant, in which case the syllable can be considered short. For example: *xan-don-lab*

considered “extra-long,” containing both a long and a short value ( – ۛ ). Regional particularities or the demands of a meter may affect the interpretation of words and syllable duration. For example, a long or extra-long syllable (“būd”) might be treated instead as two syllables, short followed by long (“buvad”). Bukharian singers and musicians pay close attention to short and long durations of syllables when setting poetry to music: the norm is for short syllables to be given short musical durations, and long syllables longer durations. Another pertinent consideration is that long syllables are generally placed on strong beats, and short syllables on weak beats. All of these factors must be taken into account when scanning Persian quantitative poetry.

A choice of syllable duration is available to poets in certain cases, so the quantitative meters are less strict than they may initially appear: in addition to the “extra-long” possibility, *i* (in the connective *ezafe*) and *u* (in the conjunction “and” and in monosyllabic words ending with the letter *u*) can be either short or long, and consonants can be assimilated to adjacent vowels (e.g., “dar īn” can be scanned as long-long or the “r” can be assimilated to the following vowel, yielding the short-long “da-rīn”). It is important to underscore that prosodic rules are very important in some genres and less important in others.

Short and long syllables are grouped into feet, each foot generally consisting of three or four syllables. According to Roshel Rubinov, poetic feet (*bahr-s*) are arranged into meters (*vazn-s*), which are used as schemas for lines of poetry.<sup>9</sup> Poetic feet might be

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can be scanned as ۛ ۛ – (Boylan et al. 1988:63).

9. Mallaev and Rubinov sometimes also use *bahr* and *vazn* interchangeably.

varied by being rotated, shortened (apocopated), or lengthened. Other alterations are also possible, such as the substitution of one long syllable for two short syllables. To take one example, the hazaj foot (short-long-long-long, or ʊ – – –) can be turned into many different meters. The most straightforward meter based on hazaj is the sixteen-syllable ʊ – – – | ʊ – – – | ʊ – – – | ʊ – – – (hazaj musamman solim). A common variant is the fifteen-syllable ʊ – – – | ʊ – – – | ʊ – – – | ʊ – – , in which the last foot is apocopated to three syllables. Elwell-Sutton (1976:98) lists the fourteen syllable – – ʊ | ʊ – – – | – – ʊ | ʊ – – – as a form of hazaj (hazaj muṭamman axrab makfūf maḥdūf), in which case the first and third feet would be both apocopated and rotated.

Although a wealth of poetic meters is available to poets, certain patterns occur much more frequently than others. Elwell-Sutton writes, “[t]here are five main patterns in Persian verse, accounting for 85% of all known metres, and all but 0.1% of the metres actually used by poets” (1976:86). For Bukharian poets writing today, hazaj and ramal are very popular feet, especially in fifteen-syllable forms (four repetitions, with the last foot apocopated to three syllables). Also common are fourteen-syllable meters of equal seven-syllable divisions, including one particular form of “muzore<sup>c</sup>” (– – ʊ | – ʊ – – | – – ʊ | – ʊ – –) and the aforementioned form of hazaj (– – ʊ | ʊ – – – | – – ʊ | ʊ – – –).

Rubinov and Mallaev name meters in three ways. Rubinov sometimes employs full prosodic names of meters, such as “ramal-i musamman-i solim” (– ʊ – – | – ʊ – – | – ʊ – – | – ʊ – –) or “muqtazab-i musamman-i matvī” (– ʊ – ʊ | – ʊ ʊ – | – ʊ – ʊ | – ʊ ʊ –) (Rubinov 2002:9; see also Elwell-Sutton 1976:109). One word rather than a full name can refer to a specific meter: in my experience with Bukharian poets, for example,

“muzore<sup>c</sup>” always refers to the  $--\cup|-\cup--|--\cup|-\cup--$  form.<sup>10</sup> Finally, Bukharian poets sometimes eschew prosodic names altogether and name meters with mnemonics. For example, in describing  $--\cup|\cup---|--\cup|\cup---$ , Rubinov used mnemonics (maf<sup>c</sup>ūlu mafoīlun maf<sup>c</sup>ūlu mafoīlun) rather than any prosodic name.

In Hebrew <sup>c</sup>arūz poetry, the distinction between “short” syllables (“pegs”) and “long” syllables (“cords”) centers on the treatment of the vowel šəva (notated in this dissertation as ə).<sup>11</sup> In one version of the system, mobile šəva-s and vowels shortened with the šəva (ḥataf vowels) are short, and all others (except the conjunction “u”) are long (Hrushovski 1981:63). Perhaps because Hebrew words or constructions can easily begin with the mobile šəva, the hazaj foot became one of the most popular quantitative feet for Hebrew poets. Some of the most popular religious poems (*piyyutim*), such as “Ləxāh dōdī,” “Dərōr yiqrā,” and “Yəhālel nīv,” are in sixteen-syllable, unaltered

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10. Tsuge (1974:178-79) and Slobin (1971:101), on the other hand, describe the meter “mozāre<sup>c</sup>” as  $--\cup-\cup-\cup\cup--\cup-\cup-$  (although they disagree on how syllables should be grouped into feet). Rubinov’s and Mallaev’s muzore<sup>c</sup> differs in two ways: in the version, position seven has one long syllable instead of two short syllables, and in the meter described by Tsuge and Slobin, the last foot is apocopated.

11. The proper use of the šəva was hotly debated by Hebrew prosodists as soon as Donash ben Labrat first applied quantitative principles to the Hebrew language in the tenth century (Tietze and Yahalom 1995:33). To Joseph Jedidiah Karmi of Modena (ca. late sixteenth–early seventeenth century), the mobile form of the šəva was a vowel “in league with the forces of evil” (1995:32).

hazaj.<sup>12</sup> Notice the use of the initial mobile šəva (boldfaced) for every short syllable, with the exception of “liq” in “Ləxāh dodī”:

˘ — — — ˘ — — — ˘ — — — ˘ — — —  
 Lə-xāh dō- dī liq-rat ka- lāh pə-nē ša- bāt nə-qa-bəl-āh  
 Də-rōr yiq-rā lə- vēn ʿim bat və-yin-šār-xem kə-mō vā- vat  
 Yə-ha- lēl nīv sə- fā- tē- nū lə-sām ḥay-yim bə-a- pē- nū

Bukharians often interpret and perform Hebrew texts according to principles of quantitative poetry even if the texts do not conform to a quantitative meter. When performing liturgical texts, Bukharians often accent mobile šəva-s at the beginning of words and then continue in a hazaj or hazaj-like pattern. One good example is this brief section of the liturgical *Qaddiš*.<sup>13</sup>

(˘ — — — ˘ — — — ˘ — — — ˘ — — —)  
 və-yiš-ta-baḥ və-yit-pā-ʿar və-yit-rō-mam və-yit-na-sē  
 və-yit-ha-dar və-yit-ʿa-leh və-yit-ha-lal

Although the *Qaddiš* does not scan in any meter, this short passage contains a powerful hazaj quality. Bukharian congregations recognize this pattern and sing

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12. Some of these hazaj poems, such as “Dərōr yiqrā” and “Yəhālel nīv,” are popular in Sephardic and Mizraḥi communities but not commonly sung by Ashkenazim. It could be that Ashkenazim, who have less experience with recognizing and interpreting texts based on quantitative meters, not only have little desire to sing songs based on such meters, but also have difficulty in setting these poems. Reinforcing this idea is the presence of other hazaj-based piyyutim in conspicuous sections of the Sephardic rite (the order used by Bukharians in New York). Two examples are “Šəma<sup>c</sup> qōlī” (in eleven-syllable apocopated hazaj: Šə-ma<sup>c</sup> qō-lī a-šer yiš-ma<sup>c</sup> bə-qō-lōt) and “Ləxā ēlī” (sixteen-syllable hazaj: lə-xā ē-lī tə-šū-qā-tī bə-xā ḥeš-qī və-aha-vā-tī) both sung on Erev Yom Kippur.

13. This section of the liturgy is in Aramaic, not Hebrew, but the languages are very close and the same interpretation of syllabic duration applies.

according to their habits of performing, interpreting, and listening to quantitative meters. One way that congregants sing this passage at Beth Gavriel demonstrates a quantitative understanding of syllable durations in the Aramaic text:

Figure 4.7. Excerpt from Qaddiš, as sung at Beth Gavriel.



#### 4.1.3.1. Poetic Form (šakl): Ğazal and Muxammas

With the additional element of rhyme (*qofiya*), lines of poetry can be combined into poetic genres or forms (*šakl-s*), such as *ğazal*, *muxammas*, *rubo'i*, *tarje<sup>c</sup>band*, *soqinoma*, *musaddas*, and *masnavi*. These forms appear in Persian poems, Uzbek and Turkic-language poems, and poems that alternate between both languages (*šīr-u šakar*, “milk and sugar,” poems). The most important form for music, the *ğazal*, is composed of a series of couplets (*beit-s*), each consisting of two lines (*raja<sup>c</sup>-s*, also *misra<sup>c</sup>-s*).<sup>14</sup> The

14. A *misra<sup>c</sup>* is usually described as a half-line or hemistich. This conception matches the common visual arrangement of *ğazals* in the Persian script, where each couplet appears on one (visual) line, divided in half. For example, the first AABA of a *ğazal* of Zebun-nisa might appear in the Persian script (Zib un-Nesā'bigom 1983:18) as:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (A) ز خون دیده در دل نقش صد گلزار میبستم | (A) برغم بلبان امشب لب از گفتار میبستم |
| (A) بسحر سامری امشب تب بیمار میبستم      | (B) ز گریه میزدم آبی بر آتشیخانه هجران |

In Cyrillic, each hemistich generally has its own line, appearing as (Belyayev 1957:184):

rhyme scheme is AABACADA, etc., with the most important rhyming syllable or syllables occurring before the end of the line.<sup>15</sup> The meter is consistent throughout. The beginning of this ġazal of Ilyos Mallaev, shown here with the rhyming syllables boldfaced, illustrates one application of the rhyme scheme.

<u>Line</u>	<u>Rhyme scheme</u>
Har kujo dono buvad mehr-i vafo on <b>jo</b> buvad,	A
Lazzat-i bazm-i tarab az suhbat-i don <b>o</b> buvad.	A
Xok-i po-i ahl-i dono ro ba čašmon surma soz,	B
Har kujo donon buvad kon-i balo on <b>jo</b> buvad.	A

The muxammas, a five-line poem of the form AAAAA, BBBBA, CCCCA, etc. is significantly used for poets to elaborate upon ġazals composed previously. When used for this purpose, the final two lines of every stanza are one couplet (AA, BA, CA, etc.) of the

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Ба рағми булбулон имшаб лаб аз гуфтор мебастам,	(A)
Зи хуни дида дар дил нақши сад гулзор мебастам.	(A)
Зи гирья мезадам обе дар оташхонаи ҳиҷрон,	(B)
Ба сеҳри сомирӣ имшаб таби бимор [бути тарпор] мебастам.	(A)

Following the Cyrillic model, I use “line” rather than “half-line” or “hemistich” to refer to each unit that gets a letter in the rhyme scheme, and “couplet” for each group of two.

15. In Persian ġazal-s, there is often a repeating word or group of syllables following the rhyme. This ending element is called the *radif* (row) of the poem.

existing ġazal, and the first three lines are newly composed on the rhyme of the fourth line. The meter is again consistent throughout. The following muxammas of Rubinov on the above ġazal of Mallaev, with the rhyming syllables again boldfaced, illustrates the way a new poem is built on top of a preexisting poem.

<u>Line and Author</u>	<u>Rhyme scheme</u>
[Rubinov]	
Mard-i dono oqil-ū bī misl-u bī ham <b>to</b> buvad,	A
Bo vafoi-ū ham tavono sarbar-i duny <b>o</b> buvad.	A
Ba ċi xūš ast ahl-i dono doimo yak <b>jo</b> buvad,	A
[Mallaev]	
Har kujo dono buvad mehr-i vafo on <b>jo</b> buvad,	A
Lazzat-i bazm-i tarab az suhbat-i dono <b>o</b> buvad.	A
[Rubinov]	
Kor-i nek karda ba olam xalq-i xud kun sar <b>faroz</b> ,	B
Nek-i ro karda ba ob parto, valī az on <b>manoz</b> .	B
Doimo peš az ibodat kardan-ū vaqt-i <b>namoz</b> ,	B
[Mallaev]	
Xok-i po-i ahl-i dono ro ba ċašmon sur <b>ma soz</b> ,	B
Har kujo donon buvad kon-i balo onjo buvad.	A

The muxammas is an important form for Bukharians who wish to demonstrate their familiarity with poets of the past and who wish to honor the work of their contemporaries. Mallaev, for example, has written muxammas-s on ġazal-s by the classic poets Mashrab, Maknuna, Jami, and Hilali, as well as his fellow Bukharian poet Mikhoel Zavul. Zavul, in turn, has written muxammas-s on ġazal-s by Mallaev.

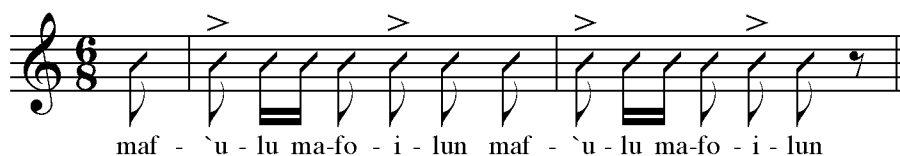
#### 4.1.3.2. Mnemonics for Poetic Meters

Poetic meters are not just abstract types, because they are primarily a component of performed and audibly articulated language. Poets use mnemonic syllables for poetic feet, such as “foilotun” (fā°elāton), to remember and apply meters, and mnemonics and meters are also linked to specific representative poems. Mnemonics are recited rhythmically, underscoring the durational values of the syllables. In a notable overlap with other elements of composition, musicians and poets might also coordinate poetic meters with musical ones: in explaining the meter of his poem “Panj panja barobar nest” (maf°ūlu mafoīlun maf°ūlu mafoīlun, or – – ◡ | ◡ – – – | – – ◡ | ◡ – – –), Roshel Rubinov not only recited the mnemonics but also tapped the rhythm on his leg.<sup>16</sup> At the second and sixth syllables (“°ū” and “ī”), Rubinov accented the syllable and nodded his head. If one takes those accents as strong beats of a time cycle, one can easily notate his performance of the meter in a 6/8 meter, which is almost identical to zarb-i ufar (described above):

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16. Compare this interpretation of a section of the *Kitāb al-aghānī*: “When a singer composed a song orally, he kept time by tapping the rhythmic mode” (Sawa 2002a:352).

Figure 4.8. Roshel Rubinov, mnemonics for poetic meter.



#### 4.1.3.3. Poetic Meter as a Guide for Rhythmic Performance

The rhythmic aspects of poetic meters often guide the performance of musical rhythms. Skilled reciters of poetry use accents and pitches to emphasize syllable durations and bring out the interplay between the meter as a framework and the words that the poet has chosen to fit the meter. When setting poems to music, composers frequently treat the syllable durations in a strict fashion. In this setting of Hafez’s “Agar on turk” to “Nasr-i bayot” (performed by Roshel Rubinov), the durations of the notes exactly match the hazaj scansion of the poem.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16																							
u	-	-	-	u	-	-	-	u	-	-	-	u	-	-	-																							
A	g	a	r	o	n	t	u	r	k	-	i	š	ī	-	r	o	-	z	ī	b	a	d	a	s	t	o	-	r	a	d	d	i	-	i	m	o	r	o

The short syllables (positions 1, 5, 9, and 13) are treated with grace notes (position 1, “a”), sixteenth notes (position 9, “ba,” and position 13, “di[l]”), or omitted altogether (position 5, “i”).

Figure 4.9. "Agar on turk" by Hafez, set to "Nasr-i bayot."





#### 4.1.4. *Coordination of Poetic Meter and Rhythmic Cycle*

Rhythms of words and rhythms of drums can be combined in stirring ways. The complex musical layers arising from relating poetic meter and rhythmic cycles in different ways have long interested music theorists. Recent scholars have continued to explore this relationship, especially in discussions of Asian music (e.g., Bektaş [2005]; Fātemi [2005b]; Jaʿfarzādeh [1999]; Levin [1984]; Manuel 1979; Slobin [1971]; Tsuge [1974]; and Yar-Shater [1974]). In this section, I wish to build on this scholarship by addressing the ways that Bukharian composers and performers understand meters and rhythms when they apply these concepts in practice.

Through experience, musicians and singers learn that poems with certain patterns of syllable durations are associated with particular drum patterns. One useful way that musicians can remember these relationships is with the proper names of *zarb*-s, which frequently appear at the beginning of composition titles. Titles of songs can also convey or suggest poetic meter, especially when the title is simply the first word or words of a poem. Ezro Malakov, for example, knows from experience that poems with the short-long-long-long pattern (*hazaj*) are set well to *zarb-i nasr*. This information is connected to specific repertoire. He once explained to me how the Hebrew prayer “LāĒl Bārūx” (note how the title can be made to fit a “short-long-long-long” pattern: la-Ēl bā-rūx) could be set to “*Nasr-i bayot*,” “*Nasrulloi*,” and “*Nasr-i segoh*.” The presence of the term “*nasr*” in the name of the composition is the primary link or association. In this case, the “*nasr*” name overrides the musical content, as “*Nasr-i bayot*” and “*Nasrulloi*” are in *zarb-i nasr*, but “*Nasr-i segoh*” is not.

Some practitioners, such as Roshel Rubinov, also know the proper names that prosodists have attached to poetic meters (hazaj, ramal, muzore<sup>c</sup>).<sup>18</sup> Through performing, Rubinov has learned conventional links between poetic meters and rhythmic cycles, but he has also learned to associate proper names for the two types of patterns. For example, he explained to me that songs in the talqin zarb almost always feature poems in the fifteen-syllable ramal meter (– ʊ – – | – ʊ – – | – ʊ – – | – ʊ – ).

For every vocal composition coordinated to a specific rhythmic cycle, there are standard poems that match. When performing “Talqin-i bayot,” a vocal composition from the Šašmaqom, most Bukharian singers will use this ġazal of Hilali, in fifteen-syllable ramal:

– ʊ – – – ʊ – – – ʊ – – – ʊ –  
 Tark-i yor-ī kard-i- yu man ham-ču-non yor-am tu-ro  
 Duš- ma-ni jon-i- yu az jon dūst- tar dor-am tu-ro

Rubinov told me that when setting (*mondan*) a new poem to music, it is best to use a new poem of the same metric type as the standard poem. Setting a new poem shows your mastery (*ustogi*), but it must be done perfectly.

Talqin-i bayot, in the Šašmaqom books, is with Hilali’s ġazal. You must sing this song with Hilali’s ġazal. But if you want to sing another ġazal, **green light for you**. Usually, you must sing Hilali. But if you want to show your mastery (*ustogī*), you can sing something else. If you find or

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18. Rubinov provides a list of the most common meters in the introduction to his book *Ilhom-i dil* (2002).

compose a good *ğazal* in the same meter (*vazn*) as Hilali. **You don't have to change [the] music.** You can set a different text (*mītoni digar suxan moni*).

To demonstrate other possibilities for poems that could be sung to “Talqin-i bayot,” Roshel Rubinov also sang his *ğazal* “Namond” (Rubinov 2002:32). His poem is in the same fifteen-syllable ramal meter as the *ğazal* of Hilali:

– ۰ – – – ۰ – – – ۰ – – – ۰ –  
 And-a- rin dun-yo- i fo-nī šaxs-i be-ar-mon na-mond,  
 Ham-ma xub-on raft-an-ū no-raft-a no-xu-bon na-mond.

Conventional norms and the actual settings of poems to rhythmic cycles can differ. For example, the rhythmic cycle of *nasr* is linked to the poetic foot of *hazaj*: “[t]he verse meter of all *shu’bes* of the *nasr* type is . . . *hazaj muṭamman sālim* [۰ – – – ۰ – – – ۰ – – – ۰ – – –]” (Karamotov and Radjabov 1981:112). Nevertheless, the most common poem used for “*Nasr-i bayot*” is a *ğazal* of Hilali, which would be scanned according to Persian versification principles not as *hazaj*, but as *mujtass musamman maxbun maxzuf*:

۰ – ۰ – | ۰ ۰ – – | ۰ – ۰ – | ۰ ۰ –  
 Bi-o bi-o ki dil-ū jon-i man fi-do-i tu bod  
 Sa-rī ki bar tan-i man hast xok-i po-i tu bod.

To explain poetic possibilities for the *nasr* cycle, Roshel Rubinov sang “Bio bio” for me as well as the beginning of the *ğazal* of Hafez cited earlier:

Agar on turk-i šīrozī ba dast orad dil-i mo ro  
 Ba xol-i hinduyaš baxšam samarqand-ū buxoro ro

A discussion about the poetic meters of these two ġazals revealed some of the different ways that poems are scanned and interpreted in practice:

ER: This is the same meter?

RR: The same meter. Mafoilun mafoilun mafoilun mafoilun. [Hazaj]-i<sup>19</sup>

musamman-i solim [ⵍ --- ⵍ --- ⵍ --- ⵍ ---] . . .

ER: —“Bio, bio” is different—

RR: Bi-o bi-o ki dil-u jon-i man fi-do-i tu bod. The same.

Applying the hazaj foot, Rubinov can be understood as thinking of Hilali’s ġazal in the following way:

ⵍ	-	-	-	ⵍ	-	-	-	ⵍ	-	-	-	ⵍ	-	-	(-)
Bi-o	bi-o	ki	dil-ū	jon-i	man	fi-do-i	tū	bod	(ay)						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

In this scansion, long syllables have been substituted for short syllables in positions three, six, eleven, and fourteen, and an extra syllable has been added to the end of the line to make a total of sixteen syllables. Now “Bio bio” matches the scansion of the Hafez poem, which is unequivocally in the perfect form of hazaj:

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19. Rubinov accidentally said “ramal” (– ⵍ – –), but has explained on other occasions that mafoilun is the mnemonic for the hazaj foot (ⵍ – – –).

˘ – – – ˘ – – – ˘ – – – ˘ – – –  
 A-gar on turk-i šī-ro-zī ba dast o-rad dil-i mo ro<sup>20</sup>  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

When singing Hafez’s “Agar on turk” to the *nasr* rhythm (see Figure 4.11), the last syllable of every foot (positions four, eight, twelve, and sixteen) receives a long sung value and coincides with the first beat of each rhythmic cycle. When singing the Hilali poem, Rubinov tends to follow this basic model, placing every fourth syllable (“o,” “jon,” “do,” “ay”) on beat one of each measure, with the exception of the iambic “fi-do” in measure three. Rubinov’s performance is very close to the Belyayev notation of this piece (Belyayev 1957:62-69), except in the Belyayev, “do” falls squarely on beat one and the sixteenth-note “fi” is treated as an anacrusis.

In several respects, Rubinov’s performance of the Hilali poem matches the *mujtass* scansion pattern more than the *hazaj* of “Agar on turk.” The most jarring discrepancies are the sixth and eleventh syllables (“di[l]” and “fi”), which would be long in a *hazaj* treatment.

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20. Sometimes Rubinov sings “turk” as an extra-long syllable, articulating the “-rk” phoneme, instead of pronouncing the *ezafe*. However, in such a treatment, the scansion would remain unchanged.

Figure 4.11. "Nasr-i bayot," comparison of Hilali and Hafez poems, as sung by Roshel Rubinov.

The musical score consists of five staves. The first staff is labeled 'Vocals (Hilali)' and contains the lyrics 'bi-o bi - o ki dil-u\_ jon-i\_ man\_ fi-do\_ i tu bod ay\_'. The second staff is labeled 'Tanbur' and shows the instrumental accompaniment for the Hilali part. The third staff is labeled 'Vocals (Hafez)' and contains the lyrics 'a-gar on turk şir - ro - zi\_ ba dast o\_ rad\_ dil-i mo ro'. The fourth staff is labeled 'Tanbur' and shows the instrumental accompaniment for the Hafez part. The fifth staff is labeled 'Implied zarb' and shows a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The music is in 9/8 time and features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes with various rests.

In Rubinov's performance, these syllables are indisputably sung as short. In another performance of this poem sung to this rhythm, Jurabeg Nabiev (*Maqām Navā* [1997]) treats the poem in almost the same way as Rubinov, with the small exception of "tu" treated as an eighth note. Belyayev's notation closely matches both Rubinov and Nabiev's performances.

There are two possible interpretations of the apparent contradiction between the way Rubinov describes the poetic meter of "Bio, bio" as a form of hazaj, and his performance, which is closer to the mujtass scansion. One interpretation is that Rubinov is creating tension by altering the syllable lengths expected from a hazaj meter. However, a comparison with his extremely respectful treatment of hazaj in his performance of "Agar on turk" shows that to be unlikely. In my experience, the coordination of poetic meter to rhythmic cycle is usually worked out prior to performance through rehearsal and trial-and-error. Based on Rubinov's performance, Belyayev's notation, and Nabiev's

performance, we can infer that when “Bio, bio” was set to “Nasr-i bayot,” the composer respected the mujtass scansion of the poem.

My interpretation is that setting poems and performing songs require separate repertoires of knowledge used at different stages of the creative process. Rubinov the poet and composer must know principles of scansion and conventional ways of matching poems to rhythmic genres, but Rubinov the performer interprets and elaborates memorized songs. The connection of nasr and hazaj is useful for Rubinov when setting poems or answering a question such as “in what meter is this poem?”, but in performance, this concept is inhibiting. Instead, he treats the versions of “Nasr-i bayot” that he knows in terms of his prior memorizations as well as in terms of a general framework—here, the placing of every fourth syllable on beat one of the rhythmic cycle and singing it long. This framework not only fits many settings (e.g., both the Hafez and Hilali poems), but also gives him the necessarily leeway to sing and perform with individual expression. In terms of this interpretation, then, Rubinov’s iambic “fi-do” is a requirement of the scansion as coordinated by the composer who set the poem, and his decision to place “fi” on beat one of the cycle is a stylistic interpretation.

In the case of the Hafez and Hilali versions of “Nasr-i bayot,” Rubinov is not *setting* the poem to a rhythm in the course of performance. Nor did he previously coordinate “Bio, bio” to “Nasr-i bayot” in advance, in which case he would have scanned the poem and adjusted his treatment of the syllables accordingly (as he did with his own “Namond” and the talqin rhythm). Rather, he is performing from a learned repertoire in which the relationship between poem and rhythmic cycle has already been established. When actually setting poems, he uses his experiences with this repertoire in conjunction

with his knowledge of the conventional combinations of poetic meters and rhythmic cycles. He draws on many different facets of his experience, working out possibilities through trial-and-error. He told me simply, “I try it one way. If it’s not good, I try another way, and see if that’s good.” Sometimes, the combination of poem and music will come to him in a dream. He once described to me a situation in which he had played at a party all night long, arriving home at around four a.m. Before sleep, he listened to a recording of Ari Babakhanov. When he awoke, he had a completely new, fully coordinated composition.<sup>21</sup>

#### 4.1.5. *Melody and Mode*

In terms of the theoretically discrete categories of rhythm, text, and melody, the basic elements of melody are tones and intervals. As words are linked to spoken language, and rhythmic patterns are linked to drum strokes, intervals are linked to singing and movements on instruments. The archetypal melody instrument for Bukharian repertoire, the *tanbūr*, complements the voice in range and technique, and singers often play the *tanbūr* to accompany themselves. An explicit connection between the voice and the *tanbūr* is explicit in the way Bukharians usually speak of *ovoz-i tanbūr*, “the *tanbūr*’s voice,” not *sado-i tanbūr*, “the *tanbūr*’s sound.” The two or two-and-a-half octave range of the *tanbūr* is equivalent to the desired vocal range of a *hofiz*, and the construction of the *tanbūr* encourages stepwise or small intervals that are natural to sing. Since melodies are played on only one string, *tanbūr*ists *must* move their hand up and down the neck of

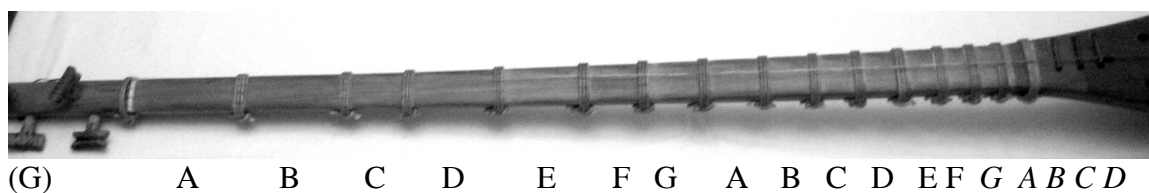
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21. Rubinov’s explanations of his compositional process are very similar to those of Bāy Mohammad Niyāzi, recounted by Jean During (During 1995:95).

the instrument to play higher or lower. Tanbūrists often pause to play a large leap or adjust to a new tessitura. There is no possibility of moving quickly across wide intervals by using strings of different tensions, as there is on the guitar, tor, or ʿud. The difficulty of playing wide leaps on the tanbūr’s long neck seems intentionally related to the voice’s propensity for small intervals.

Intervals are further combined into melody-types and tunes, and intervallic organization, music theory, and music notation are intimately related to the tanbūr’s construction. As shown in Figure 4.12, the instrument is tuned diatonically, and the open melody string is conventionally called “sol” and notated as G on the treble clef. The underline, plain text, and italics is simply to designate different octaves for the current discussion.

Figure 4.12. Tanbūr fretboard



Melodies acquire distinct qualities through the exploitation of different starting notes, ending notes, and four- to five-note ranges of the instrument. For example, the beginning of “Saraxbor-i Buzruk” emphasizes D–G and G–D, and the beginning of “Saraxbor-i Navo” exploits the groups D–G and F–C. Tones can also be raised a half-step or an interval not quite a half-step during a melody; a song starting and ending on D, for

example, might have a raised F and/or C. The high bridge of the tanbur, shown in Figure 4.13, is designed for tones to be raised with added finger pressure.

Figure 4.13. Tanbūr bridge



Acoustic properties of the tanbūr inform conceptions of intervallic relationships. The tanbūr is tuned (*soz kardan*) with one string a perfect fifth or fourth below the melody string, and two (previously only one) drone strings doubling the melody string (i.e., “G-D-G-G” or “G-C-G-G”). When the notes of the tuning interval are struck, they resonate strongly with the instrument, making those notes natural candidates for beginning and ending phrases. In contrast, some notes do not resonate well with the drone strings, and are often treated with a high amount of pitch variability by performers.<sup>22</sup> The most unstable pitches on the tanbūr are B and F, which are frequently the third and seventh degrees of a melody (Figure 5.5, in Chapter 5, provides an example).

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22. Hormoz Farhat’s discussion of “the theory of flexible intervals” in Persian music is pertinent here (Farhat 1990:15-18). For more on the relationship between the construction of the tanbūr and melodic structure in the Šašmaqom, see Abdurashidov 1992.

The various ways that Bukharian performers organize melodies can be discussed in relation to the concept of mode. Mode is a term that musicologists have used to analyze a wide range of practices, as is apparent in a recent definition:

Taking the term [mode] in the modern, twofold sense, mode can be defined as either a “particularized scale” or a “generalized tune,” or both, depending on the particular musical and cultural context. If one thinks of scale and tune as representing the poles of a continuum of melodic predetermination, then most of the area between can be designated one way or another as being in the domain of mode. To attribute mode to a musical item implies some hierarchy of pitch relationships, or some restriction on pitch successions; it is more than merely a scale. At the same time, what can be called the mode of a musical item is never so restricted as what is implied by referring to its “tune”; a mode is always at least a melody type or melody model, never just a fixed melody. (Powers et al. 2001:776)

Along this “continuum,” the “Central Asian *makom*” is “nearer the tune end,” along with the “Middle Eastern *maqām* . . . and particularly the Indian *rāga*.” “Nearer the scale end” are “the *pathet* of Javanese gamelan music and particularly the *chōshi* of Japanese court

music (*gagaku*)” (Powers et al. 2001:830).<sup>23</sup> Levin and Sultanova have also invoked the “tune end” definition for Central Asian maqoms (Levin and Sultanova 2002:911).

Items in the Šašmaqom repertoire (one “Central Asian *makom*” of the *New Grove* entry) that share the same maqom name (e.g., all the *dugoh* or *čorgoh* pieces) do have melodic commonalities that can be analyzed as sequences of abstract scales (see Belyayev [1950:19-20], Asʻadi [2000], Matyakubov [1992], and Abdurashidov [1992]). However, Bukharian musicians treat the repertoire of the Šašmaqom as a set of tunes more than as a set of scales, confirming the “tune end” characterizations of Powers, Levin, and Sultanova.

It is common for Bukharians to use pre-existing tunes—not just Šašmaqom repertoire—as models for new compositions. For example, when demonstrating some options for performing his poem, “Panj panja barobar nest,” Roshel Rubinov based his performance on three different Uzbek melodies: “Sayora” (Persian: “planet”), “Qorokuzlar” (Uzbek: “dark eyes”), and “Tong otgunča” (Uzbek: “break of dawn”). Notice that the melodies all follow a very similar contour, but either the values of certain notes differ (E vs. E-flat, B vs. B-flat) or the shape is varied (starting on A and descending in “Qorokuzlar” vs. starting on D and rising and falling in “Sayora”).

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23. The concept of mode as a cross-cultural analytical tool has intrigued many scholars in the twentieth century. See, for example, Elsner 1975 and the proceedings of the Maqām Study Group of the International Council for Traditional Music (Elsner 1989; Elsner and Jähnichen 1992; Elsner and Pennanen 1997).

Figure 4.14. Roshel Rubinov, three settings for "Panj panja barobar nest."

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a vocal line and an implied zarb line. The first system is for "Sayora", the second for "Qorokuzlar", and the third for "Tong otgunca".

**System 1: "Sayora"**

- Vocals:** har-xel ba ja-hon in - son
- Implied zarb:** A rhythmic accompaniment consisting of quarter and eighth notes.

**System 2: "Qorokuzlar"**

- Vocals:** har-xel ba ja-hon in - son ay panj panj
- Implied zarb:** A rhythmic accompaniment consisting of quarter and eighth notes.

**System 3: "Tong otgunca"**

- Vocals:** har-xel ba ja - hon in - son
- Implied zarb:** A rhythmic accompaniment consisting of quarter and eighth notes.

**System 4: Continuation of the third setting**

- Vox.:** panj panja baro bar nist hasrat ba di-lam lu ma fo
- Zrb.:** A rhythmic accompaniment consisting of quarter and eighth notes.

**System 5: Continuation of the third setting**

- Vox.:** a baro bar nest hasrat ba dilam çan don
- Zrb.:** A rhythmic accompaniment consisting of quarter and eighth notes.

**System 6: Continuation of the third setting**

- Voc.:** panj pan - ja baro bar nest hasrat ba di-lam
- Zrb.:** A rhythmic accompaniment consisting of quarter and eighth notes.

9  
Vox. can - don lun - panj pan - ja ba-ro bar  
maf - u - lu ma fo i

9  
Vox. ay panj panj - a baro bar nest

9  
Voc. can - don ay yar ay panj pan-ja ba ro

13  
Vox. nest lun

13  
Vox.

13  
Voc. bar nest

The method of basing melodies on pre-existing tune models is only one option for Bukharian musicians. Another possibility is to compose melodies according to more general contours and conventional sequences, either before or during a performance.<sup>24</sup> Ezro Malakov works with both of these options when singing the Sabbath song “Yāh

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24. It should be noted that most Bukharians would consider rearranging melodic phrases on the spur of the moment to be an aspect of performance, not composition.

ribōn ʿālam.” One setting of this poem has a relatively fixed sequence of melodic phrases, but these melodic phrases can be applied to the text differently from performance to performance. A comparison of three performances illustrates this approach to melody. In the first example, Malakov uses a melodic shape in almost the exact same way at the same place in the text. In all three performances, Malakov sings the words with the same rhythm, starting with a short-long-long-long pattern on “šə-far qa-dā” and melodically extending the syllable “mai.” Each version also follows a zig-zag minor-scale descent from G to C.

Figure 4.15. Ezro Malakov, "Yāh ribōn ʿālam," first excerpt.

Recording 1  
šə-far qa-dā - mai \_\_\_\_\_ la - ha-vā - yā

Recording 2  
šə-far qa-dā - mai \_\_\_\_\_ la - ha - ḥa-vā - yā

Recording 3  
šə-far qa-dā - mai \_\_\_\_\_ la - ha-vā \_\_\_\_\_ yā

In the next example, taken from a later point in the text, Malakov sings the same melodic shape with more substantial variations in his treatment of the melody from performance to performance. In all three versions, the short-long-long-long opening is retained (except the last syllable gets a short treatment in Recording 3). In Recordings 1 and 2, Malakov follows a zig-zag minor-scale descent from G to C and melodically extends a syllable

(“yo”), similar to his melodies in Figure 4.15, but in Recording 3 he simply descends in a no-nonsense scalar fashion from F to C.

Figure 4.16. Ezro Malakov, "Yāh ribōn ʿālam," second excerpt.

The figure shows three recordings (Rec. 1, Rec. 2, and Rec. 3) of a musical excerpt. Each recording is represented by a staff with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes. In Rec. 1, the melody is a descending scale from F to C, with a melisma on the syllable 'yo'. In Rec. 2, the melody is similar but includes a melisma on 'band-i' and 'bar-e'. In Rec. 3, the melody is a simple descending scale from F to C, with a melisma on 'yo'.

Rec. 1  
tam-om - i \_\_\_\_\_ kul - li aš - [i]-yo \_\_\_\_\_

Rec. 2  
tam-om - i kul - li aš - [i]-[o]-yo \_\_\_\_\_ band - i \_\_\_\_\_ bar - e

Rec. 3  
tam-om - i kul - li aš - yo

In the last example, there is quite a bit of difference in each performance of this melodic shape and the way that he coordinates the melody to the text. Of course, his treatment is not arbitrary. It is dependent on how other compositional and structural principles have been realized during each performance. In Figure 4.17, the opening short-long-long-long rhythm and zig-zag descent from G to C begin on “Ta-mom-i murg” in all three recordings, preceded by a higher phrase. Malakov melismatically extends the syllable “mo” differently in each recording. In Recording 2, Malakov melismatically extends the A as he did in Figures 4.15 and 4.16, but in Recordings 1 and 3 the extensions are instead on D and F.

Figure 4.17. Ezro Malakov, "Yāh ribōn ʿālam," third excerpt.

Rec. 1  
ba dar - goh - i Tu mi no - land har sahar - goh

Rec. 2  
ba dar-goh-i Tu mi no-land har sahar-goh Ta-mom - i murg u mo -

Rec. 3  
ba dar-goh-i Tu no-land har sahar-goh Ta-mom - i murg u mo - - -

Rec. 1  
Ta-mom-i murg u mo - - - - - hi ru - yi dar - [i]-yo

Rec. 2  
- - - - - hi ru - yi dar - yo

Rec. 3  
- - - - - hi ru - yi dar-[i]-yo

Bukharians deal with these and other approaches to composing and performing melodies. Melodic shapes and phrases from various tunes might be mixed and matched in the course of performance, with each phrase adjusted accordingly in order to construct a logical whole. This is a common practice in the synagogue, for example, where a performance of a religious text often starts in a specific tune (e.g., “Ēl ādōn” starting in “Soqinoma-i ʿiroq-i buxoro”), but then proceeds in a looser fashion than the tune proper. Due to the fact that most regular congregants neither know nor would be able to perform an entire melody from a repertoire like the Šāšmaqom, the singers adjust, simplify, or treat the melody as they go, according to the moment. As Rubinov explained to me,

In synagogue, average people (*odam-ho-i ʿodī*) **only start like this** [sings first two lines of “Dəṛōr yiqṛā” to “Ĉapandoz-i gulyor”] . . . Because if you want to sing “Ĉapandoz-i gulyor” you must be a **professional** singer (*hofiz-i professional*). **[A] regular guy is not going to sing this . . .**

Finally, singers and musicians are expected to treat melodies in performance with expressive nuances of ornamentation. Unlike the zarb, which can be played without variation, melodic performance requires techniques such as adding notes, altering rhythms, or bending the pitch on the tanbūr (*nola*, “groan”). A musician might decide to alter a tune so much that it is almost unrecognizable from the original model. Roshel Rubinov describes “improvisation” (*improvizasiya*) as this process of heavily ornamenting and altering a tune.

#### 4.1.5.1. Nusah

Nusah (“version,” “form”), a generic framework for performing religious texts during worship, is one important approach to melody that can lie closer to the “scale-end” of the mode spectrum. Nusah styles can range from declaiming or *sprechstimme* to very “professional” and highly elaborate singing. Certain texts are connected to specific styles within this range. For example, the half-qaddiṣ is almost always performed in a declaiming style. These are norms rather than hard and fast rules, and the typical style for a section can be altered depending on the circumstances. If a service is running late, sections that would usually be sung along melodic contours might be read as fast as possible, with little to no pitch movement.

“Nusah” is a complex and multivalent term. Ezro Malakov’s definition of the term is any melody or melodic contour used in religious practice, applicable to an individual or a community. The term is also used widely by Jews to describe a way of praying unique to those adhering to a certain rite (such as “Nusah Ari” for those following the method of praying established by the Ari, Isaac Luria), or rooted in a region (“Nusah Ashkenazi” to indicate an Ashkenazic, or Eastern European, style). The *Encyclopaedia Judaica* notes that nusah

denotes a specific musical mode to which a certain part of the liturgy is sung. The musical characteristics of these modes are defined by the following elements: 1) each is based upon a particular series of notes which may be a tetrachord, more often a combination of several overlapping tetrachords, or another scale of less or more than eight notes; 2) each contains a stock of characteristic motives which undergo constant variation; 3) each combines these motives in a completely free order, forming an ‘irrational’ pattern; 4) the association of each nusah, as defined by the above-mentioned three elements, is with a particular section of a specific holiday liturgy . . . . (Avenary 1971a:1283)

In another definition, nusah consists of combinations of melodic formulas led by the cantor (Seroussi et al. 2001:52). Summit describes it as “traditional chant” (2000:5), and the congregants with whom he spoke understood nusah in opposition to metric tunes (2000:105). Frigyesi defines the term as “a melodic-rhythmic framework that is associated with particular services and prayers” (Frigyesi 2002:125). For the cantors she

interviewed, *nusah* can refer to the “simple basic melody” as well as “a broad range of possible improvisations” (2002:126). *Nusah*, then, refers to particular melodic formulae, scales, and ways of combining motives either for individuals or communities as a whole.

In normative Bukharian practice, the exact relationship of pitches and intervals in a singer’s “scale-end” *nusah* (which Malakov also calls *ḥazzanut*) can differ greatly from person to person. Nevertheless, there are some consistent approaches. Generally, a singer employs a set of three to five pitches at the outset of a prayer. One pitch is the central or resolving tone, and the others are used for accent or stress. The highest pitch usually receives the most emphasis and has a longer duration. At Beth Gavriel, a common *nusah* is made up of the following pitches, with note values representing relative length:



When performing this *nusah*, the central tone is F modified by the lower neighbor (E) and upper neighbor (G-flat). Sometimes the two are used in a double-neighbor format, the singer sliding from G-flat down to E before resolving to F. For extra emphasis, the singer glissandos up to the A, which is held longer than the other notes, and accompanied by an accent. A narrow range might be used for the duration of a performance. This is often the case at times when long passages are chanted at a brisk pace, such as the singing of Psalms before morning worship. In hymns and more elaborate performances of *ḥazzanut*, singers systematically extend the range as the prayer proceeds.

#### 4.2. A Compositional Form: The Šu<sup>c</sup>ba

A legitimate Bukharian musical composition is a coordination of the previously described building blocks. When composers create a larger composition out of smaller ones, they must not only deal with coordinating elements at the smallest level (such as syllables to drum strokes), but also with components that are distinctly related to the larger form. For example, the coordination of syllables and words to a meter is a fundamental concern of poetry, but the concern of rhyme only emerges when a poet decides to compose in a larger form such as the ġazal. These concerns are cumulative: poets must think about rhyme *in addition to* meter, not *instead of* meter.

One type of composition, the vocal *šu<sup>c</sup>ba* (branch) of the Šašmaqom, is usually a coordination of one ġazal, one rhythmic cycle, and a distinct sequence of melodic phrases. These melodic phrases are arranged in an arc shape of rising and then falling, and melodies are divided according to couplets or lines of the ġazal. In songs, divisions of tessitura and poetic lines are often underscored in performance with repetitions of words and melodies, responses provided by instruments alone between vocals, or cadential vocalizing on stock syllables (“yor aman,” “yor ey,” “jon-i mo”).

The sections of the *šu<sup>c</sup>ba*’s arc-contour shape have proper names: the *daromad* (“entrance,” “introduction”),<sup>25</sup> the *miyonxat* (“middle line,” also *miyonparda*, or “middle division”), the *dunasr* (“upper octave”), and the *furovard* (or “descent”).<sup>26</sup> The sections

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25. For *daromad*, Roshel Amin also used the term *baromad* (Tajik Persian for “going out”). Roshel Rubinov also used the term *sarxat* (Persian for “beginning line”).

26. For *furovard*, Amin and Rubiniov both substituted *faromad*, which Amin translated as “going down.”

are linked to tessitura: conventionally, the daromad is sung within scale degrees 1-5, the miyonxat within 5-8, and the dunasr within 8-13. Thus, a competent singer must have a solid range of at least an octave and a half. Between sections, a part of a previous section—usually the daromad or miyonxat—can be used as a refrain, either directly or in a slightly modified form. This refrain was evidently called *xang* (Karamatov and Radjabov [1981:108]) or *hang*,<sup>27</sup> but Bukharians in New York generally use the Russian word *pripev*. Instrumental breaks (*pauza muzika*) also set apart sections of the ġazal.

The *awj* (“culmination”) is the climactic section of the piece, where a singer showcases his or her abilities. The *awj* is linked with the *dunasr*, as well as the optional section following the *dunasr* of one or more *namūd*-s (“appearances”), in which sections from other *šu°ba*-s are used as modulations. Some *namūd*-s are named “*awj*,” such as “*awj-i turk*.” The highest points of the *dunasr* and *awj* give the singer a chance to expose his or her range, while the *namūd*-s demonstrate his or her deep knowledge and mastery (*ustogī*) of the repertoire. *Namūd*-s normally follow a set sequence, but as Amin explained, “If you become a master (*usto*), you know every *namūd* perfectly, and you can play a *namūd* where you want in the [appropriate] song.”

Each of the above sections may or may not appear definitively in every *šu°ba*. Much depends on the rhythmic genre. All sections are clearly presented in the opening vocal *šu°ba*, *saraxbor*, which is designed to introduce the melodic elements of the

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27. Jung speculates that “*hang*” is a “colloquial abbreviation for ‘[o]hang’” (1988:202); however, her “*hang*” is used to describe the melismatic descent on vocables following a line of poetry.

upcoming maqom in a systematic fashion. In other pieces, perhaps only the daromad, miyonxat, and dunasr will be used.

Each section of the song is connected to a line or couplet of the ġazal.<sup>28</sup> When I learned the šu<sup>o</sup>ba “Savt-i navo,” Roshel Amin applied the sections to a ġazal of Zebun-nisa in this way (designations in brackets are my own additions):

Table 4.1. Form of "Savt-i navo."

<u>Line of Poem</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Range (scale degrees: start-[high-low]-end)</u>
1a	daromad	1-3-1
1b		3-6-1
2a	miyonxat/[pripev]	8-9-5-6
2b		3-5-1
2b (repeat)		8-10-1
3a	dunasr/awj	8-10-8
3b		8-12-8
4a	[pripev]	8-9-5-6
4b		3-5-1
4b (repeat)		8-10-1
5a	namūd-i muhayyir-i navo	5-7-6
5b		6-9-5-6
5a (repeat) or 6a	[pripev]	8-11-6
5b (repeat) or 6b		3-5-1
5b (repeat) or 6b		8-9-1

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28. This specific relationship between šu<sup>o</sup>ba sections and ġazal couplets is typical of Central Asian music and different from ġazal settings in South Asia, where the A line of a ġazal usually becomes a refrain (also found in Central Asia). An area for further research is the similarity between this Central Asian approach and that found in Iranian classical music, in which each line or couplet of a ġazal is connected to a different *gušeh*. More affinities include the arc contour of a conventional performance and shared terminology (*darāmad*, *owj*, *forud*) (Caton 2002; Farhat 1990).

#### 4.2.1. A Compositional Case Study: "Id-i Purim"

The activity of setting texts to music (*mondan*) is a creative activity of high prestige, merit, and difficulty. Even setting existing poems to existing melodies is a challenging compositional process only done by accomplished practitioners. For example, according to Rubinov, Neryo Aminov created the frequently performed song “Zulf-i parišon” by setting a ġazal of Bedil to music by Gavriel Mulloqandov (originally, Mulloqandov had set a Baġdadi Turkish ġazal by Fuzuli to his melody—this version, “Qurbon olam,” is also very popular). In explaining Aminov’s process to me, Roshel Rubinov remarked that setting new words to music “is not easy either! You must be [a] *perfect* singer.” For Rubinov, a proper setting will have the full ġazal adjusted to an unerring and exact rendition of a melody, while a less competent version will be put together willy-nilly, “one line from this maqom, one line from that maqom.” Ezro Malakov has a less strict attitude, and will creatively modify the core or basic tune when setting poems.

When combining ġazals and melodies, the conventional sequence of named tessituras found in šu<sup>ʿ</sup>ba-s can be a framework and shared vocabulary for musicians, but the exact setting is nuanced, variable, and usually coordinated in rehearsal. Performers must also take into account other structural concerns, such as coordinating poetic meters to rhythmic cycles. They must also apply their own personal style to the material.

At a recording session for *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns*, Ezro Malakov, David Davidov, Roshel Rubinov, and Matat Baraev were setting a ġazal of Ilyos Mallaev, “Id-i Purim” (Holiday of Purim) to “Qašqarča-i rok,” a šu<sup>ʿ</sup>ba from

Maqom Buzruk. Mallaev's printed direction on the page indicated the melody, so even by the time the musicians received the poem a number of compositional processes had already taken place.

Mallaev had composed his poem in the same meter as the standard poem of "Qašqarča-i rok," a ġazal of Avzah in muzore<sup>c</sup>.<sup>29</sup> The two poems match in this fashion:

Avzah:

	-	-	u		-	u	-	-		-	-	u		-	u	-	-
1a	Az	jus-tu	jū-	yat	ey	jon	jo-	nam	ba	lab	ra-si-	da					
1b	Bo	has-ra-to	ki	mur-dam	rū-	i	ma-	hat	na-di-	da							
2a	Go-	hi	su-xan	zi	la <sup>ʿ</sup> -lat	šahd-i	ša-	kar	bi-rī-	zad							
2b	Zī	koš-	kī	bi-	gi-	ram	man	az	la-	bat	ma-ki-	da					
3a	To	čand	mī-	si-	tez-ī	to	čand	mī-	gu-rī-	zī							
3b	O	yo	bu-vad	ki	gi-	ram	man	az	do-	manat	ka-ši-	da					
4a	Xuš	on	ša-be	ki	o-	ī	band-i	qa-	bo	ku-šo-	ī						
4b	Is-	to-	da-am	ba	ro-	hat	ran-gam	zi	rū	pa-ri-	da						

Mallaev:

1a	Id-	i	Pu-rim	har	sol	bar	Is-	ro-	e-	lon	ši-or	šud		
1b	Dar	čašm-i	Is-	ro-	el-	on	to-	bis-ton-ū	ba-hor	šud				
2a	Bar	xalq-i	xud	bi-	guy-am	šarq-i	id-	i	Pu-rim	ro				
2b	In	tar-ix	ro	bi-	guf-tan	az	bahr-i	man	xu-mor	šud				
3a	Hu-	mon	mī-xost	qir	ku-	nad	mar-	dum-	i	Is-	ro-el	ro		
3b	O-	xir	in	qal-	lo-	bi-	yaš	bar	ham-	ma	sar-	i	kor	šud
4a	Is-	ro-	e-	lon	ro	jam	kard	Mor-	de-xai	bar	te-fi-	lo		
4b	Rahm-i-	Xu-do	o-	mad-ū	dor	bar	Hu-	mon	darkor	šud				
5a	Nazd-i	Hašver-	uš	o-	mad	Es-	ter	Ha-	mal-	ko-i	mo			
5b	Guft	ki	"Hu-mon	dar	qast-i	Is-	ro-	e-	lon	taiyor	šud"			
6a	Bo	yor-dam-i	Xu-	do-	vand	ge-	zī-	ro	ham	bo-til	gašt			
6b	Bar	mar-dum-i	Is-	ro-	el	šo-	dī-	yu	xand-	a	yor	šud		
7a	Aj-	ab	ma-kkor-i-	ho	kard	Hu-	mon	bar	qast-	i	mo-	yon		
7b	Az	kird-u	kor-	i	Hu-	mon,	Haš-	ver-	uš	ham	bī-zor	šud		
8a	Far-	mon	bi-dod	Haš-	ve-	ruš	az	bahr-i	qat-	li	Hu-	mon		
8b	Hum-	on	u	dah	far-	zan-	daš	o-	xir	dar	zīr-	i	dor	šud
9a	Ta <sup>ʿ</sup> -	rif-	ho	bar	nom-i	Mur-	da-	xai	Es-	ter	Ha-	mal-	ko	

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29. Only the beginning of the ġazal appears in the setting.

9b Az su-xan hoi- i on- ho Is- ro- el bar qa-ror šud  
 10a Az on ruz id- i Pu- rim om- ad ba tar- i- xi mo  
 10b Il- yos ham ruz-i Pu- rim zavq-i tan-būr u tor šud

Mallaev explained to me that “Id-i Purim” could only be sung to “Qašqarča-i Rok,” so clearly he wrote the poem with that melody in mind. As “Qašqarča-i rok” is a fast piece from the end of the suite, Mallaev is able to take certain liberties with the meter without undermining it. But although meter and vowel length is not of prime importance in the poetic composition, prosodic qualities remain crucial in the interpretation of the poem by Bukharian singers and musicians, as will be shown later in this analysis.

In the Belyayev notation of “Qašqarča-i rok” (Belyayev 1950:250-52), each line of Avzah’s ġazal is set to a four-measure melody. The couplets of the ġazal are coordinated with the musical phrases and tessitura ranges as follows:

Table 4.2. Form of “Qašqarča-i rok,” based on Belyayev (1950:250-52).

<u>Line of Poem</u>	<u>Musical Phrase</u>	<u>Range (Scale degrees: start-[high-low]-end)<sup>30</sup></u>
Instrumental	music 1a (1x)	5-6-1
ġazal 1a	music 1a (2x)	5-6-1
ġazal 1b	music 1b (2x)	3-5- <u>5</u>
ġazal 2a	music 2a (2x)	<u>5</u> -3-2
ġazal 2b	music 2b (2x)	5-6- <u>5</u>
ġazal 3a	music 3a (2x)	5-8-5
ġazal 3b	music 3b (2x)	8-11-5
ġazal 4a	music 1a (2x)	5-6-2
ġazal 4b	music 1b (2x)	3-5-1

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30. Tones in the octave below scale degree 1 are indicated with an underline.

In this setting, the music (1a-b) that opens and closes the piece (ğazal 1a-b and 4a-b) is in the miyonxat range. The musical phrase that exploits the lower daromad range, which one would expect to find at the beginning of the piece, appears with the second couplet of the ğazal (music 2a-b). The dunasr is matched to the third couplet of the ğazal.

Mallaev's ğazal is considerably longer, with ten couplets instead of four. For the first take of Malakov's ensemble, the instrumentalists followed Malakov's melodic lead, starting with the lower daromad musical phrase rather than the miyonxat (the opposite order from that in the Belyayev notation). The ensemble worked out the following setting:

Table 4.3. Form of "Id-i Purim" ("Qaşqarča-i rok"), Malakov (et al.) setting, take one.

<u>Line of Poem</u>	<u>Musical Phrase</u>	<u>Range (Scale degrees: start-[high-low]-end)</u>	
Instrumental	music 2b (2x)	5-6- <u>5</u>	
ğazal 1a	music 2a	<u>5</u> -3-2	daromad/pripev
ğazal 1b	music 2b	5-6- <u>5</u>	
ğazal 2a	music 1a	5-6-2	miyonxat
ğazal 2b	music 1b	1-3- <u>5</u>	
ğazal 3a	music 2a	<u>5</u> -3-2	pripev
ğazal 3b	music 2b (2x)	5-6- <u>5</u>	
instrumental	music 2b	5-6- <u>5</u>	pauza muzika
ğazal 4a	music 3a	5-8-5	dunasr
ğazal 4b	music 3b	8-11-5	
ğazal 5a	music 1a	5-6-2	[miyonxat]
ğazal 5b	music 1b	1-3- <u>5</u>	

The group then stopped to discuss what to do with the rest of the poem. They had sufficiently navigated four couplets of the *ġazal*, but at this point were unsure about where to go with the second half of the poem—which parts to repeat, if new sections should be introduced, and if certain sections should be extended or varied.

The next attempt was considerably different. In this version, the musicians decided to definitively treat the opening melody and couplet (music+*ġazal* 2a-b) as a refrain. Also, Malakov made a new musical phrase by combining the beginning of melody 1b and the beginning of melody 1a into what I will call 1b/a. Melody 1b/a is essentially a prolongation of the cadential 1b figure, drawing on the melodic resources of the tune.

Figure 4.18. Ezro Malakov, creation of new melodic resource.

Music 1a  
Hu- mon mī-xost qir ku-nad\_\_\_ mar-dum - i Is - ro - el ro

Music 1b  
Rahm - i Xu - do o - ma-dū\_\_\_ dor bar Hu-mon darkor šud

Music 1b/a  
Is - ro - el - on ro jam kard Mor - de-xai bar te - fi - lo\_\_\_

At various points Malakov also made variations on melody 3b in order to prolong the high register. With the new melody 1b/a, as well as Malakov's variation or prolongation of melody 3b, the ensemble now seemed to have enough melodic resources to play

through the whole ġazal, but the arrangement was still not complete. Near the end of the next performance it seemed that Malakov was trying to extend various sections simply to finish the poem, and the ensemble stopped to figure out some kind of solution. This version resulted in the following order:

Table 4.4. Form of "Id-i Purim" ("Qašqarča-i rok"), Malakov (et al.) setting, take two.

<u>Line of Poem</u>	<u>Musical Phrase</u>	<u>Section</u>
instrumental	music 2b (2x)	daromad/pripev introduction
ġazal 1a	music 2a	daromad/pripev
ġazal 1b	music 2b	
ġazal 2a	music 2a	rep. of daromad
ġazal 2b	music 2b (2x)	
ġazal 3a	music 1a	miyonxat
ġazal 3b	music 1b	
ġazal 4a	music 1b/a	miyonxat extension
ġazal 4b	music 1b	
ġazal 1a	music 2a	pripev
ġazal 1b	music 2b	
instrumental	music 2b	pauza muzika
ġazal 5a	music 3a	dunasr/awj
ġazal 5b	music 3b	
ġazal 6a	variations on 3b	
ġazal 6b	variations on 3b	
ġazal 7a	music 1a	rep. of miyonxat with extension
ġazal 7b	music 1a	
ġazal 8a	music 1b/a	
ġazal 8b	music 1b	
instrumental	music 2a	pauza muzika/pripev

instrumental	music 2b	
ğazal 9a	music 3a	rep. of dunasr/awj
ğazal 9b	music 3b	
[group stops]		

Near the end of the ğazal, Malakov was repeating the dunasr, still far from where he wanted to be at the finish. In the next take, the ensemble decided to repeat both the final couplet of the ğazal and the opening couplet (twice) in order to play through the miyonxat and the daromad tessituras in a relaxed descent.

Table 4.5. Form of "Id-i Purim" ("Qaşqarča-i rok"), Malakov (et al.) setting, take three.

<u>Line of Poem</u>	<u>Musical Phrase</u>	<u>Section</u>
instrumental	music 2b	daromad/pripev introduction
ğazal 1a	music 2a	daromad/pripev
ğazal 1b	music 2b	
ğazal 2a	music 2a	rep. of daromad
ğazal 2b	music 2b (2x)	
ğazal 3a	music 1a	miyonxat
ğazal 3b	music 1a	
ğazal 4a	music 1b/a	miyonxat extension
ğazal 4b	music 1b (2x)	
instrumental	music 2a	pauza muzika/pripev
instrumental	music 2b	
ğazal 5a	music 3a	dunasr/awj
ğazal 5b	music 3b	
ğazal 6a	variations on 3b	
ğazal 6b	variations on 3b	
ğazal 7a	music 1a	rep. of miyonxat (without extension)

ğazal 7b	music 1b	
ğazal 1a	music 2a	pripev (with opening couplet)
ğazal 1b	music 2b	
instrumental	music 2b	
ğazal 8a	music 3a	rep. of dunasr/awj
ğazal 8b	music 3b	
ğazal 9a	variations on 3b	
ğazal 9b	variations on 3b	
ğazal 10a	music 1a	rep. of miyonxat (with extension)
ğazal 10b	music 1a	
ğazal 10a	music 1b/a	
ğazal 10b	music 1b	
ğazal 1a	music 2a	pripev (with opening couplet)
ğazal 1b	music 2b	
ğazal 1a	music 2a	
ğazal 1b	music 2b	

After our recording session, the group made even more changes to the setting. The CD performance (track 10 on *Az qudrat-i Xudovand* [2003]) differs most significantly in that the musicians are not following Malakov but are already familiar with the arrangement. This is apparent in the way instrumental sections *anticipate* the *dunasr*, rather than echoing Malakov's cadences or filling in gaps with the *pripev* melody. This version also has the most standardized repetitions of musical material, and Malakov seems to adjust the couplets of the *ğazal* to the music, rather than the other way around. The entire musical arrangement from the *dunasr* through the refrain (*ğazal* couplets 5-8) is repeated; this necessitates Malakov repeating the opening couplet to the music of 1b/a and 1b before he sings the words again in the refrain proper.

Table 4.6. Form of "Id-i Purim" ("Qašqarča-i rok"), *Az qudrat-i Xudovand* (2003).

<u>Line of Poem</u>	<u>Musical Phrase</u>	<u>Section</u>
instrumental	music 2a	daromad/pripev introduction
instrumental	music 2b	
ğazal 1a	music 2a	daromad/pripev
ğazal 1b	music 2b	
ğazal 2a	music 2a	rep. of daromad
ğazal 2b	music 2b	
ğazal 3a	music 1a	miyonxat
ğazal 3b	music 1b	
ğazal 4a	music 1b/a	miyonxat extension
ğazal 4b	music 1b	
ğazal 1a	music 2a	pripev
ğazal 1b	music 2b (2x)	
instrumental	music 3a	dunasr/awj introduction
instrumental	music 3b	
ğazal 5a	music 3a	dunasr/awj
ğazal 5b	music 3b	
ğazal 6a	variations on 3b	
ğazal 6b	variations on 3b	
ğazal 7a	music 1a	rep. of miyonxat (with extension)
ğazal 7b	music 1b	
ğazal 8a	music 1b/a	
ğazal 8b	music 1b	
ğazal 1a	music 2a	pripev (with opening couplet)
ğazal 1b	music 2b (2x)	
instrumental	music 3a	repetition of previous music from dunasr/awj
instrumental	music 3b	introduction through pripev
ğazal 9a	music 3a	[dunasr/awj]
ğazal 9b	music 3b	

ğazal 9a	variations on 3b	
ğazal 9b	variations on 3b	
ğazal 10a	music 1a	[rep. of miyonxat (with extension)]
ğazal 10b	music 1b	
ğazal 1a	music 1b/a	[opening couplet sung to miyonxat extension]
ğazal 1b	music 1b	
ğazal 1a	music 2a	pripev
ğazal 1b	music 2b (2x)	

Ezro Malakov often marks up printed ğazal-s with symbols that remind him of the music he is to sing. These notations show how the tessituras of a šu<sup>ˆ</sup>ba can be used as a mnemonic device, and they visually demonstrate the structural connections between tessitura sections and ğazal couplets. His copy of “Id-i Purim” has the following annotations:

Figure 4.19. Ezro Malakov's copy of "Id-i Purim."

*Езро Малков*      *1902*

Илѣс Маллаев

**ИДИ ПУРИМ**  
(ба оҳанги қашқарчайи роқ)

+ ↓ Иди Пурим ҳар сол бар Исроэлон шиор шуд,  
Дар чашти Йсроэлон тобистону баҳор шуд.

+ ↗ *сфайа*  
Бар халқи худ бигўям, шарқи иди Пуримро,  
Ин тарихро бигуфтан аз баҳри ман хумор шуд.

— ↗ *музыка музыка*  
Хўмон мехост қир кунад мардumi Исроэло,  
Охир ин қаллобияш бар ҳамма сари кор шуд.

— ↘  
Исроэлонро чам кард Мордехай бар тефило,  
Раҳми Худо омаду дор бар Хўмон даркор шуд.

*наҳз*

Назди Ҳашверўш омад Эстер Ҳамалкои мо,  
↗ Гуфт ки: «Хўмон дар қастии Исроэлон тайёр шуд»,  
*принев иди пурим*  
↗ Бо ёрдами Худованд гезеро ҳам ботил гашт,  
Бар мардumi Исроэл шодио ханда ёр шуд.

↗ Ачаб маккорихо кард Хўмон бар қастии моён,  
Аз кирду кори Хўмон, Ҳашверўш ҳам безор шуд.

↗ *наҳз музыка*  
Фармон бидод Ҳашверўш аз баҳри қатли Хўмон,  
Хўмону дах фарзанди ~~Х~~ охир дар зери дор шуд.

↗ *гали*  
Таърифхо бар номи Мўрдахай, Эстер Ҳамалко!,  
Аз суханҳойи онҳо, Исроэл барқарор шуд.

Аз он рўз иди Пурим омад ба тарихи мо,  
Илѣс ҳам рўзи Пурим завқи танбўру тор шуд.

*принев*

20-ми январь, соли 2003. Нью Йорк.

In the second column (closest to the words), Malakov has written a down arrow next to the first couplet and a diagonal arrow next to the second couplet, matching his first attempt at daromad followed by miyonxat. In the first column (farthest to the left), he has put new symbols—a + next to the first and second couplet, and a — next to the third and fourth couplet. This matches his later treatment of daromad (+) and miyonxat (—) in the version described immediately above. He also sings line 4b twice, matching the “2.” he has written. The “pauza” is indicated between couplets four and five. The up arrow coincides with the *dunasr* at the fifth couplet, and the diagonal arrow agrees with the miyonxat repetition at the seventh couplet. Another “pauza” does come between the seventh and eighth couplets, and the piece ends with the “pripev,” indicated in handwritten Cyrillic below the *ğazal*.

The following comparative table shows the evolution of the musical setting. Sections that are reflected in Malakov’s notations are in boldface.

Table 4.7. Comparative table of settings for "Id-i Purim."

Ĝazal Couplet	Take 1	Take 2	Take 3	CD
	instrumental (2)	instr. (2)	instr.	instr.
1	<b>daromad</b>	<b>daromad</b>	<b>daromad</b>	<b>daromad</b>
2	<b>miyonxat</b>	~ <b>daromad</b>	~ <b>daromad</b> (2)	~ <b>daromad</b>
3	pripev	<b>miyonxat</b>	<b>miyonxat</b>	<b>miyonxat</b>
	<b>pauza</b>			
4	<b>dunasr</b>	~ <b>miyonxat</b>	~ <b>miyonxat</b> (2)	~ <b>miyonxat</b>
		pripev		pripev
		<b>pauza</b>	<b>pauza</b>	<b>pauza</b>
5	miyonxat	<b>dunasr</b>	<b>dunasr</b>	<b>dunasr</b>
6		~ <b>dunasr</b>	~ <b>dunasr</b>	~ <b>dunasr</b>
7		~ <b>miyonxat</b>	~ <b>miyonxat</b>	~ <b>miyonxat</b>
			pripev	
			<b>pauza</b>	
8		~ <b>miyonxat</b>	~ <b>dunasr</b>	~ <b>miyonxat</b>
		pauza		pripev
				pauza
9		~ <b>dunasr</b>	~ <b>dunasr</b>	~ <b>dunasr</b>
10			~ <b>miyonxat</b>	~ <b>miyonxat</b>
			<b>pripev</b> (2)	<b>pripev</b>

In the rehearsals for "Id-i Purim," the ensemble worked out many more details than just the coordination of ĝazal couplets to tessitura sections. They zoomed in on structural and compositional components, such as the rhythmic treatments of lines in relation to syllable values. The basic rhythmic pattern of the melody, as notated in the Belyayev edition, does not reflect the prosodic values of the syllables. However, Malakov

shortened and lengthened syllables according to their prosodic value, and the instrumentalists adjusted the melodic phrases in a similar fashion. In most lines, for example, Malakov shortens the syllable in position twelve (“**ši**-or šud,” “**ba-hor** šud”). His choices for shortening or lengthening syllables are not based on a metric scansion of the poem, but rather on his experience with performing vowel values—in the second line, he shortens the sixth syllable (“e”) even though the fifth syllable (“ro”) should have the short value according to the meter. Malakov’s treatment of syllable length demonstrates the importance of interpreting vowel values for his style, despite the relative unimportance of the meter for this melody, as shown by Mallaev’s poem. Figure 4.20 shows Malakov’s treatment as compared with the Belyayev version.

Figure 4.20. "Qaşqarča-i rok," comparison of Belyayev notation and Malakov performance.

The figure displays two pairs of musical staves, each comparing a Belyayev notation (top) with a Malakov performance (bottom). The music is in G major and 2/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some syllables marked with accents or breath marks.

**First Pair:**

- Belyayev:** Go - hi su - xan zi la<sup>˘</sup> - lat šahd - u ša - kar bi - ri - zad
- Malakov:** I - di Pu - rim har sol bar Is - ro - el - on **š**i-or **š**ud

**Second Pair (marked with //):**

- Belyayev:** Zī koš - ki bi - gi - ram man az la - bat ma - ki - da
- Malakov:** Dar časm - i Is - ro - e - lon — to - bis - ton - u ba-hor **š**ud

Performers must also agree on the coordination of text and melody. In one version, Rubinov and Malakov differed on the setting of a particular line. They stopped

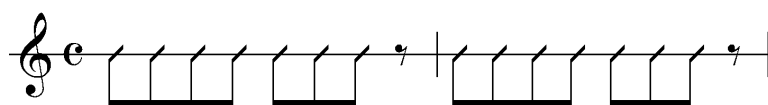
and discussed the coordination of the phrase until they reached a consensus. Malakov's phrasing of the line ended on scale degree 1 in the *middle* of line 6b; Rubinov adjusted the melody so that scale degree 1 was not reached until the end of the line. The group decided to go with Rubinov's treatment.

Figure 4.21. Malakov and Rubinov in line 6b.

Malakov 

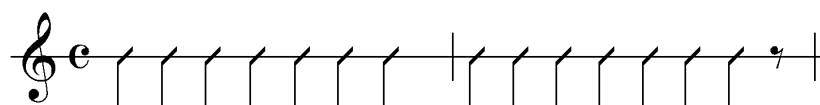
Rubinov 

In another instance, the regular division of the melody into two equal halves of seven syllables interrupted a word in line 9a, the name “Murdaxai” (one of the heroes of the Purim story):



Ta`-rif - ho bar no - mi-Mur da - xai Es - ter Ha-mal - ko

To solve this problem, on the CD performance Malakov stretches out “Mur” to flow into the next syllable and connect the phrases.



Ta`-rif - ho bar no - mi Mur - da - xai Es - ter Ha-mal - ko

In this analysis of “Id-i Purim,” it is evident that the musicians must engage several different structural levels of composition in rehearsal and performance. At times, they need to concentrate on the rhythms of the poem, figuring out syllable durations and ways of treating quantitative meters. At other times, they must decide how sections of a šu°ba should be applied to lines of a ġazal.

There are countless additional factors that I have not addressed. While performing “Id-i Purim,” each musician provided his own ornaments, resulting in a harmonic texture that was essential to the performance. And in ways that I could not see or hear, each performer drew on his prior experiences with “Qašqarča-i rok” and adjusted what he knew to the situation. In turn, these rehearsals and performances became part of his experience, to be drawn upon in the future.

#### **4.3. Compound Forms**

Once composed, individual compositions can be treated as autonomous compositions or, in keeping with the principle of combining components of progressively more elaborate structure, they can be combined into compound forms. The suite, epitomized by the Šašmaqom, is one of the most common and important ways that Bukharians organize compositions. Albums and concert programs are also compound forms, in which individual compositions are connected and sequentially presented. In albums and concerts, large-scale flow is a concern but performers have more freedom to order individual compositions than in a suite. One of the most important compound forms for Bukharians is the Jewish religious service, which is a sequenced assemblage of smaller compositions associated with specific behaviors, melodies, and texts.

Performers must engage compound compositions in many of the same ways that they engage smaller compositions. They must decide how they will organize materials and how they will elaborate structures in the course of performance. Individuals also apply personal interpretive styles to compound forms, and in the process they collectively contribute to interpretive styles of communities and institutions. To illustrate how people can elaborate compound compositions, I discuss the way Bukharians at one synagogue, Beth Gavriel on 108th Street, interpret and perform the compound form of the Jewish religious service.

#### 4.3.1. Suites

The quintessential Bukharian compound form is the Šašmaqom.<sup>31</sup> In the Šašmaqom, šu<sup>°</sup>ba-s are grouped together and sequenced based on their rhythmic cycles.<sup>32</sup> The groups of šu<sup>°</sup>ba-s are also put in order: the instrumental šu<sup>°</sup>ba-s (*muškilot*) start the maqom, and then the vocal šu<sup>°</sup>ba-s (the *nasr* section) are performed in two groups (except for Maqom °Iroq, which has no second group). The šu<sup>°</sup>ba-s in each group proceed from slow and stately to fast and joyous. Each complete sequence of *muškilot* and *nasr* makes a maqom, and each maqom has consistent melodic features (sub-maqoms, such as “bayot” in “Navo,” are modulations of sorts, like large-scale versions of

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31. As noted in Chapter 2, Šašmaqom translates as “six maqoms” or “six suites.” The maqoms, in order, are Buzruk, Rost, Navo, Dugoh, Segoh, and °Iroq. For more on the widespread use of suites in predominately Muslim regions, see al Faruqi 1985.

32. Following each main šu<sup>°</sup>ba, there can also be *tarona*-s (songs) in different rhythms, making sub-suites.

the namūd-s in individual šu°ba-s). These six maqoms are sequenced, making a suite of suites.

Today, entire maqoms are rarely (if ever) performed, but the conventional sequences in the maqom still inform practice. Sometimes, musicians will play “mini-suites” that link together three or so rhythmic genres. On 13 May 2004, Roshel Rubinov’s ensemble performed a private concert at the restaurant Troyka on Queens Boulevard, which was videotaped as a birthday present for a Šašmaqom connoisseur. The group performed “Talqin-i bayot,” “Nasr-i bayot,” and “Ufar-i bayot”<sup>33</sup> as a short fifteen-minute suite, respecting the standard order of rhythmic genres in the first group of vocal šu°ba-s (saraxbor–talqin–nasr–ufar). Abridged versions of entire maqoms, such as Mallaev’s rendition of Maqom Buzruk (*At the Bazaar of Love* [1997]), omit sections but still adhere to the conventional sequence of šu°ba-s.<sup>34</sup>

The concept of the suite is also manifested in the increasingly obligatory “DJ Remix” (or “popuri”) found at the end of contemporary Bukharian albums. The remix is a suite linking together all or most of the songs on the album. The songs are usually shortened, subjected to new rhythmic treatments, and presented in the same sequence as the album tracks. In between each abridged song, the DJ inserts a transitional effect or

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33. They performed a *tarona* (song) of “Ufar-i bayot,” rather than the ufar itself.

34. There are examples of performers playing abridged versions of Šašmaqom suites and not following the standard sequence. Jurabeg Nabiev, a Tajik musician, recorded Maqom Navo (Nabiev 1997) with instrumental šu°ba-s between vocal ones and ending with “Čapandoz-i navo,” two highly unusual decisions. I have not heard any Bukharians in New York perform Šašmaqom as *Šašmaqom* (and not just as part of a general program) with these kinds of innovations.

figure. Such remixes can be found on Khavasov 2002, Narkolaev 2003 and 2005, and Rubinov 2002.

#### 4.3.2. *Albums and Programs*

The most common way for šu<sup>c</sup>ba-s and other individual compositions to be performed is as autonomous pieces in a concert program or album. A typical concert program by a maqom group such as Ilyos Mallaev's Ensemble Maqam or Roshel Amin's ensemble might include a few šu<sup>c</sup>ba-s from the Šašmaqom, some non-canonical *xalqī* tunes, some folk songs, and some pieces from other classical maqom repertoires, such as the Fergana-Tashkent *Čormaqom* ("four maqoms").<sup>35</sup>

In composing concert programs, the conventional ordering of the Šašmaqom can be a model. Performers seem to want to apply the feeling and flow that one finds in the Šašmaqom, in which the general mood proceeds from serious to festive, and lighter songs create pauses and diversions within this overall contour. Concerts might begin slowly, with an instrumental or a saraxbor, and end with ufar numbers and dancing. Mallaev's group, for example, played the following program at Symphony Space on 19 February 2005:

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35. The preference of Bukharian Jews for mixing and matching autonomous pieces contrasts with the performance practice of the Academy of Maqâm, the most recent representatives of the Šašmaqom in Tajikistan, which performs long suites. At a dinner/informal performance of the Academy at a Bukharian restaurant in Queens on 20 March 2006, the difference was striking. The Academy first played one long suite lasting over one hour, after which Bukharian Jewish musicians in attendance spent the same length of time forming impromptu ensembles and performing individual maqom compositions lasting five to ten minutes each.

1. “Saraxbor-i navo” + two tarona.
2. “To bod-i sabo” (music by Neryo Aminov, poem by Zebun-nisa).
3. “Dilbar” (music by Yakhiel Sabzanov, in a fast 6/8).
4. “Širin jon” (another fast piece).
5. “Ufar-i savt-i kalon” (from maqom Rost) + “Noz noz.”
6. “Man-i divona ro” (music by Ilyos Mallaev—starts rubato with vocal solo, then ensemble enters in a medium fast tempo).
7. “Qurbon olam” (music by Gavriel Mulloqandov, poem by Fuzuli).
8. “Eastern melody” (music by Mallaev—an instrumental mini-suite).
9. “Ey xonum” (starts rubato with vocal solo, then ensemble enters in fast tempo).
10. “Nozanin” (fast song with dancing).

The concert programs of many Bukharian groups have a fairly regular sequence. The standard set of Ilyos Mallaev’s Ensemble Maqam is similar to what was presented at Symphony Space, although the inclusion of a guest singer from Uzbekistan (Rustam Samarqandi) necessitated some changes. For example, Samarqandi sang “Qurbon olam” where Ezro Malakov would normally sing “Zulf-i parišon” (hardly a major change since the melody is the same). Also, the group normally starts with their “Bukharian Jewish wedding song,” but perhaps they felt that “Saraxbor-i navo” was more appropriate for a prestigious Manhattan venue.

Certain pieces are standard vehicles for individuals in the ensemble. Almost all concerts by Ensemble Maqam that I have seen have included “Ey, xonum,” a feature for Muhabbat Shamaeva; “Eastern melody” (formerly “Georgian miniatures”), a feature for

Yosef Abramov; and “Zulf-i parišon,” a feature for Ezro Malakov. Other pieces are trademarks for the ensemble as a unit. “Yalalum,” one of Ilyos Mallaev’s most popular compositions, is usually played at the end of concerts as a kind of band theme.

The flow of a concert program strongly affects the audience’s reception of the event. In a performance at the China Institute (New York) on 2 August 2005, Roshel Amin’s group played:

1. “Navruz-i ajam” (rubato tanbūr solo, then medium tempo instrumental version with ensemble).
2. “Imruz” (music by Neryo Aminov, poem by Hilali).
3. “Girya” (mini-suite from maqom Segoh—rubato introduction segues into zarb-i talqin and then zarb-i ufar).
4. “Čul-i ʿiroq” (same sequence as “Navruz-i ajam”).
5. “Čorgoh” (slow, sung by Amin).
6. “Dance, dedicated to 9/11.”

The program ended with this dance, but it was not the usual joyous ufar affair. Rather, it was an original programmatic mini-suite by Amin that utilized “Čorgoh” as a model melody-type. The composition tells the story of a woman who is happily walking with her son on September 11, 2001, only to have the Twin Towers collapse. She loses her son and then finds him dead. The piece finished with Zuhra Safarova, the dancer, collapsing on the floor.

After this piece, the mood was understandably somber. The audience clapped but shifted uncomfortably in their seats. Quickly, the musicians realized that they would have to revert to a more standard format and end with a happy dance number. They decided on a mini-suite, “Munojot” followed by “Savt-i munojot.” As the musicians played, Safarova employed the typical and very effective technique of bringing people out of the audience to dance with her. This time when the piece ended, the audience clapped enthusiastically and left with a very positive feeling.

#### 4.3.3. *The Jewish Religious Service as a Compound Composition*

##### 4.3.3.1. Structure of Jewish Prayer

The Jewish service is a compound form, a sequence of diverse materials that have come to be associated with generic types of activities. Like the Šašmaqom, the Jewish service is an ordered assemblage of units of increasing complexity. The texts are drawn from a variety of sources spanning millennia, including the Hebrew Bible (another assemblage of diverse materials), the Talmud, and liturgical poems called *piyyutim* written as late as the sixteenth century. Services are meant to be performed, and each community has their own way of elaborating the basic structure. Furthermore, communities and individual actors modify, expand, or reduce the content of the service in practice.

There are three obligatory daily services for Jews: morning (*Šaḥarīt*), afternoon (*Minḥāh*), and evening (*‘Arvīt*). The central prayer for each is the *‘Amīdāh*, or “standing.”

The prayer is also called the *Šəmōneh °Esreh*, or Eighteen Benedictions.<sup>36</sup> The °Amīdāh is an excellent example of the modular type of composition at work in Jewish prayer. It is composed of various selections from the Hebrew Bible, and paraphrases and expansions of Biblical texts. The selections are combined into the benedictions: *Āvōt* (Patriarchs), *Gəvūrōt* (Might), *Qədūšāh* (Holiness), *Da°at* (Insight), *Təšvāh* (Repentance), *Səliḥāh* (Forgiveness), *Gə°ulāh* (Redemption), *Rəfū°ah* (Health and Healing), *Birkat ha-Šānīm* (Blessing of the Years), *Qībūš Gāluyōt* (Ingathering of the Exiles), *Hāšivat ha-Mišpāt* (Restoration of Peace), *Birkat ha-Mīnīm* (Against Heretics), *°Al ha-Šadiqīm* (The Righteous), *Binyan Yərūšālāyim* (Rebuilding Jerusalem), *Malxūt Bēt Dāvid* (Davidic Reign), *Šōmē°a Təfillāh* (Acceptance of Prayer), *Rəšēh* (Temple Service), *Mōdīm* (Thanksgiving), and *Birkat Šālōm* (Peace). Over time, the benedictions and their order became standardized, although variations remain in different rites and communities.

Before and after the °Amidah are sections constructed in the same way: Biblical passages and later paraphrases and expansions are ordered and combined into larger units.<sup>37</sup> Šaḥarīt services, for example, start with morning benedictions and the *pəšūqē dəzimrāh* (“verses of song,” a collection of Psalms, other Biblical passages, and poems), which serve as a warm-up for the central points that follow: the *Šōma°* (Deuteronomy 6:4–9, 11:13–21, and Numbers 15:37–41) and its benedictions, and the °Amīdāh. The

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36. Originally eighteen, now there are nineteen benedictions. However, the “eighteen” has been retained (Elbogen [1913] 1993:24-25, 31-37).

37. Although there are variations from rite to rite, the following outline applies to the entire Jewish world. The Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist movements have developed their own versions of the service, but they too proceed from this basic structure.

°Amīdāh is first performed silently, or almost silently, by those present (it is required of the men), and then repeated by one or more of the prayer leaders, on behalf of the congregation as a whole and for those who might not be able to perform the prayer properly. After the °Amīdāh on certain days there is a Torah reading. Prayers called “supplications” end the service, as a mirror image of sorts to the opening pāsūqē dāzimrāh. Each of these sections is distinct, and different forms of the Aramaic *Qaddīš*, the “Call to Worship” (*Bārḫū*), and various Biblical passages and hymns serve as transitions or introductions. Mystically, the worshipper proceeds through the prayer sections from the “World of Action” to the “World of Formation” or “World of Angels”; then with the Šəma°, to the “World of Creation”; and then to the “World of Emanation,” with the high point of the service, the °Amīdāh; and then finally back to the “World of Action” (Steinsaltz 2000:87). This arc-like model is reminiscent of the daromad–miyonxat–dunasr–furovard structure applied to Šašmaqom and other Bukharian melodies.

The overall structure of the service is subject to changes, adjustments, and variations. Following the general compositional principle, the service is lengthened by adding prayers and selections to the core structure, or even an additional service altogether (called *musaf*). During the repetition of the °Amīdāh, for example, certain benedictions are expanded, and on special holidays and festivals, such as Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, most of the prayer sections are considerably augmented with additional prayers and piyyutim. On Friday night, the beginning of the Sabbath, the Miḥḥāh and °Arvīt services are connected with a special section of Psalms and songs called *Qabbalat Šabbāt*, a custom which was started in the seventeenth century by Rabbi Isaac Luria and

the mystics of Safed (Şəvat). Other changes are determined according to the time of day; for example, in the Minḥah service, there is no recitation of the Šəma<sup>c</sup>. The service might have variations in the sequence of particular items or in non-obligatory (but still standard) sections, depending on the rite to which the congregation subscribes.<sup>38</sup> Other variations that are not a matter of altering the fundamental texts of the service, such as melodic variations, fall under the rubric of *minhag*, or custom.

#### 4.3.3.2. Performance of Prayer

Prayer, like the other structures discussed in this chapter, is a structure that is designed to be performed, and individuals and communities develop their own styles of performance and interpretation based on rite, minhag, and the preferences of the congregants. Ideally, prayer takes place communally (ten men can constitute a *minyan*, or quorum) and in a dedicated location—the synagogue—built according to strict guidelines (Elbogen [1913] 1993:343-63). This section describes ways in which Jews commonly perform sections of the prayer service, and the specific take on the service at Congregation Beth Gavriel.<sup>39</sup> The performance styles and actions described below apply

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38. The dominant service orders or rites in the contemporary Jewish world are the Ashkenazic, Sephardic, and “Sefard” (not Sephardic, as the name implies, but rather the Ḥassidic/Lurianic order). Although Bukharians are not technically a Sephardic community (see Chapter 1), Bukharian congregations have used the Sephardic rite since the late eighteenth century.

39. Most of the service at Beth Gavriel is typical of other Orthodox congregations, especially those that adhere to the Sephardic rite. This section is not intended to exceptionalize the Bukharian service, but rather to explore the idea of the Jewish service as a compound form.

to men only, as women do not sing audibly, read from the Torah, or participate in various other aspects of Jewish worship at Beth Gavriel and most other Orthodox synagogues.

In the Jewish service, there are many different genres of performance practices for worship. There is a range of approaches to performing liturgical texts, ranging from a silent or barely audible delivery to loud, virtuosic singing. Judit Frigyesi has constructed a preliminary typology of these performance styles (Frigyesi 2002:122), which is especially useful for my analysis of the service as a compound form made up of distinct genres. As will be shown in specific parts of the service, these styles are often linked to specific movements, gestures, and behaviors. Her typology is as follows (with some of my own minor modifications):

1. Flowing-rhythm recitation which is performed by each individual and by the precentor in a simultaneous but independent fashion
  - a. silent, barely audible reading
  - b. almost speechlike, quasi non-musical, fast recitation
  - c. simple melodic recitation on few notes without much melodic elaboration
  - d. the same as (c) but with somewhat more elaborate melody and quasi-strophic structuring
  - e. melodic types often in a quasi-strophic form with more or less fixed overall melodic outline, typical rhythmic and melodic patterns but with ample ground for individual versions

- f. variation on the basis of more or less (melodically and rhythmically) fixed pieces associated with particular texts and function
  - g. highly ornamental and melodically elaborate, personal improvisation based on or replacing any of the above styles
2. metric and strophic songs which are typically performed in a co-ordinated manner, by the congregation together.

At Beth Gavriel, for much of the service, Simḥa Elishaev, Imonuel Shimonov, Ezro Malakov, and other established congregants will lead the prayers in their specific nusah style (Frigyesi's 1.c. and 1.d.), with the congregation responding or joining at appropriate times. Responses might be declaimed (e.g., "Amen," "emet," or "Barux Šəmo" in many places, and "yəhē šəmē rabā məvārax lə'ālam lə'ālmē 'ālmayā" in the Qaddiš [Frigyesi's 1.b.]), sung, or in *sprechstimme*. Sung responses are often repetitions of passages sung by the leader, as in this passage:

Figure 4.22. "Adonai melex," as sung at Beth Gavriel.

Leader: A - do - nai me - lex      A - do - nai mā - lāx      A - do - nai yim - lōx \_\_\_\_\_      lə · 'ō - lām vā - 'ed

Cong.: A - do - nai me - lex      A - do - nai mā - lāx      A - do - nai yim - lōx \_\_\_\_\_      lə · 'ō - lām vā - 'ed

In such repetitions, the congregation sings heterophonically. Although the congregation mostly proceeds with the service together, it is crucial that each worshipper be free to

elaborate the melodic patterns as he sees fit. Jewish prayer is a balance between communal and individual worship.

The leaders will also sing more elaborate melodies for specific sections of the service (Frigyesi's 1.g.). These might be brief melodies, associated with particular words or syllables, such as those marked by certain te<sup>◌</sup>amim symbols or tropes in texts culled from the Torah (Seroussi et al. 2001:41-47). In the performance of the Šəma<sup>◌</sup>, the quote-like tropes on (vəhā)yū (hadvārīm ha'ēleh), (lə'aha)vā (et-Adonai), and (a)ni (Adonai elohēxem) receive long, melismatic treatments. At some moments, the leaders sing melodies that are fairly long, sometimes lasting over ten minutes. At Beth Gavriel, one such section is the performance of Nišmat as in the style of *ašula-i kalon*, in which the leaders trade passages back and forth in rising tessituras until culminating in a duet or trio. Ezro Malakov is usually featured during climactic moments, such as the words “Anī Adonai Elohēxem” (“I am the Lord your God”), sung during the repetition of the <sup>◌</sup>Amīdāh in the musaf service at *Qədūšāh*. The elaborate melodies sung by Malakov and the other prayer leaders are often from the maqom standard repertoire and, as such, are some of the most distinctly Bukharian moments of the service.

Other hymns are performed by the entire congregation as a song (Frigyesi's 2.). Ezro Malakov often has the role of leading the worshippers, as in the “Yigdal” prayer that ends Friday night services. The tune (shown in Figure 4.23) is ideal for group participation, in a narrow range and highly repetitious:

Figure 4.23. "Yigdal," tune sung at Beth Gavriel.

Yig - dal E - lō-hīm hai və yiš - ta - baḥ nim - ṣa və ēn 'ēt el mə šī - ū - tō E -

ḥad və ēn yā-hīd kə yi - hū - dō nē - lām və-gam ēn sōf lə aḥ - dū - tō

The service at Beth Gavriel also has sections for laymen to perform elaborate melodies. During group singing, one can simply sing louder than everyone else, but there are also songs where any congregant can sing a strophe as a solo. Examples of these songs are “Adonai šāma<sup>˚</sup>tī šim<sup>˚</sup>axā” (during Šaḥarīt of Rosh Hashanah), “Āḥōt qəṭannāh” (during <sup>˚</sup>Arvīt of Rosh Hashanah) and “Anēnu.” An inspired worshipper simply begins when the previous strophe ends or after a refrain following the strophe. If two or more sing, others may drop out, or they might even sing together. There may also be pauses if no one jumps right in. When a congregant sings something that catches the attention of others, participants often shout words of encouragement or stock responses (“ey salomat bošed!”). During Qabbalat Šabbāt at Beth Gavriel, two or three boys under bar mitzvah age might lead the standard Psalms and “Ləxāh Dōdī” (the central hymn of Qabbalat Šabbāt), singing loudly and with great enthusiasm.<sup>40</sup> The Psalms are sung responsorially, with the boys singing an ornamented line spanning an octave and the

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40. The text of the Psalms for Qabbalat Šabbāt encourage this sort of participation: “Come, let us sing joyously to the Lord . . . let us raise a shout for Him in song!” (Psalm 95), “Sing to the Lord a new song, sing to the Lord, all the earth” (Psalm 96), “Break into joyous songs of praise! Sing praise to the Lord with the lyre, with the lyre and melodious song. With trumpets and the blast of the horn . . .” (Psalm 98).

congregation responding in a narrower range of three whole-steps. The congregation sings in unison, although occasionally someone will harmonize the melody a fifth above. The refrain for “Ləxāh Dōdī” (Figure 4.24) is repetitious and catchy, like the melody for Yigdal.

Figure 4.24. "Ləxāh Dōdī," tune sung at Beth Gavriel.



Special occasions encourage distinct kinds of song and movement. A circumcision (*bərīt mīlāh*) performed at Beth Gavriel is a welcome opportunity for blessings, songs, and honors. The ceremonial coat (*joma*) is worn by the honoree at such important times, and he will be praised with songs. In response, the honoree usually makes substantial donations to the synagogue. Ezro Malakov may regale the new father with songs such as “Ruz ba ruz,” “Xudovando,” “Nagila haleluya,” “Moro zi xob-i ġaflat,” or even recent poems by Mikhoel Zavul, Roshel Rubinov, or Ilyos Mallaev, inserting the name of the honoree where appropriate. At specific times, such as after the actual *bərīt* is performed, the congregation will also sing (typical choices are “Eliyahu hanavi” and “Mazal tov u siman tov”).

Prayers, musical styles, and movements are linked in the Jewish service. For example, the silent/barely audible performance of the °Amīdāh is set apart from the rest of the service by standing (at or around “təhilōt lə’ēl °elyōn”), facing Jerusalem, and

moving in a prescribed manner. An English-language siddur available for use at Beth Gavriel, *Siddur Qol Sassoon*,<sup>41</sup> instructs:

At the word “תהלות” stand and prepare to begin the *Amidah* . . . . Take three steps back and then take three steps forward, thereby returning to the original place to begin the *Amidah* . . . . (Toledano 2002a:388)

During the °Amīdāh, there are other motions: bowing and straightening at specific times, and rocking back and forth on one’s heels (not obligatory, but conventional). Furthermore, the °Amīdāh is not to be interrupted for any reason. The near-silence and unique set of motions designate the °Amīdāh as a particularly serious and holy moment.<sup>42</sup>

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41. The vast majority of congregants at Beth Gavriel use other siddurim on hand at the building, containing either only Hebrew texts or Hebrew and Cyrillic transliterations. *Siddur Qol Sassoon*, which is used in Syrian congregations in Brooklyn, is available but rarely used by worshippers. Following the Bukharian service with this siddur involves some adjustments in order.

42. Although worship depends on structure, order, rules, customs, and habits, it should be noted that people often disobey rules. Often, one can learn a lot about what people *do* do by what they are told *not* to do. Here, again, there is a range of possibilities guided by norms and conventions. During the °Amidah, for example, it is highly unusual for a worshipper to be disruptive or stay seated; the prayer, after all, only takes fifteen minutes or so to perform. In contrast, during the Torah reading, which can last well over an hour, congregants often socialize despite the siddur’s reminder that “[d]uring the reading of the Torah it is forbidden to speak. Furthermore, all must listen to the reading” (Toledano 2002a:530). At times, these proscriptions can reach almost comical proportions, as when the worshipper is told that “[c]are should be exercised that men and women do not mingle during the recitation of *Tashlich* [a service performed at a body of water], or on the way to and from the water” (2002b:483), or that “[t]he shofar blowing does not signal the end of *Yom Kippur*” (2002c:1058). At Beth Gavriel and many other synagogues, *Tashlich* mingling and leaving after the last shofar blast are *de rigueur*.

Other sections of the liturgy are also set off by specific behaviors and actions. The Šema<sup>°</sup> is declaimed while covering the eyes with the right hand (many also make a special attempt to pronounce the <sup>°</sup>ayin and dalet, which are printed larger than the other letters).<sup>43</sup> The priestly blessing is set apart by the descendants of the priestly caste (*kohanim*) going to the rostrum and all of the worshippers covering their heads with their prayer shawls (fathers generally cover their sons). During the singing of “Ləxāh dōdī,” the congregation faces the entrance of the synagogue at the words “bo’ī vəšālōm” (“enter in peace”), and then bows and turns for the line “bo’ī kalāh” (“enter O Bride”).

One specific section of a service, the reading (chanting aloud) of the Torah on the Šaharīt of the Sabbath, can serve as an example of a long conventional series of actions elaborated in a specific way by a congregation. In every synagogue, the reading of the Torah is typically preceded by the opening of the Ark (which holds the scrolls), and a procession. The Torah reading itself is conducted in an ordered fashion according to conventional divisions of the text. At Beth Gavriel, the one reading the Torah is free to read in his own nusah (in this context, nusah refers to a personal melody or melodic style), and there is no overriding modal principle to the cantillation (as there is, for example, among Syrian Jews in Brooklyn [Kligman 2001]). Before and after each reading, the congregation says blessings. At Beth Gavriel, there is first an auction for various honors (in Persian, Hebrew, and English), led by Mullo Avrom, a wealthy and respected member of the community. When one successfully bids on an honor, he is blessed by Mullo Avrom and/or the Rabbi. The auction is followed by a sermon (*suxan*),

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43. Figure 5.7, in the next chapter, shows the Šema<sup>°</sup> as printed in one prayerbook.

given by the Rabbi in Tajik Persian and related to topics presented in the current Torah portion. Other individuals may also be invited to give speeches.

Congregants get as close to the Ark as possible when it is opened in preparation of removing the Torah. On the way to the podium, the Torah is paraded around the congregation, and congregants are invited to touch it (at Beth Gavriel, as in many other synagogues, congregants sing the hymn “rōmēmū Adonai, Elohēnū” during the procession). To present the Torah, each Torah is opened and raised, then shown to each section of the congregation—when one sees the words on the scroll, he says “vəzot ha-Tōrāh ašer-sām Mošeh lifnē bənē Yisrāēl . . .” (“This is the Torah that Moses set before the children of Israel . . .”), holds up a loop made from the fringes of his prayer shawl (*šitsit*), touches the loop to his eyes, and kisses it.

Before the Torah is read, the screen dividing the women’s section is up and many women make a sweeping motion with their arms towards their eyes. Once the Torah reading begins, the screen is lowered. Each person called to bless the Torah is announced loudly by the *gabbai* of the congregation. The honoree’s time on the pulpit is an opportunity for him to have blessings said for specific people, and sometimes he will himself announce whom in the congregation he wishes to honor—typically, he will announce families (“mišpaḥat Malakov, mišpaḥat Elishaev, mišpaḥat Abramov”) and then extend his blessing to “kol ha-keniso” (“the whole synagogue”). He blesses the Torah while touching his prayer shawl to the Torah’s case. Following the blessing, a bar mitzvah or someone trained in cantillation lifts the fabric covering the words of the Torah and chants a section of the weekly portion. The fabric is replaced, the Torah is blessed again, and more prayers are said for the honoree, at which point he sits on the pulpit until

after the next blessing. On his way back to his seat, congregants shake hands with him and acknowledge his honor.

#### **4.4. Conclusion**

Bukharian performers and composers learn and employ certain principles of musical and poetic structure. These principles constitute a set of issues that Bukharians engage and expand upon through creative practices. Bukharians have particular ways of understanding rhythm, melody, and text; of coordinating these elements into compositional modules, which can be mixed and matched; of creating long compound compositions out of shorter units; and of elaborating compositions and structures in performance.

These attitudes regarding composition and structure remain fundamental to Bukharian music making. Although this chapter predominately described maqom compositions, tui and Jewish repertoire also rely on these ways of thinking about music. Composers and performers of tui songs, for instance, create pieces by mixing and matching rhythms, “musics” (melodies), and lyrics. At tui-s, these pieces are linked into long compound numbers and elaborated on the spot. Consistency in compositional issues may be due to the fact that many of the same Bukharian performers are involved in these different styles.

A modular approach creates continuity over time. Composers explicitly relate new compositions to older ones by drawing on one or another existing module. “Id-i Purim” is a new poem based on the framework of a long established poem and set to an existing melody and rhythm. Thus, only one aspect of the composition is actually “new.”

Similarly, Roshel Rubinov's new arrangement of "Tamanno" is largely a matter of a new rhythmic composition; as Rubinov explained it, he set the existing poem and melody to his own new 4/4 rhythm. Modules also create continuity from person to person, as when, for example, musicians share MiniDiscs of instrumental arrangements.

The concept of musical modules can be applied to other aspects of Bukharian repertoire and practice. Musicians themselves develop a repertoire of personal styles and idiosyncratic approaches to interpreting compositions and playing instruments. Roshel Rubinov and Avrom Tolmasov, for example, have distinct "sounds" based on particular ways of thinking and moving. They are recognizable whether they are playing guitar, tanbūr, tor, or sitar, and they can adapt their styles to different repertoires. In ensembles, the group sound consists of the amalgam of musicians' personal styles. Thus, each musician's style is a compositional component of sorts. Personal styles are directly related to compositional structure, as for example in an ensemble performance of a saraxbor, when each singer generally performs discrete ġazal couplets, or during worship, when prayer leaders alternate verses of sacred texts.

Finally, modular composition relates to the construction of a Bukharian self. Bukharian musicians apply their personal styles to many different repertoires, creating a diverse range of options for performance. Similarly, Bukharians in New York learn different sets of skills for social interactions. Roshel Rubinov's fluency in several languages and musical styles, for example, enables him to perform for a wide range of listeners as a musician, and he also has skills as a barber and entrepreneur. Ezro Malakov mixes and matches his skills as a ḥazzan, popular singer, and community leader. Their personalities and individual modes of behavior remain consistent even as they wear

different hats and apply their skills to various social situations. An attitude of developing personal qualities that can be mixed and matched is a key element in keeping Bukharian ideas and values intact while adapting to life in a new environment.

## CHAPTER 5. TEACHING AND LEARNING REPERTOIRE

The ethnographic data in this section come from conversations with practitioners as well as from my experiences studying tanbūr with two different teachers: Roshel Amin (from Fall 2003 to Spring 2004) and Roshel Rubinov (from Summer 2004 to Fall 2005). With both teachers, I had weekly lessons (with occasional lapses) of one to two hours. Judging from conversations with other students and observations of their lessons, my experiences with music pedagogy in Queens were typical in method, frequency, and length.

My lessons with Roshel Amin took place on the sixth floor of the Queens Gymnasia, a predominately Bukharian Jewish day school on Woodhaven Boulevard. Amin’s “Shashmakom” school is split between Amin’s office and two classrooms. On his office walls (one of which is shown in Figure 5.1), Amin has prominently displayed pictures of Bukharian food, clothing, ritual objects, and famous musicians of the past and present, including Barno Işhoqova, Ezro Malakov, Yosef Gurgov, Gavriel Mulloqandov, and of course, his father, Neryo Aminov. In his office he also keeps several instruments: rubob, tor, and a three-stringed tanbūr that Amin claims was played by Levicha. The five volumes of the Belyayev edition of the Šašmaqom sit on Amin’s desk.

Figure 5.1. Roshel Amin's office. Among the many Bukharians pictured on the wall are Lev Levaev (top), Barno Işhoqova (top right), and Mikhoel Tolmasov (bottom right). The Belyayev edition of the *Šašmaqom* can be seen at the bottom left against the wall.



At my first meeting with Amin, I explained my background and my intention to study Bukharian music. I tried some of his instruments in order to pick one. I was most interested in playing tanbūr, despite its reputation as a difficult instrument and the formidable challenges presented by its long neck, high bridge, and diatonic fretting, which requires subtle changes in pressure and string tension to play chromatically (although one can outfit a tanbūr with “half-frets” [*nim-parda*] to aid chromatic intonation). I ordered a tanbūr to be picked up at a subsequent lesson. Of the ten to twenty students at the school, there were no other tanbūr students. Most of the students are young boys studying voice or percussion. Amin’s son Jacob, a realtor in his early twenties, was usually on hand at the school and was learning rubob and guitar.

My lessons with Roshel Rubinov took place at his house, in a room on the second floor containing a TV, couch, and instruments hanging on one wall. Rubinov, who works as a barber during the day and as a professional musician playing tui-s at nights, only had Friday mornings and afternoons free, before sundown and the beginning of the Sabbath. I would usually go to his house at around 11 am and we would have a lesson for an hour or two. Like Roshel Amin, Roshel Rubinov had no tanbūr students besides me; most of his students were learning to sing and/or play guitar.

### **5.1. Acquiring Skills**

Music is a practice, involving habits, movements, and styles of interpretation and cognition. All of these aspects of musical practice, including actions performed by the mind, are cultivated bodily skills. One must train one’s fingers to move in certain ways, learn to breathe in the proper manner, and develop the ability to respond properly to aural

and visual symbols. The skills one acquires should be flexible and extendable, internalized as a behavioral mode or style, so that the musician can not only present what he or she already knows but also can think and react properly in new and unfamiliar situations. Through practice, one becomes a practitioner.

Skills and styles are connected to repertoires of moves, gestures, and responses as well as repertoires of compositions. Repertoire and skill are interdependent: one needs to develop the proper skills and abilities in order to have access to the repertoire, and at the same time, repertoire is the avenue by which these skills and abilities are cultivated. This section explores three intertwined aspects of musical practice acquired via the study of repertoire: instrumental technique, memory, and cognitive style.

### *5.1.1. Instrumental Technique*

In my first lessons with Amin, he taught me an ordered sequence of actions to be repeated whenever I prepared to play the tanbūr. Amin instructed me to first raise the bridge (*xarak*) to create string tension, as the bridge is collapsed after playing. Then, I moved the bridge into position. Amin had me wet the spots for the bridge with a tiny bit of saliva in order to keep it from sliding. Most of all, I had to tune the strings (*soz kardan*). It was of the utmost importance to both Amin and Rubinov that the instrument was perfectly tuned before I attempted anything else. The tanbūrist Roman Tolmasov reiterated the importance of tuning via a story about the noted Uzbek tanbūrist Turgun Alimatov. At one concert, Roman told me, Alimatov tuned the tanbūr for twenty minutes, then tuned “himself” for fifteen minutes, and only then played a composition, which lasted five minutes. Intonation is a constant concern for tanbūrists, and I found it difficult

to control. I would often place my left-hand fingers too far to the left or right, or I would press too hard on the strings, resulting in out-of-tune notes; furthermore, frets would move haphazardly according to shifts in the weather.

After learning how to tune, I learned how to hold the instrument against my chest, strike the strings with the plectrum (*noxun*) on my right-hand index finger, and position my left-hand fingers on the neck of the instrument. At this point, I began to play rhythms, melodies, and patterns found in maqom compositions. As shown in Figure 5.2, I played one cycle of a particular zarb (*nasr* in this example, but also *talqin*, *ufar*, and *soqinoma*) in the form of a scale. I aimed to keep each note in tune with the proper amount of left-hand finger pressure as I moved up and down the entire length of the instrument, fret by fret.

Figure 5.2. Beginning of a scale played in zarb-i *nasr*.



As shown in Figure 5.3, Amin also had me practice the opening phrase of the melody I was to learn, “Savt-i navo,” in a scalar fashion.

Figure 5.3. Beginning of an exercise in zarb-i *čapandoz*, using melodic pattern from opening phrase of “Savt-i navo.”



Roshel Rubinov had me work on similar exercises in which I would play a certain number of strokes per note, either covering one octave or the length of the instrument. I

started with four strokes per note (up-down-up-down) and then proceeded to two strokes, one stroke, and three strokes. I also studied thirds (do-mi-re-fa-etc.) with the same variety of strokes. Amin and Rubinov both consistently underscored the importance of having the rhythmic cycle internalized in the motion of the right-hand index finger. They would often accompany me on the doira, so I could practice playing the compositions in time with the rhythmic cycle and striking the strings in coordination with the zarb pattern.

Scales and patterns removed from compositions only constituted a small portion of my tanbūr studies. In fact, they seemed to be almost an exceptional aspect of my learning method, as not one musician mentioned scales, patterns, or even “maqom” (in the “scale-end” sense of relationships among pitches) when I inquired about skill acquisition. Roman Tolmasov, for example, admitted to never learning scales on any of the many string instruments he plays; when I described the exercises to him, he shrugged and said, “Maybe it helps, I don’t know.” Instead, musicians spoke almost exclusively of learning songs, tunes, and the Šašmaqom (as a collection of pieces). In my case, I began learning compositions in their entirety almost immediately.

My teachers impressed upon me the idea that I would develop my technique through the memorization and internalization of compositions. Amin believes that the best way to learn tanbūr technique and maqom style is to jump right in with difficult repertoire, and indeed, most of my technical practice stemmed from encountering passages that presented an unusual amount of difficulty and playing that passage with increasing speed until I had trained my fingers to make the proper movements. The first

piece that I learned from Amin, “Savt-i navo” or “Čapandoz-i navo”<sup>1</sup> (from the Navo cycle of the Šašmaqom), posed many technical challenges. Amin explained:

I don't want to give you something easy. No. I want [to give you something] from the classical [repertoire]. You read at your university, you understand what talqin is, from which maqom this song is. I could give you an easier song today, but no. I want to give you classic [music], don't worry.

Although Amin refers to my university education, his teaching philosophy holds true for his other students. He teaches the elementary and middle school students in his “Maqom class” the long and demanding “Saraxbor-i navo.”

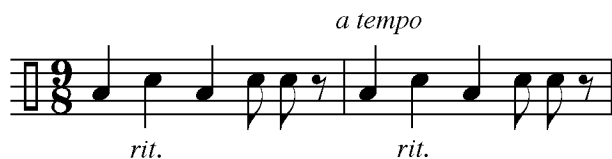
The zarb of “Savt-i navo,” *čapandoz*, is characterized by five gradually slowing strokes, which return to the original tempo with every repetition (as shown in Figure 5.4).<sup>2</sup> The unusual rhythm of this zarb is highly dependent on subtlety, nuance, and interaction, making it especially *vaznin* (serious and advanced). Playing this pattern on the tanbūr in time with the doira can be quite difficult. On the other hand, the overall pace is moderate, and the speed of finger movement can be manageable for a beginner.

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1. Amin used both titles interchangeably. In the Belyayev *Šašmaqom*, the piece is called “Savt-i navo.” Roman Tolmasov insisted that it should be called “Čapandoz-i navo” (the title also used on Jurabeg Nabiev’s recording of *Maqām Navā* [1997]).

2. This particular way of approaching pulse is also a feature of the better-known *zarb-i talqin*. Amin equated *čapandoz* and *talqin*, and on Jurabeg Nabiev’s performances of “Talqin-i bayot” and “Čapandoz-i navo” (on *Maqām Navā* [1997]), both zarb-s are played in the same manner.

Figure 5.4. Zarb-i čapandoz.



Like “Saraxbor-i navo,” “Savt-i navo” contains every registral section—daromad, miyonxat, dunasr, awj, namūd, and furovard—and proceeds systematically through them according to the couplets of the ġazal to which it is set (see Chapter 4). Students learning quintessential Šašmaqom pieces, two examples of which are “Savt-i navo” and “Saraxbor-i navo,” will ideally internalize and absorb structural elements, concepts, and techniques essential to the maqom style.

Like Amin, Rubinov stressed intonation and rhythm, but he also emphasized some different skills than Amin. It seemed to me that Rubinov was more concerned with quickly providing me with a repertoire that I could perform reasonably well in public. He taught me certain skills to make me independent; for example, he showed me how to replace the strings on my tanbūr when they broke (a frequent occurrence). He always stressed that I should play tunes the “right way” (*roh-i durust*) even while also playing them the “easy way” (*roh-i oson*). The “easy way” was stripped of all the expressive ornaments that are part and parcel of each musician’s personal style. In addition to playing notes correctly and in tune, a musician might play some notes with a “groan” (*nola*) or add quick flurries of grace notes called *foršlag*, a Russian musical term derived from the German *Vorschlag* (one or two grace notes is called *foršlag-i kutoh*, “short grace note,” a longer series of grace notes is called *foršlag-i diroz*, “long grace note”). To teach me how to ornament (*oroiš dodan*) a melody, Rubinov would isolate specific patterns at

specific places. It was crucial to Rubinov that I learn when, where, and how to use these elements properly before I introduced them on my own. For Rubinov, a melody without ornaments was “easy” but still “right,” and thus, ideal for pedagogy. When I observed Rubinov teaching singers, he also emphasized the “right way” by correcting his students’ pronunciation. Vowels were especially important, and Rubinov would isolate a vowel when necessary and physically demonstrate exactly how the vowel should be vocalized.

Rubinov also trained me to perform with as little bodily movement as possible. He considered excessive swaying, nodding, and other such movements to detract from the performance. In general, I found that this aesthetic preference seemed to be shared by other instrumentalists, most of whom, when performing, moved very little beyond the motions necessary to play their instruments.<sup>3</sup> Singers who do not accompany themselves on instruments may move more. Ezro Malakov, for instance, often combines high notes with emphatic head movements and dances subtly during instrumental breaks. Singers who are also featured dancers, such as Tamara Kataeva, will leave their sitting position in the ensemble to move about the stage or dance floor at appropriate times. By limiting their motions, instrumentalists keep the audience’s attention focused on the movements of dancers and singers.

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3. Compare Sultanova’s recounting of a story about Mamurdjan Uzakov performing an Uzbek Soviet musical play. She writes, “despite expectations, Mamurdjan remained motionless while singing. After the performance finished, the First Secretary asked Mamurdjan Uzakov why he had not moved, and he confessed that, due to his old-style traditional training, he could either sing or move but never both simultaneously as was required in the Western style” (Sultanova 2005:137).

### 5.1.2. *Memory*

Learning is inseparable from memory. A Persian term for “learn,” *yod giriftan*, literally means to “grasp memory” or “take memory.” *Yod kardan*, an almost synonymous verb (“to make memory”), can be translated as “remember.” To teach is *yod dodan*, or to “give memory.”

It is sometimes forgotten in our post-Cartesian, post-Enlightenment world that the mind is a part of the body, and as such, the development of memorial skills is similar to the training of other physical abilities, such as vocal and finger technique. Thus, to understand the art of memory, it will be helpful to draw on ideas about memory in European medieval scholarly culture, before the idea of a Cartesian mind/body split became widely accepted.<sup>4</sup>

Medieval scholars understood memory as a set of physical techniques for storing and retrieving ideas, including *divisio*—dividing something up into smaller, manageable

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4. Stephen Toulmin writes, “At the base of Descartes’ epistemology lay the distinction between the *rational freedom* of moral or intellectual decision in the human world of thought and action, and the *causal necessity* of mechanical processes in the natural world of physical phenomena” (Toulmin 1990:107, emphasis in original). From the “Mind-Body dichotomy” emerge related dichotomies, such as “mental *vs.* material, actions *vs.* phenomena, performances *vs.* happenings, thoughts *vs.* objects, voluntary *vs.* mechanical, active *vs.* passive, creative *vs.* repetitive” (1990:108, emphasis in original). In my opinion, these dichotomies often force people to place musical performance, with its emphasis on reflex, repetition, and emotion, as a bodily process in opposition to rational thinking and decision-making (it is easy to think of one more dichotomy, which I have tried to question in this dissertation: composing music *vs.* playing music). Renaissance humanists, such as Montaigne, instead believed that “there is no use laying down a hard and fast line to divide bodily processes (‘material’) from voluntary activities (‘mental’)” (1990:40). Following Toulmin’s recommendation to reconsider matters of practice and pre-1630 philosophy (1990:186), I look at Bukharian musical practice within a general discussion of memory informed by the work of Mary Carruthers on medieval scholarship and memorial practices (1990).

units—, and *compositio*—putting the segments back together in their proper order (Carruthers 1990:85-86). Musical practice also involves memorial techniques of breaking up pieces into small fragments of music and putting them back together. The medieval art of memory was also heavily visual and architectural. Scholars remembered items by thinking of them in relation to physical locations, complete with backgrounds (Carruthers 1990:82), or by associating them with tangible illustrations and text layouts (1990:221-57). Musicians also remember items with visual metaphors—melodies go “up” and “down,” and the word *maqom* literally means “place”—and layouts of texts and musical notations also aid the memory. Sounds are also related to locations, such as positions on an instrument and parts of the body. When performing music, one can access stored movements in a number of ways, such as by beginning to move one’s fingers on an instrument in the correct manner.

Memory is fundamental to performance. Bukharians refer to an accomplished singer as a *hofiz*, which in a broader sense means “keeper,” “protector,” “guardian,” or “retainer.” In Central Asia and the greater Muslim world, *hofiz* can denote any “memorizer” of any area of knowledge, and can specifically be applied to one who has memorized the entire Qur<sup>ān</sup> (al-Faruqi 1981:90; Blum 2001a:365; Sultanova 2005:136). By committing the Qur<sup>ān</sup> to memory, the *hofiz* becomes a “protector” of the words. The Qur<sup>ān</sup>ic *hofiz* not only knows the words, but can perform them with the proper technique and skill. The sound should be pleasing and the words intelligible. Similarly, a Bukharian *hofiz* has committed many compositions to memory and can perform them in the proper manner. *Hofiz*-s need a solid personal repertoire of memorized pieces on which they can draw when in various kinds of situations. Roshel Rubinov compared

repertoire to ammunition in a gun. The gun must always be loaded to be effective, and a performer must always be prepared to play just as a soldier must always be ready to use his weapon.

Amin believes that music is best learned by fully memorizing one piece at a time, proceeding line by line until the piece is completely internalized from beginning to end.

While we were working on “Savt-i navo,” he told me:

You must memorize/learn (*yod giri*) this song (*surūd*) from beginning to end (*az sar to oxar*). . . . When you have completely learned “Savt-i navo,” after that you’ll pass to another song. Now you must record this on your [MiniDisc], **that’s it**. I want you to learn one maqom song. . . . I want you to remember/learn (*yod kun*) this from beginning to end, **that’s it, nothing else**.

With Roshel Rubinov, I also worked through one composition at a time, memorizing each section in order from beginning to end. Perhaps even more than Amin, Rubinov emphasized the mnemonic value of absorbing entire compositions, as we worked through pieces at a much quicker rate. Although my faster pace can be partially attributed to the fact that I was no longer an absolute beginner, I believe that Rubinov’s pedagogical style and choice of repertoire were mainly responsible. Our lessons consisted of multiple repetitions of sections and very little else. And whereas Amin extolled the merits of the difficult “Savt-i navo,” Rubinov praised simple and repetitious pieces for their pedagogical worth as well as the positive reaction they received in performance. The first piece I learned with him was “Dugoh,” which he explained as being simple, easy,

very nice, and enjoyable for listeners. I memorized each of Rubinov's selections of "Dugoh," "Nasr-i segoh," "Qoščinor," and "Navruz-i ajam" in about one to two months, whereas "Savt-i navo" had taken me well over six months. His attitude extended to other students, to whom he taught "Dugoh" and similarly manageable pieces (such as "Sayora"). If Rubinov felt that I was taking too long to memorize a composition, as was the case with "Čorgoh" and "Uššoq-i samarqand," he would switch to a structurally simpler and more repetitive composition. Having several complete compositions in my memory enabled me to abstract progressively larger structural units, and build upon that familiarity to retain melodies more quickly.

The basic process of memorization was the same in studying with both Roshel Amin and Roshel Rubinov: *divisio* and *compositio*. My teachers divided each piece up into sections (*qism-s*) of equal or nearly equal length. In the case of a song, these sections generally corresponded to šu<sup>o</sup>ba registers and the couplets of a ġazal, although only Amin made an explicit connection between ġazal, register, and melody (and even he only rarely verbalized these connections). I would play a section repeatedly until it came automatically and without hesitation. Rubinov would usually play along with me, and we would repeat a section ten to thirty times without stopping. If the section was still too long for me to remember, he would divide the section up again into two, repeating until the section was of a length that I could handle. When he thought I had a section, I would play it for him by myself. We repeated this process until he was sure that I had memorized the section. Then, if I had memorized a preceding section, we would connect the sections (*compositio*) and play from the beginning. We never played sections out of order. The process was always linear.

After memorizing a composition, it was essential that I keep the melody in my memory through constant practice (*mašq*). Both Amin and Rubinov would periodically test me on my repertoire, making sure that I could recall tunes quickly and without error. If I ever forgot a tune or a section, my teachers would remind me that to be a tanbūr player, I needed to play every day and repeat the compositions I had learned. Amin used a food metaphor: pieces needed to be “ripe,” “cooked” (*puxta*), not “raw” (*xom*).

#### 5.1.2.1. Mnemonic Devices

As musical practice is fundamentally a matter of retaining and accessing repertoire in one’s memory, musicians employ various memory aids or mnemonic devices. Two of the most widely recognized mnemonic aids for music are notations and recordings. In investigating these physical objects, it is essential to remember that mnemonic devices are connected to practices. One must learn techniques for interpreting signs written on paper and for hearing information stored on a recording. True, anyone with the sense of sight can see notations, but very little information is conveyed without developing techniques for understanding the symbols. At the same time, an either/or dichotomy of “literacy” and “illiteracy” also means very little without a wider context. The fact that someone can “read Western notation” only has meaning if we know the repertoires, practices, and styles he or she has learned to apply to the symbols, and at what level of ability. A lead sheet played by a jazz musician, a toccata played by a Baroque organist, and a šu<sup>ˆ</sup>ba of the Šašmaqom played by a Bukharian tanbūrist might all be written in “Western notation,” but the symbols will be interpreted very differently in each case. I may have learned to read, write, understand, and pronounce English

sentences at a certain level, but these skills will hardly help me read, write, understand, and pronounce Turkish, French, Vietnamese, or any other language written with the same alphabet.

#### 5.1.2.1.1. Recordings

In the time between lessons, both Amin and Rubinov required that I practice daily. At home, I was to repeat the sections that I had learned in my lesson, entrenching them even deeper in my memory. For this purpose, I always recorded segments of my lessons on my MiniDisc recorder. The MiniDisc was a substitute teacher, as I could play along and repeat the sections endlessly until I felt ready to play alone. In an interesting overlap with the concepts of *divisio* and *compositio*, the MiniDisc had two useful functions: “divide” and “combine.” If I found sections too long to remember, I would “divide” the track into two and repeat each one separately. Once I had learned each section individually, I would “combine” the tracks back into one.

Rubinov and Amin were both somewhat uncomfortable that I wished to make recordings of their playing. They were aware of the possibility of others learning their techniques from recordings and were somewhat suspicious if I recorded them too much. At times, they would ask me to stop recording. Rubinov used to joke that I was going to sell the recordings and get rich. The discomfort felt by these musicians is understandable, as their voice and musical talent are two of their most valuable assets, and after a recording is made, the recorded musician has very little control over what others do with

it.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, both Amin and Rubinov recognized the memorial and pedagogical usefulness of recordings. Rubinov invited me on one occasion to make a video of him playing, not only so I could benefit from the recording but also so he could study his own performance and learn from it.

If Amin or Rubinov thought that a worthwhile recorded version of a composition already existed, he would recommend it for home study. After “Savt-i navo,” Roshel Amin taught me the beginning of “Čul-i ʿiroq” and encouraged me to listen repeatedly to the version on his CD *Sado-i dil bo ovoz-i tanbūr* (“The Sound of the Heart with the Voice of the Tanbūr”) (2002). When Roshel Rubinov taught me “Navruz-i ajam,” he had me listen to a recording by Turgun Alimatov, one of his favorite performers. Alimatov’s version was much faster than the recordings I had made with Rubinov. Rubinov told me that even though it was “too fast,” Alimatov was “the best,” and I would learn a lot by listening to the recording and playing along with it. Rubinov was proud of the way he could quickly memorize items and absorb stylistic elements from recordings. He told me on a few occasions about beginning his study of the tanbūr autodidactically, learning from recordings alone. During the course of my lessons, he encouraged me to listen to a wide range of musicians, including Alimatov, Levi Babakhanov, and even the Greek pop singer Demis Roussos.

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5. Boris Babakhanov recounted Emir Ahad Khan telling Levicha, “If they record you, then anyone will be able to hear you and you will be lower than everything; your music won’t have any weight” (quoted in Levin 1996:101). The Emir’s anger when Levicha’s voice was recorded is a major theme of Ilyos Mallaev’s play, *Levicha Hofiz*.

Recordings also enable musicians to learn from deceased or otherwise inaccessible performers who have been “immortalized” on record. Many celebrated Bukharian musicians in Queens have memorized numerous recordings note for note and can play along with them perfectly. When I played a recording of “Nasr-i uzzol” as performed by Rasul Qori Mamadaliev and Kamoluddin Hamraqul<sup>6</sup> for Roshel Rubinov, he sang and played along with every note to a tee. Due to his intense study of their recordings, Rubinov considers Turgun Alimatov, Mamadaliev, and Avrom Tolmasov his teachers, even without any face-to-face instruction.<sup>7</sup> Rubinov told me:

**And I listen[ed] all the time [to] Avrom Tolmasov. He’s my teacher. He didn’t teach me . . . face to face. All the time I listen[ed to] his tape[s] . . . and the great singer Rasul Qori Mamadaliev. I listened, listened, listened to his recordings, and now I play exactly like him. I loved the way Rasul Qori Mamadaliev played tanbūr. He’s [a] very good tanbūrist, a virtuoso. . . . He is my teacher, Rasul Qori.** Absent teacher (*ustoz-i ğoibona*). **I never saw him, he never saw me, . . . I only listened**

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6. On *Ouzbekistan: Les Grandes voix du passé (1940-1965)* (1999).

7. The “variety of ways people engage [recordings] in human contexts—through imagining the people behind the recording, but also simply through listening and then drawing on the recordings in their own performing” (Solis 2004:339) is a rich and little-explored area of ethnomusicological inquiry. Rubinov’s experiences with recordings of Alimatov, Mamadaliev, and Tolmasov is reminiscent of the pianist Fred Hersch on Thelonious Monk: “Since there was nobody around to teach me, and I figured things out for myself, what I would do is, I would sit at the piano and try to imagine that I was Monk . . . or whoever I was listening to. I would listen to a side and then go to the piano and try to just channel them in some way” (quoted in Solis 2004:341).

**[to] his music, how he's singing, and learn[ed] from him.**

With recordings, musicians learn items to add to their personal repertoire. In a recording session on 16 January 2003 for *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns*, Ezro Malakov brought a cassette of his grandfather singing various melodies, including one tune for the end of the Pesah Seder. Malakov played the cassette and taught the tune to the rest of the ensemble, Roshel Rubinov and Matat Baraev. They quickly absorbed the melody and improvised an arrangement for it. Ensemble Star, a Bukharian group in Israel, had learned compositions such as Rubinov's "Tanbūr manam" from listening to his cassettes and CDs.<sup>8</sup>

The way that musicians use recordings to expand their personal repertoire and professional skills became most apparent in my interactions with Rubinov. Very early in my lessons he had me assist him in transcribing the lyrics to Elvis Presley's "It's Now or Never," and he was eager for me to make him cassettes of other American pop songs that he could incorporate into his repertoire. He also enjoyed styles heard on New York radio stations, including smooth jazz and Western classical; he was especially interested in adding elements of smooth jazz into his playing. When I once asked him how he had learned such a wide variety of songs in so many styles and languages, he simply tapped his cassette player and smiled.

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8. This information comes from discussions with Roshel Juraev, guitarist for Ensemble Star, in Israel, 29 May 2003, and Roshel Rubinov, 2 September 2005.

#### 5.1.2.1.2. Notations

Carruthers states that medieval *memoria* was primarily visual. Scholars thought of memory with architecture or storage metaphors: storage-rooms (Carruthers 1990:33), pigeon-holes (1990:37), and coin-sorters (1990:39). The terms used by Bukharians to describe compositional structure can be thought of as also being visual. Melodic contour follows an arc shape, with ascent and descent, going out and coming in. Malakov's arrow notation for registral sections makes the visual association clear (see Figure 4.19). The visual layout of a *ğazal*, with lines of poems grouped in pairs, helps the musician access the information he or she has memorized. Bukharian singers often employ printed or handwritten poems in live performances.

I have never seen a Bukharian singer or instrumentalist use sheet music (*nota*) in a live context, but it is sometimes used in pedagogy. Roshel Rubinov was taught with Western notation while studying at a music conservatory in Tajikistan. Because he knew that I was familiar with Western notation, he gave me an instructional sheet music book to copy and use in conjunction with our lessons (Abdukarimov 1990). In one instance, he played "Navruz-i ajam" (on *tanbūr*) from this book. He had me record his performance from the sheet music so that I had an aural supplement to the notation. By practicing along with his recording and looking at the notation, I glimpsed Rubinov's approach to interpreting Western notations of standard repertoire, and I began to learn the techniques and practices for reading the notation myself.

Figure 5.5 is a comparison of Rubinov's performance (my own descriptive transcription) with Abdukarimov's notation.<sup>9</sup> Rubinov alters the rhythm, frequently substituting four sixteenth notes where the book has two eighth notes or one quarter note (e.g., mm. 24-32); this technique gives more contour the long melodic phrases and increases the impact of the solid quarter-note resolutions (mm. 32, 36). He uses syncopated accents, as in measures 35 and 45, and plays a range of values for the notated grace notes (*foršlag*), some longer (as in mm. 2 and 5) and some shorter (as in mm. 36). Rubinov sometimes liberally introduces his own grace notes, as in the tremolo leading up to measure 20.

Another interesting area of comparison is pitch. As noted in Chapter 4, some notes resonate well with the drone strings of the tanbūr, and others do not. G is a typical point of resolution, matching the tuning of G-G-D-G, and although it looks as if Abdukarimov has notated "Navruz-i ajam" in F-major, G is more properly considered scale degree 1, as is suggested by the resolutions at mm. 8-10 and 16-19. F and B (scale degrees 7 and 3), which do not resonate well, are regularly treated with much variability on the tanbūr. In this performance of "Navruz-i ajam," Rubinov consistently plays those particular notes in four modified ways: with a wide vibrato (indicated with a ~ sign above the note), slightly high (indicated with an up arrow), slightly low (indicated with a down arrow), or by beginning high and quickly sliding down (indicated with a curving down arrow). In fact, the very first note he plays is an F treated with a wide, wobbly pitch,

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9. Rubinov did not play measures 7 and 12, and only the beginning of the performance is transcribed.

reinforcing that note as unstable (in contrast, Rubinov underscores the stability of G by playing a drone string at measure 17). B has the widest variety of all, played as B-flat, B-natural, and many points in between. Rubinov occasionally applies these pitch-bending techniques (*nola*) to other pitches, most commonly C. The high bridge and diatonic fretting of the tanbūr makes it easy to exploit these techniques, as even the slightest change of pressure on these notes will alter the pitch.

Figure 5.5. "Navruz-i ajam." Roshel Rubinov interpretation of Abdukarimov notation.

Rubinov performance

Abdukharimov book

Rubinov

Abdukharimov

Rubinov

Abdukharimov

Rubinov

Abdukharimov

The image displays a musical score for two performers, Rubinov and Abdukarimov, across four systems of music. Each system consists of two staves: the top staff for Rubinov and the bottom staff for Abdukarimov. The music is written in a single melodic line on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents (>), breath marks (~), and dynamic markings. Measure numbers 28, 34, 40, and 46 are indicated at the beginning of their respective systems. The notation is dense, particularly in the Rubinov parts, which feature many sixteenth and thirty-second notes.

During the Soviet Era, the Šašmaqom was notated with the idea that committing the repertoire to paper could preserve it for future generations (Levin 1996:46-51; Djumaev 2005). Importantly, the notations were connected to methods and institutions, such as orchestras in Soviet-style conservatories, in which students were taught to interpret the musical notations in a specific way. Levin, who studied the Šašmaqom in Soviet Uzbekistan, reported that he “was startled by the extent to which the Šašmaqom

had been frozen, not only on paper but also in performance” (1996:47). Reflecting on my experiences in New York, I view the Šašmaqom as proof that there is no exact correlation between notation (or literacy) *as such* and performance. Soviet policies, institutions, and performance practices, rather than Western notation, were responsible for the many changes in Central Asian music over the course of the twentieth century. Bukharian Jews in Queens have a dynamic relationship with maqom, notations, and recordings, connected to the specific attitudes and approaches to memory, interpretation, and performance partially described in the present chapter. For example, Rubinov explained to me that if he was called upon to perform a suite or šu°ba that he had not already memorized, the Belyayev notations would serve as a basis from which he could proceed. But it is essential to note that Rubinov can use these notations because he has developed the necessary skills by studying with teachers, listening to recordings, and attending and participating in performances.

For Bukharian musicians in Queens, notations of poetic texts are of vastly greater importance than Western musical notations. As shown in Chapter 4, poetic rhythm and form and the physical layout of ġazal-s convey a great amount of musical information to those trained in and familiar with the conventions and principles of Central Asian music. Ilyos Mallaev said that he learned °arūz meters and poetic forms solely by studying books of classic poetry and combining this study with listening to music. Because ġazal-s are so strongly related to music, singers circulate and maintain handwritten copies, printouts, and Xeroxes of poems. Roshel Rubinov has several notebooks (*daftar-s*) of poems that he uses in performance. Imonuel Rybakov and Yosef Munarov showed me copies of poems that they had circulated by email. Poems can also be found in printed books (such as

*dīvon*-s, or collected poems of one poet), and with increasing frequency, websites<sup>10</sup> and newspapers;<sup>11</sup> the Latin alphabet is commonly used for these notations. The Belyayev *Šašmaqom* is very useful, even without the sheet music, for the Persian poems printed at the back of each volume.

Notations of words are essential mnemonic devices for the performance of Bukharian Jewish repertoire. In Jewish religious practice, many “musical” activities, such as chanting Torah and singing ḥazzanut, are almost always done with printed or written texts.<sup>12</sup> The primacy of the text and importance of the sacred meaning of the words means that even if a singer knows a text by heart, he will often have the text in front of him in order to make sure that no errors are made. In synagogue, congregants will often follow along with the chanting of the Torah and yell out corrections. Prayer is done with the siddur (prayerbook) or maḥzor (prayerbook for festivals and High Holidays)—books that contain all of the necessary texts for a service.<sup>13</sup>

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10. E.g., Ilyos Mallaev’s “Non-i padar” (“Father’s Bread”) and Roshel Rubinov’s “Mulloqand” (written in honor of Gavriel Mulloqandov) can be found on [www.bjews.com](http://www.bjews.com).

11. E.g., Rubinov’s “Panj panja barobar nest,” my translation of this poem, and Mikhoel Zavul’s “Ey amriko!” (“O America!”) and “Davlat-i didor” were performed at a concert on 5 June 2005, and then published in a *Bukharian Times* article reviewing the concert.

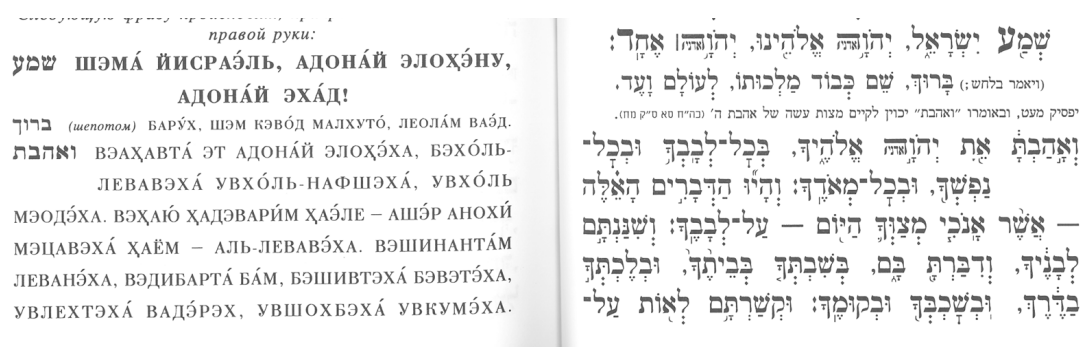
12. These practices do not use musical instruments, so Bukharian Jews do not refer to them as “music” (*muzika*, *mūsīqī*). They are also only done by men in synagogue, according to an Orthodox interpretation of Jewish law.

13. In the Bukharian community in Queens, most of these books contain texts in either just the Hebrew alphabet or Hebrew with Cyrillic transliterations.



The Torah and Haftarah also contain *te°amim* markings, which relate to melodic formulae (the specifics of the melodic phrases, however, differ greatly from community to community). Figure 5.7 shows a section of the Šəmə° prayer, with *te°amim*, from the same Bukharian siddur.

Figure 5.7. Detail of a page from *Siddur Šelomo ben David* (1988:305), showing the Šəmə° with *te°amim* (right), and Cyrillic transliteration (left).



The fact that these texts are meant to be performed aloud is also apparent in that accents are printed in the Cyrillic transliterations to aid pronunciation.

Western musical notation has not been widely used for Bukharian religious practice or pedagogy. Ḥazzan-s, prayer leaders, and other singers featured in religious practice learn their craft from practice in synagogue, imitating other singers, and listening to recordings. However, Ezro Malakov’s forthcoming publication of Bukharian Jewish repertoire in Western notation (*Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns*) raises the possibility of *nota* becoming an important mnemonic tool and aspect of transmission for Bukharian religious practice. Malakov’s decision to include accompanying CD recordings containing expert renditions of the notations will conceivably help transmit acceptable ways of interpreting the notations.

### 5.1.3. Cognitive Style

In his *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy* (1972), Michael Baxandall discusses a “Quattrocento cognitive style.” He writes:

By [the notion of a Quattrocento cognitive style] one would mean the equipment that the fifteenth-century painter’s public brought to complex visual simulations like pictures. One is talking not about all fifteenth-century people, but about those whose response to works of art was important to the artist—the patronizing classes, one might say.

[. . .]

To sum up: some of the mental equipment a man [*sic*] orders his visual experience with is variable, and much of this variable equipment is culturally relative, in the sense of being determined by the society which has influenced his experience. Among these variables are categories with which he classifies his visual stimuli, the knowledge he will use to supplement what his immediate vision gives him, and the attitude he will adopt to the kind of artificial object seen. (Baxandall 1972:38-39)

It seems to me that one can quite easily and productively extend this notion of visual cognitive style to that of an aural cognitive style. Music listeners—including, of course, musicians themselves—cultivate ways of hearing just as art viewers cultivate ways of seeing. Categories, knowledge, and attitudes are learned and socially determined. Ideas of variation, repetition, hybridity, genre, style, melody, rhythm, harmony, and even “music” and “noise” are factors of aural cognitive style. Furthermore, like the Quattrocento

painter, a musician is concerned with responses of specific people or classes of people. One of the challenges that the Bukharian musician in New York faces is negotiating the various responses emanating from different cognitive styles.

In the New York Bukharian community, one can posit different cognitive styles related to kinds of repertoire and their associated patrons. A ḥazzan is concerned with the responses of the congregants at his synagogue. In turn, the worshippers have developed the necessary skills to hear the ḥazzan perform Jewish repertoire in a meaningful way. At tui-s, musicians are generally concerned with the responses of patrons who have learned to listen to pop dance and ballad styles. At concerts of maqom, musicians might gear their performances to the listeners who are familiar with standard compositions, melodies, poems, and styles.

Rubinov, Amin, and other Bukharian musicians with whom I spoke emphatically recommended that I listen to maqom as much as possible in order to develop an understanding and appreciation of the music. For those who have not developed the cognitive style for listening to maqom, the music sounds “like nothing,” goes “on and on,” and “is hard to follow” (in the words of one twenty-something Bukharian male). Language can be a barrier. If a listener cannot comprehend the meaning of the words, he or she might very well respond in an unintended or improper way. Even when someone speaks the language, one must still develop skills to interpret the often obscure and multilayered language used in poetry. Yosef Munarov eloquently summed up the importance of poetry to maqom:

We [Yosef and some of his friends, in their early twenties] like [maqom], but people don't like to hear it. They say, "why are you singing this, we're not at a cemetery right now, you're crying." When you sing maqom, it's more calm music, you want to remember bad things, it makes you remember your Mom who passed away, and things like that. So younger people don't want to hear that. They say, "stop singing that." They're saying that because they don't understand the words. Let me explain to you what Avrom Tolmasov or Roshel Rubinov is singing. It's like high [art]. When you take [an] English class, it's poetry—even if you know English so well or when I know English so well when I read poetry I don't understand what it's saying. Same thing with maqom. Even though I understand Bukharian [i.e., Persian], it's sometimes very hard for me to understand what he's saying, because it's poetry. . . . For example, Avrom sings this poem of Ilyos Mallaev[, one of our] greatest poets. . . . "Šišē miškastan ast paivand kardan muškil ast/Dil ki ranji az on kas-i xursand kardan muškil ast." You understand what I said? If I break—take a glass and drop it on floor and it breaks into small pieces, how hard it is it to put it back together? Very hard? It's almost impossible, but it's possible. *Muškil ast* [it is difficult]. Very hard. Same thing when you hurt someone's feelings, to put him back again happily, it's very hard. This kind of thing, it's poetry. When I try to [explain] this to my

**friends who don't understand poetry, I think: if they [would] understand, they'd enjoy it. But because they don't understand, they hate it. I think that if they understand it they would like it.**

Listening in the proper way involves certain physical responses. Roman Tolmasov said that only when I had achieved a certain listening ability would I cry upon hearing Barno Işhoqova sing. Appreciation of music is learned, not innate, and a matter of training. Roman Tolmasov told me, “every [style of] music, you have to listen, listen. No one is born with it.” But at the same time, someone born in the community who speaks Persian as a first language and hears Bukharian repertoire from birth has a unique access to maqom and Bukharian styles. In a lesson with a Bukharian vocal student, newly arrived from Israel, Roshel Rubinov encouraged him to learn tanbūr. He pointed out that, as opposed to me, the instrument was “close” (*nazdik*) to the new student because of his background.

A listener's cognitive style determines the categories, groupings, and entities he or she perceives, and the meanings he or she assigns to those entities. For example, Bukharians communicate in several languages, including Persian, Russian, Uzbek, Hebrew, and English. Listeners have associations with languages per se, in addition to any messages conveyed by the words. Bukharians recognize Russian as a suitable language for speeches, scholarship, announcements, and contemporary pop songs, but not the Šašmaqom, which, according to Amin and Rubinov, should ideally be sung with Persian verses (in their words, the “original” language of the Šašmaqom). Languages might also have resonance *because* listeners cannot understand them. Bukharian

cognitive style welcomes foreign elements and multilingualism, and performers sometimes employ languages that are not comprehended by Bukharian listeners for their affect. For example, Roshel Rubinov and Muhabbat Shamaeva sing in Spanish, Arabic, and Hindi. Bukharian listeners do not understand the lyrics, but they can identify the languages and draw on their associations. Bukharian music may have a similar appeal for non-Bukharian listeners who do not understand Persian or Turkic languages.

Cognitive style affects the way a listener interprets techniques and styles. Something as simple as plucking direction can be loaded with meaning. Amin wanted me to recognize striking from the top in a downward flicking motion as the authentic way to play *tanbūr*, whereas Rubinov and most other Bukharian *tanbūr*ists that I have seen will strike the melody string from both the top and bottom. Rubinov, in fact, encouraged me to begin lines with an upward motion, because the upward attack is easier (for one thing, the player is less likely to strike the non-melody strings that are above it). Similarly, holding the *tanbūr* on one's leg rather than up by one's head makes it easier to play, and thus for Amin, less authentic. Rubinov prefers a straight singing style with clear articulation of words and without "unnecessary things" (*čiz-ho-i nadarkor*), whereas some other singers and listeners prefer a broad, heavily ornamented style. Rubinov, Amin, and other practitioners frequently conveyed their opinions in terms of criticisms of other players. By lauding and criticizing elements of other players' styles, teachers help students recognize salient aspects of style and technique, form aesthetic opinions about what they are hearing, and incorporate their ideas into a personal cognitive style.

Far from being musical universals, repetition, variation, and ornamentation are concepts related to cognitive style. In the early stages of my fieldwork, I realized that I

had to learn to hear and recognize these elements in different ways than those that I had cultivated through years of training. In one instance I was doing research for an analysis of variations in Ezro Malakov's style. My intention was to gather a few versions of Malakov performing one piece and, through comparison, discover the ways in which he ornamented, embellished, and reorganized melodic formulas in the course of performance. My way of hearing his performances led me to believe that he had a basic melody to a hymn that he would vary in certain ways. Malakov and I had different ideas about what constituted a "basic melody." Each variation that I perceived was, to him, "the same" (*hamin*) as the previous one. The variations that I recognized as significant were categorically inconsequential to Malakov. It seemed not to matter to him even when he would move sections of the melody to different parts of the text. When I would ask him to sing the hymn again he would look at me incredulously, not understanding what the problem was. Did he not just sing it? What would be the purpose of two recordings of the same melody? When I would try to explain that I was hearing two different melodies, his confusion made the problem of cognitive style particularly apparent.

Similarly, at first, every version of "Savt-i navo" that Amin played sounded qualitatively different to me. The melodic phrases would differ in the number of notes, which notes were played, and the number of times the phrases were repeated. Amin would even start in different positions on the instrument, retaining the overall melodic contour but giving the melody distinctive characteristics. It was unclear to me, based on my own cognitive style and ways of categorizing and interpreting sounds, what exactly the melody was that Amin was repeating. I understood that for Amin, these many iterations of "Savt-i navo" could be considered "the same," perhaps varying in different

ways depending on personal approach, level of difficulty, or the context in which he was playing, but not in any way that would be ultimately categorizable as a different piece.

## 5.2. Methods of Transmission

Bukharian music is taught and learned in various ways, each with its own methods and associations. Roshel Amin is vocal about his opinion that the master–student (*ustoz–šogird*) relationship is the ideal method for the transmission of maqom. Other methods of learning include the imitation of practitioners without the benefit of corrections and explanations provided by a teacher, the study of sources such as books, music notations, and records, and the practical experience of playing in ensembles and learning in group classes. Students frequently combine methods and may have several teachers to maximize their learning experience. Rubinov attended a music conservatory in Tajikistan, where he learned from ustoz-s (including Barno Işhoqova and Neryo Aminov), played in ensembles, and studied music notations. Yosef Munarov, a beginning student in his early twenties, studies with Roshel Rubinov and David Davidov, learns from recordings, and works with his peers. Unlike the *shāgerd* of an *ustād* in Herat, Afghanistan (Baily 1988:112-13, 118-19), a Bukharian *šogird* may have a number of masters, and masters do not have control over their students. A musician might even call someone whom he does not know personally his or her “ustoz.”

In the ustoz–šogird format, a student mostly learns compositions through rote repetition from someone who has memorized the pieces and mastered the art of interpretation. The teacher plays, and the student repeats, and at times both teacher and student will play together. Roshel Rubinov and Roshel Amin teach all of their students in

this fashion. At Roshel Amin’s school, students typically learn in groups (see Figure 5.8). It is also possible for master-student interactions to be less formal. I observed a session with Avrom Tolmasov and one of his advanced students, Shlomo Kalontar. Kalontar primarily accompanied Tolmasov by strumming chords on the guitar while Tolmasov played melodies on the sitar and sang. Only a few times during the evening did Tolmasov repeat and demonstrate passages to Kalontar in the teaching manner to which I had become accustomed from Amin and Rubinov.

Figure 5.8. Roshel Amin teaching a music class.



In musical families, a father–son, uncle–nephew, or similarly hereditary relationship might be of the *ustoz–šogird* type. Avrom Tolmasov’s *ustoz* was his father, Gavriel, who in turn learned from his uncles, Mikhoel and Isroel. Roshel Amin’s *ustoz* was his father, Neryo. A teacher can otherwise accept an unrelated student as an apprentice, whom he might teach regularly for years without any monetary exchange. In New York, the *ustoz–šogird* relationship exists, but there may also be a component of

payment, or the student and teacher may not meet regularly because of busy schedules.

Yosef Munarov's experience with finding an ustoz serves as one typical example:

**Roshel Rubinov, I always used to see him at weddings. He used to come to synagogue [i.e., Beth Gavriel, where Munarov works] sometimes, and we knew each other. He knew I was singing a little bit in synagogue, but we were never close . . . I love [his music] so much, Roshel Rubinov, that I started to learn his songs. Whenever I'd go to my friend's house for Shabbat, or any small parties, gathering together with friends, people always ask me to sing a couple songs. . . . One time I went to the house of Simḥa Elishaev [the sponsor of Beth Gavriel, who also leads prayers there] . . . and he said, "Yosef, this Simḥat Torah . . . you're going to sing with Roshel . . . [his song] 'Panj panja barobar nest.'" . . . So I said, "No, you're crazy Simḥa, leave me alone. Roshel Rubinov, me, what are you comparing?" He said, "OK, don't worry." So . . . Simḥat Torah came, . . . and Roshel Rubinov was singing. The main part came [to an] end, [so] he starts to sing his Šašmaqom songs. People are enjoying, not like fast songs. Simḥa took the microphone and says, "There's one guy in synagogue here who likes you, who sings your songs, and I want to call him to sing one song with you." So Roshel says, "OK, call him." So he called my name, he said, "Yosef Munarov, come." I was so nervous, the first time to sing in front of such a big crowd. . . . So I was like shaking. So**

Roshel said, “Which song?” I said “‘Panj panja,’ your song.” So he said, “How high, from which note.” I said, “The same thing you sing on your tape. . . . From the same note.” So he . . . started the song, and he was singing and I was helping him. I took a couple lines, he took a couple lines, and in the end you have to take [it] very high and finish with a high note. But Roshel didn’t feel good, so he said, “Do you want to take it?” I said, “Let me take it.” So I took it. God helped me to take it, it was so beautiful, Roshel got impressed. . . . After two weeks he came to Shabbat to synagogue . . . he told me, “Yosef, God doesn’t give voice, he doesn’t give talents, he doesn’t give presents to everyone. But if he gave, don’t let it go, work on it.” So I said, “If you say these kind words, you work on me. You be my teacher. You work on my voice.” So he said, “OK, xai, we’ll see.” At first he said, “I don’t have time.” I said, “OK, we’ll work out something.” And he said, “[at first] go to a different teacher” . . . this guy’s number one, his name is David Davidov, David Torči [tor player], I don’t know anyone who can beat him right now. So three, four years ago, Roshel sent me to him, until [recently].

In his story of becoming Roshel Rubinov’s student, Yosef Munarov talks about what is perhaps the most important element in transmission: divine inspiration and talent. For Bukharians, a teacher might be able to help a student realize his or her potential, but ultimately, the student must have God-given abilities. Even members of musical families

are judged according to their skills and the time and energy that they have invested into cultivating their gifts. Avrom Tolmasov told me that although he learned the Šašmaqom from his father and uncles, his skills came from God and inspiration. He learned how to play the sitar only “from my heart” (*az dilam*). He prays to God (*du‘o kardan*) to play his best and in turn, music serves as a form of worship. Similarly, according to Ilyos Mallaev, only “one thing” makes a great poet: “inspiration from God” (*ilhom-i Xudo*).

### 5.3. Professionals and Masters

Once someone has mastered instrumental and/or vocal technique, acquired an extensive repertoire and developed his or her memory, and learned to understand even the most serious pieces, he or she may achieve the rank or status of professional and/or master. In my experience with the New York Bukharian community, “professional” is an adjective describing mastery of skills, and not necessarily connected to whether or not the musician earns his keep from performing. Musicians that do play for money might not be described as “professional” if they are not accomplished and cannot demonstrate expert-level skills. “Professional singer” seemed to be an English-language addition to the Persian terms *hofiz* (sometimes qualified, as in *hofiz-i buzurg*, or “great singer”) and *ustoz*. During my research I compiled a preliminary list of some qualities applied to professional performers, and primarily, to singers.

A professional singer must have an excellent range. Ezro Malakov told me that a great *hofiz* sings “very sweetly” (*bisyor širin*), “very loudly and high” (*bisyor baland*), “very low” (*bisyor pastī*), “very beautifully in the midrange” (*bisyor miyonxat noz*), and “pleasantly” (*foram, xuš, zībo*). According to Roshel Rubinov, a *hofiz* should be able to

sing “*Iroq-i buxoro*” and “*Nasrulloi*,” two *šu°ba*-s in *Maqom Buzruk* with a vocal range spanning over two octaves.<sup>14</sup> Rubinov also mentioned that singers must have a big voice (*ovoz-i kalon*), strong voice (*ovoz-i zūr*), and a loud/high voice (*ovoz-i baland*). It is also an esteemed quality to be able to sing and play an instrument simultaneously, as Roshel Rubinov told me in referring to Rasul Qori Mamadaliev. The range of the *tanbūr* closely mirrors the desired vocal range of a *hofiz*, and when playing and singing simultaneously, the *tanbūr* can help a *hofiz* reach high notes. Avrom Tolmasov, probably the most widely praised Bukharian singer in Queens, sometimes hits notes *beyond* the range of the *tanbūr* while he sings, and the tension of his high, loud voice against the range limits of the *tanbūr* generates the kind of response in trained listeners that garners him accolades. Yosef Munarov praised Tolmasov by explaining that he always sings a song “two or three notes higher” than other singers.

Professionals should have a quick and retentive memory. Roshel Amin once told me that his father would only play a section for him once, and from that one instance he was expected to remember it. Ezro Malakov emphasized the ability to quickly absorb and retain repertoire, saying:

Some *hofiz*-s, things don’t stay in their memory. They know only a few items. They learn something today, and tomorrow forget it (*imruz yod mīgirad, pagoh az yodaš faramuš mīkunad*). . . . A *hofiz* that sings lyrics very beautifully, that learns melodies and lyrics quickly (*tez mīgirad*)—

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14. In the Belyayev *Šašmaqom*, “*Iroq-i buxoro*” has a range of one octave + a minor seventh and “*Nasrulloi*” two octaves + a major second.

this is a great (*buzurg*) hofiz. And also has a nice voice (*ovoz-i xuš dorad*)—[like] Avrom Tolmasov—[he’s] a great singer. . . . There is a mediocre (*miona*) hofiz. It’s difficult for him or her to quickly learn melodies. In order to remember, he or she needs things *repeated* several times. . . . [This] hofiz only sings small, little (*maida, xurd*) songs.

Professionals should be able to thrive in many styles. They should have a versatile working repertoire in order to respond to the needs and desires of different audiences. When I asked Avrom Tolmasov which songs he considered essential for a hofiz to know, he said, “nowadays, everything is necessary” (*imruz hameš darkor*). Ezro Malakov said, “a great hofiz wants to take and understand everything. A mediocre hofiz says ‘ah’; he doesn’t want to understand.” Comprehensive knowledge of Bukharian music of the past is also a laudable quality. Roman Tolmasov praised Roshel Amin for his extensive knowledge of the Šašmaqom as well as namūd-s, titles, and other details of the system.

Professionals should be able to put their own spin on repertoire, especially familiar items. Munarov explained about Avrom Tolmasov (speaking in English): “What I like about Avrom is he takes a song and he creates his own new, he puts his own new ideas to it. If it goes [a certain way], he changes it a little bit, makes it more beautiful, or sometimes makes it more higher, or a little bit different, or he adds [a] couple different music [i.e., melodies] into it.” An artist can also be admired for his or her ability to compose new items. Neryo Aminov and Gavriel Mulloqandov, for example, are singled out as exceptional composers who contributed significant new works to Bukharian musical repertoire. In general, audiences listen for creativity and fresh ideas, not only

imitations. Roshel Rubinov said (again in English), “[One shouldn’t] only copy, copy, copy, no, you gotta do by yourself, you gotta *do* something, you understand me, you gotta write new musics [i.e., melodies], new words, new poetry, not only copy killer [i.e., be a ‘copy cat’].”

Formal musical training is a good quality for professional musicians to have, but not a necessary one. Roshel Rubinov is often admired for the five years he spent at the music institute in Tajikistan. Roman Narkolaev and Eduard Mallaev also have training in Western classical music (I once heard Mallaev play Chopin on the hammered zither, *čang*). Bukharians sometimes articulate a conflict between the training found at conservatories, which is regarded as dependent on Western notation, and learning done solely through rote repetition and memorization. Roman Tolmasov asked me, in what seemed to be a combination of rhetorical questioning and genuine interest, how one could notate *nola*, the “groaning” or “moaning” pitch alteration essential to tanbūr technique.

Heredity is also a factor when considering who is or is not a professional. Those from musical families, such as Avrom and Roman Tolmasov, Roshel Amin, and David Davidov enjoy a respect specific to members of Bukharian musical dynasties. The experience of learning from one’s musical relatives is also sometimes put in contrast to learning in a conservatory. In a discussion about transmission methods, Yosef Munarov recounted the following anecdote about one of his teachers, the tor virtuoso and instrument builder David Davidov:

**David Davidov, most of his life he was a teacher in Tashkent, in a university of music. But because he doesn’t know notes, . . . his father**

was Yakov Tanbūri, one of the greatest singers and tanbūr players, one of the first and best Bukharian music players in Uzbekistan, the way I heard from him, from David, our most popular singers before Avrom, like Gavriel Mulloqandov and Avrom's father, singers of maqom, were best friends with David's father. . . . David was young, sixteen or seventeen, and was already at that time very professional, he played all the instruments, he went by his father's way, every night [he played at] weddings. And then he went to conservatory because the director knew David Davidov's father, who was also teaching in the conservatory. They said, "Do you know whose son you are?" And they take him. He [was there] half a year or something. [The] teacher [would play] something, [Davidov] heard it, and [Davidov] plays it by heart. One day, the teacher said, "He never looks at notes, but he played it better than everyone else. Try to read from here to here." [Davidov] couldn't do it, so he dropped it.

Bukharians greatly respect the few singers and musicians who write poetry in addition to singing and playing. This is not only a matter of professionalism, but also a perceived link to the past. In praise of Roshel Rubinov, Rafael Nektalov commented, "He is like the poet in olden days. Then, the poet also sung." Ilyos Mallaev is admired for the same reason, as he is not only considered a fine singer and instrumentalist but the greatest living Bukharian poet. Roman Tolmasov told me that Mallaev was in the same camp as Hafez, the most important poet in the history of Persian literature.

Ḥazzan-s are subject to slightly different standards. Ezro Malakov told me that it was not necessary to be an accomplished hofiz in order to be an esteemed prayer leader or reader of Torah. It is important to read and pronounce Hebrew perfectly, and to be religious and follow strict rules of halaxah, but it is possible to have a small range and relatively quiet voice and still be an effective ḥazzan. One of Roshel Rubinov's favorite ḥazzan-s, a man named Mansur who sings at an Iranian synagogue in Queens, "doesn't have a big voice," but does have a "beautiful, very nice voice." Rubinov also characterized him as "very professional" because of his memory, as Mansur prays without the aid of a book.

Professional musicians have a high status in the Bukharian community. They are not just considered "entertainers" but tradition-bearers and even culture heroes, as in the case of Levicha, and are considered to have God-given talents. Professional musicians perform at life-cycle events and cultural presentations, but they also often speak at these events and oversee the proceedings. The presence of highly regarded musicians at an event can add much to the prestige of the event and those that promoted it. Because they are in the public eye, professional musicians need to be upstanding members of the community. They should not be greedy or arrogant, and should value religion, decorum, education, and family. If someone is considered to be a base person, uninterested in spiritual matters and ethical living, these qualities can easily overshadow his or her technique.

#### 5.4. Conclusion

Bukharian repertoire is transmitted from one person to another because members of the community find value in the practices, styles, habits, and roles associated with and contained in the music and poetry. Master–student relationships and interactions with recordings and notations are fundamental to the process of transmission. Importantly, practitioners invested with authority are responsible for teaching and maintaining proper modes of performing and listening. The Bukharian community as a whole is involved in collectively assessing the abilities of performers and teachers, considering whether or not they are “professionals” according to a complex set of aesthetic categories.

Bearing special attention is the idea that cognitive style can be learned. This is crucial to the transmission of Bukharian repertoire, for music is not only a matter of performance but also one of appreciation and listener response. Musicians who perform Bukharian repertoire need trained listeners who are able to properly interpret their activities. Every Bukharian musician with whom I spoke commented on what they perceived as a shift in the interpretive skills of the Bukharian community in general. Musicians spoke of only playing maqom repertoire for about fifteen minutes at the end of a several-hour Bukharian wedding or otherwise adjusting their performances according to these perceptions. Especially for *vaznin* repertoire, “interest” is not enough. Authorities on maqom—musicians as well as connoisseurs—emphasized the importance of memorizing poetry and understanding nuances of meaning, and of developing the skills necessary to properly judge and respond to vocal and instrumental technique.

## CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION: REPERTOIRE AND BUKHARIAN TRADITION

I consider “tradition” to be a transmitted mode of behavior and thought, including values, assumptions, and ways of responding to various situations.<sup>1</sup> In this chapter, I discuss Bukharian repertoire in terms of several aspects of tradition: narrative, authority, institutions, values, and diaspora. Narrative and authority are fundamental issues of tradition as something transmitted, as all traditional behavior must take place within some narrative of continuity, and there must be some agreement on who and what has the authority to maintain and pass on a tradition. Traditions need the support of institutions to stay viable. The practice of a traditional mode of behavior such as playing music can teach values and at the same time *be* a value. And finally, diaspora and geographic dispersion, increasingly common in the world, may both pose a threat to tradition and present unique opportunities for its continuation. In the case of the Bukharian Jews, who are diasporic several times over, musical repertoire unites the community across great distances.

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1. This discussion of tradition draws heavily on the work of Alasdair MacIntyre (1984), and following him, avoids the term “traditional” as a category defined in opposition to “modern.” This binary dualism—tradition, stability, and past on one side and modernity, change, and the present on the other—obfuscates two realities: 1) change is an inherent part of tradition, and 2) “*all* reasoning takes place within the context of some traditional mode of thought” (MacIntyre 1984:222, emphasis mine). However, dichotomies such as traditional/modern are very much a part of our own cognitive style as human beings living in modern societies.

### 6.1. Narrative

The actions of Bukharian musicians are traditional in that they are part of a narrative: “Human life is composed of discrete actions which lead nowhere, which have no order; the story-teller imposes on human events retrospectively an order which they did not have while they were lived” (MacIntyre 1984:214). The Bukharian musicians discussed in this dissertation reflect on their individual and communal past, attempting to create continuity between themselves and their predecessors. They recognize themselves as part of a community with a history, and by choosing to engage their history and inherited ideas of the self, they perpetuate Bukharian tradition.

Bukharian musicians often explicitly linked certain repertoire and performance styles to the past and Central Asia, using English words such as “tradition,” “eternal,” and “old,” and Tajik words such as *qadim* (“ancient,” “old”) and *an<sup>c</sup>ana* (“tradition”). Roshel Amin’s school, for example, self-consciously advertises transmission of the Bukharian musical tradition through the “traditional” ustoz-šogird system, and he views himself and his students as exponents of a particularly authentic style. Amin’s website proclaims: “His father instilled in him a respect for this ancient musical art of the East . . . . Thus he learned in the traditional way through oral transmission rather than through formal lessons. . . . These compositions were handed down from teacher (ustoz) to pupil (shogird) as is the tradition throughout Central and South Asia” (Amin and Amin 2004). In a recording session for *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns* on 16 January 2003, Ezro Malakov, Roshel Rubinov, and Matat Baraev performed a version of “Navruz-i sabo” that Malakov called *qadim*. In comparison with other versions of this composition, “qadim” aspects seemed to be an increased emphasis on non-diatonic intervals, including

microtonally-flattened scale degrees 2 and 6 in addition to the more familiar pitch variability on scale degrees 3 and 7, a more liberal use of wide vibrato, especially in the daromad range, and a slower tempo (the association of “qadim” with “slow” can also be found in the slow zarb of the saraxbor-s, often called *zarb-i qadim*).<sup>2</sup> “Traditional” and related terms are also commonly applied to moments at weddings or special occasions (such as the opening of the Bukharian Jewish Community Center) when celebrants don the *joma* and play the long trumpet *karnai*.

Places in the Central Asian past can be recalled in poems, such as Mallaev’s “Samarqand” (Mallaev 1999:41) and Roshel Rubinov’s “Shashrisabz” (Rubinov 2002:105). A narrative of Bukharian continuity is also constructed when poets and musicians invoke their mentors and predecessors in tributes, such as Mallaev’s lament (*marsiya*) for Neryo Aminov (Mallaev 1999:213), his *masnavi* “Ziyorat-i se hofiz-i buzurg” (“Pilgrimage [to the graves] of three great singers”—Levicha, Gavriel Mulloqandov, and Mikhoel Tolmasov [Mallaev 1999:352-55])—, and Rubinov’s “Barno” (for Barno Işhoqova [Rubinov 2002:158]). A poet will also literally write himself or herself into history by inserting his or her name into the last couplet of a *ğazal* (the *taxallus*). The last couplet of Mallaev’s “Id-i Purim” is an instructive example which binds together Jewish, Bukharian, and individual narrative: “Az on ruz id-i Purim omad

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2. This is not to say that these aspects truly were more common in the past than today. The central point is that these performers thought that such a performance style evoked the past.

ba tarix-i mo / Ilyos ham ruz-i Purim zavq-i tanbūr-u tor šud” (“From that day the festival of Purim entered our history / Ilyos too acquired talent for tanbūr and tor Purim day”).<sup>3</sup>

Bukharian musicians are both subjects and authors of Bukharian history, and the two are often intertwined. In his musical play *Levicha Hofiz* (performed at the Queens Theater in the Park on three nights in February 1999), Ilyos Mallaev tells a history of Bukharian society in the early twentieth century by focusing on the musician and Bukharian cultural hero Levicha (Levi Babakhanov). Levicha is the protagonist, but he can only act with the hand that he has been dealt.<sup>4</sup> He manages to impress the Emir enough to serve at the court, but when the Russians take over, Levicha is imprisoned. The story Mallaev tells about the past, in fact, is a story he knows well. As professional Jewish musicians in Soviet Central Asia, he and Muhabbat were subject to the whims of those in power. As Ilyos and Muhabbat told me, they thrived under one tolerant, enthusiastic minister (Shorof Roshidov) only to suffer under his successor.<sup>5</sup> Bukharians who are not musicians may easily relate to this narrative as well. Several Bukharians with whom I spoke rose to prominent ranks in the Soviet government—they speak with

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3. Syrian Jewish poets in Brooklyn also use techniques to write themselves into their poems, including the acrostic, where the first letter of each verse spells the name of the poet (Shelemay 1998:45, 195-98).

4. “I spoke earlier of the agent as not only an actor, but an author. Now I must emphasize that what the agent is able to do and say intelligibly as an actor is deeply affected by the fact that we are never more (and sometimes less) than the co-authors of our own narratives. Only in fantasy do we live what story we please” (MacIntyre 1984:213).

5. Mallaev told Levin and Celia Dugger of the *New York Times* similar stories regarding Roshidov (Levin 1996:268-69; Dugger 1997).

fondness and nostalgia for the Soviets, explaining how they brought modern medicine and technologies to Central Asia—and left soon after the Soviet Union collapsed, fearful of the new Central Asian governments. And so history once again repeats itself. In telling the story of Levicha, Mallaev is telling his own story and becoming a co-author of a more general Bukharian narrative.

Composers of music and poetry, such as Ilyos Mallaev and Roshel Rubinov, choose to create their works according to inherited principles of *ʿarūz* poetry and maqom structure, establishing continuity through formal characteristics. Oftentimes, one or another aspect of a new composition will be explicitly culled from the past, as in the setting of the newly composed poem “Id-i Purim” to the canonical melody “Qašqarča-i rok.” Performers interpret and perpetuate a narrative when they choose to add inherited Bukharian compositions and new works based on inherited principles to their personal repertoire. In the process of learning and performing such items, they continue Bukharian tradition by applying their own individual and contemporary styles.

By relying on established repertoire for creative activities, old works remain vital and new works are linked to the past. Through interaction by contemporary actors, certain patterns, melodies, attitudes, and habits remain at the core of a standard Bukharian repertoire. In turn, familiarity with inherited principles is fundamental to the idea of Bukharian repertoire as a locus of identity in New York City, and central to the appreciation and development of any particularly “Bukharian” ways of behaving and interacting.

The adaptation of a self-consciously diverse and cosmopolitan repertoire can be considered traditional in that cosmopolitanism has been a part of Bukharian life for

generations. Roman Tolmasov thought that the ability to appreciate and learn musics of different origin was a distinctively Jewish trait, but not necessarily Bukharian: “something special about Jewish people.” Bukharian musicians have found ways to incorporate diversity and new options into their repertoire and in the process keep traditional modes intact. In New York City, suites and compound forms intersect with DJ remixes, and the dance patterns found in zarb-i ufar are played on synthesizers and drum machines for contemporary Bukharian wedding songs. Bukharian musicians maintain inherited compositional issues while engaging new sets of issues, reflecting a will to both thrive in a new environment and keep a consistent idea of Bukharian identity and tradition. Various repertoires and compositional forms coexist, allowing artists to engage different sets of issues depending on the circumstances.

Some options found in New York City are at a crossroads of active interaction with past issues and a rejection of the past. Yet debate and argument over the merits of various options show that certain core issues remain vital to Bukharian tradition. For example, a Reform Jewish service is based on the same principles as the service at Beth Gavriel, but the experience is different enough that participation in a Reform service might be considered a rejection of, rather than an engagement with, Bukharian Jewish religious practice. Furthermore, Reform Judaism was not at all a part of Jewish religious life in Central Asia. One younger Bukharian man told me that he had recently started attending a Reform or Conservative synagogue in Manhattan, saying that he preferred it to Beth Gavriel for various reasons, including a mixed male-female choir. He asked me not to tell anyone, demonstrating that he recognized it could be regarded as a rejection of Bukharian tradition. Other potential options, such as the rejection of religious practice

altogether or practicing a religion other than Judaism, are threats to tradition in that these options render inherited issues irrelevant. At the same time, “rebellion against my identity is always one possible mode of expressing it” (MacIntyre 1984:221).

## 6.2. Authority

Tradition is not up for grabs, but transmitted and maintained by individual actors who have the authority to do so. Authority can be a birthright or it can be acquired, but in either instance it must be recognized by others. As discussed in Chapter 5, the authority of “professionals”—the bearers of Bukharian musical tradition—is a matter of lineage, divine inspiration, talent, skill, and hard work.

Geography can be a source of authority for Bukharian tradition. The fact that Bukharians come from Central Asia, or were born there, gives them the authority to create and lay claim to certain kinds of music. In discussing the unique Bukharian repertoire of Jewish texts set to maqom melodies, Roshel Rubinov told me:

Moroccan Jews set [Jewish texts] to Moroccan melodies, Ashkenazim set [Jewish texts] to Russian melodies, Bukharian Jews set [Jewish texts] to Central Asian melodies. **That’s it. We have permission, because we were born over there. Right?**

Geography within Central Asia is also invoked in debates and discourse among Bukharians. Musicians frequently claim authority based on the specific towns and cities where they were born or grew up. Cities in which Persian is widely spoken and places

with a storied Islamic past, such as Bukhara and Samarqand, are often characterized as being closer to Bukharian traditions than the big Soviet metropolis of Tashkent.

Through the continued interpretations of Bukharian artists, repertoire itself acquires authority. The medieval concept in scholarship of *res*, “a cluster of meanings which are only partially revealed in [the work’s] original statement” (Carruthers 1990:191), suggests one way of thinking about repertoire as a carrier of tradition and authority. *Res* is an original “intention” and “meaning” that can be found in the work itself (not the person-author), but which is dependent on properly trained scholars internalizing and digesting, and then interpreting and re-presenting, the work (Carruthers 1990:165-68). The original intention residing in the work was constructed both through individual creative activity (“authoring”) and social activity, as “an ‘author’ [meaning the text itself] acquires ‘authority’ only by virtue of having his works retained ‘sententialiter’ in the hands of subsequent generations” (1990:190). Bukharian repertoire too carries meaning and authority accumulated over generations of performance, interpretation, and unique responses by practitioners who have completely internalized and digested the music and poetry. These practitioners’ performances in turn add to the bundle of meanings attached to the repertoire.

Interpretation was a necessary part of accessing the *res*, and a lack of interpretative ability was considered a failure of memory, and hence dishonorable (Carruthers 1990:220). Bukharian musicians, regardless of whether or not they know the composer of a work or a piece’s canonical status, take ownership of repertoire when they learn and perform pieces, and they aim to make their interpretations relevant and contemporary to the community. Roshel Rubinov reserved his harshest criticisms for

those that he felt “only copied,” “just repeated,” or imitated without putting their own unique spin on the repertoire. A worthy Bukharian performance, like a medieval scholar’s interpretation of a text, is simultaneously both a new creation and a vehicle for carrying and transmitting the meaning of the work. The performances in *Levicha Hofiz*, for example, were truly “traditional” in the sense that the actors were co-authors (of the play and the history told in the play), bringing their own experiences and styles to their roles and the music associated with Levicha. When performing the role of Levicha, Roshel Rubinov (as the younger Levicha) and Avrom Tolmasov (as the older Levicha) maintained their own distinctive styles while demonstrating a mastery of Levicha’s instrumental and vocal technique. They showed that they could perform Levicha’s particular vibrato and the particular way he pronounced vowels, and that they had absorbed his tanbūr style and techniques (for example, loudly strumming the tanbūr’s drone strings). Yet the singing and performing was distinctively that of Rubinov or Tolmasov. Through their interpretations, Levicha’s life and music acquired contemporary meaning.

Jewish repertoire also relies on human interpretation of perceived meanings located in texts and melodies, but unlike maqom, which relies solely on the activities of professionals, it is the duty of every Bukharian male to contribute to these meanings through prayer. Sacred texts carry authority and meaning, but they require Jewish practice, such as communal worship, and continually new interpretations to remain vital to the Jewish community. Rubinov told me that in praying, a worshipper should feel free to use whatever melody feels appropriate. During sections where individuals are eager to express themselves and be heard as individuals, such as the priestly blessing, singers find

ways to exploit the differences between their melody and those of others, such as stretching out notes or finding unoccupied registers. When singing the same tune, it is common for individuals to ornament and modify the melody in their own way, resulting in what is sometimes called a heterophonic texture.

Rabbis, ḥazzans, and other prayer leaders have a special authority and responsibility. Ḥazzans interpret and communicate the meanings of the sacred texts through expert renditions, and rabbis have acquired the authority to teach and debate issues of Jewish practice. In New York, some Bukharian customs and behaviors are changing because of new rabbinic interpretations and rulings. For example, one funerary Bukharian practice called *šaid-i ovoz*, which involves women singing and playing instruments, is considered improper by some rabbis in New York and has become rare as a result. However, even authoritative interpretations are often the subject of debate. Roshel Rubinov accepts the new ruling, saying that “[the] rabbi knows more Torah than you and I put together,” whereas Ilyos Mallaev thinks the practice should continue and does not accept the new interpretations. The busy website [bjews.com](http://bjews.com) has a forum called “Ask a Rabbi,” in which Rabbis Rafael Rybakov and Iṣḥoq Yehoshua answer questions regarding Jewish practice. Postings can sometimes lead to heated debate. The concerns and questions on the forum capture some of the new issues Bukharians are facing in Queens: whether or not selling diamond Crosses on 47th Street in Manhattan (where many Bukharians work and own stores) is “idolatry”; whether or not women can become rabbis, read from the Torah, or address a congregation (e.g., “Shalom Rabbi, Can you tell me [the] Torah's position on Women Rabbis. Is it expressly forbidden? If so, then

where?"); what sorts of physical contact are permissible before marriage; and nuances of being “observant” versus “religious.”

### **6.3. Institutions**

According to MacIntyre, “[a] living tradition then is an historically extended, socially embodied argument, and an argument precisely in part about the goods which constitute that tradition” (MacIntyre 1984:222). The goods about which he writes can be gained through practices, and they are of two types: internal goods, which “can only be identified and recognized by the experience of participating in the practice in question” (1984:188-89), and external goods, which are “contingently attached to . . . practices by the accidents of social circumstance . . . such goods as prestige, status and money” (1984:188). External goods are “characteristically objects of competition in which there must be losers as well as winners,” whereas internal goods “are indeed the outcome of competition to excel, but it is characteristic of them that their achievement is a good for the whole community who participate in the practice” (1984:190-91). Thus, playing the tanbūr yields unlimited internal goods that can only come from the practice of playing the tanbūr, but it can also result in the accumulation of limited external goods such as status and money.

External goods are connected with institutions. MacIntyre, again, writes:

[Institutions] are involved in acquiring money and other material goods; they are structured in terms of power and status, and they distribute money, power and status as rewards. Nor could they do otherwise if they

are to sustain not only themselves, but also the practices of which they are the bearers. For no practices can survive for any length of time unsustained by institutions. Indeed so intimate is the relationship of practices to institutions—and consequently of the goods external to the goods internal to the practices in question—that institutions and practices characteristically form a single causal order in which the ideals and the creativity of the practice are always vulnerable to the competitiveness of the institution. In this context the essential function of the virtues is clear. Without them, without justice, courage and truthfulness, practices could not resist the corrupting power of institutions. (MacIntyre 1984:194)

As MacIntyre indicates, tradition is an argument about goods, including external ones, and thus, without institutions and external goods practices and traditions die. There are external goods available for professional musicians, and especially singers, in the Bukharian community. Besides money, titles such as “master” (*usto* or *ustoz*), “professor,” and “uncle” (*aka*) are status symbols for important artists. In the Soviet Union, Ezro Malakov, Shoista Mullojanova, Muhabbat Shamaeva, and the dancer Malika Kalantarova were awarded the title “People’s Artist.” This honorific is still used in concert programs and on CDs for those individuals.

The Bukharian community values the role of professional musician, and through external goods provided by institutions such as synagogues, concert organizations and venues, and newspapers, professionals are encouraged to continue their activities. Ezro Malakov is remunerated by Beth Gavriel for his services as a *hazzan*. Roshel Amin has

found one patron in Lev Levaev, a billionaire Bukharian diamond merchant and the sponsor of the Queens Gymnasia. Roshel Rubinov and Mazal Tov are paid for the music they provide at tui-s. Ilyos Mallaev's Ensemble Maqam receives external goods when performing at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall. In turn, singers and their art can be considered external goods for their patrons. Take, for example, Roshel Amin's praise poem for Levaev, "Levi sardor," or the prestige attached to Beth Gavriel because Malakov is the ḥazzan. This dissertation is also an external good of sorts for the artists who appear in it.

Bukharian musicians depend on patronage to accomplish their creative activities, and patrons can wield considerable influence. Rabbi Hillel Ḥayimov and the Ateret Menahem Organization in Israel commissioned Ilyos Mallaev's Persian religious poetry (Mallaev 2003) and the recordings that followed (*Ereṣ Isroel, Az qudrat-i Xudovand*). As this dissertation was nearing completion, I learned of another new project along these lines. A well-to-do Israeli Bukharian poet, Nison Niyozzi, was commissioning Malakov to organize recordings of his poems, which are also religious. Malakov, together with Avrom Tolmasov, Roshel Rubinov, Muhabbat Shamaeva, Ilyos Mallaev, and others, set the poems to maqom and newly composed melodies. It was of the utmost importance to Malakov and the other performers that they provide a worthy product to Niyozzi. Malakov asked Ilyos, Muhabbat, Ilyos's son Gary, and me to listen to some recordings, as he wanted to know if he should re-record some tracks. Gary turned to me and said in English, "They sound fine to me. But he's being careful. He's a *professional*. It would be better if everyone took their work this seriously."

In the Bukharian community, external goods are often bestowed and exchanged in public fora. At cultural presentations, performers are announced with long, laudatory speeches in which their titles and roles are mentioned. Wealthy members of the community are expected to publicly contribute to the finances of important institutions. At Beth Gavriel and the Bukharian Jewish Community Center, congregants donate money during auctions held at religious services. Most congregants with whom I spoke liked the auctions and explained that the social pressure of an auction encourages people to make more substantial donations than they would in a less public setting. A few, however, see the auction as inappropriate to the service. This view could be a part of a more general American attitude that donations to religious institutions should be done in private.

External goods are also necessary to attract talent to musical occupations. Yosef Munarov, for example, told me about how he never dreamed he would have his picture in the newspaper, but because of music, he is in the newspaper and gaining exposure performing on stages. In the United States, where musicians generally receive little pay for their efforts (except for the small number of megastars), some Bukharians who played professionally in Uzbekistan (such as Ezro Malakov's sons and Roman Tolmasov) have chosen to enter more lucrative fields, like business and dentistry.

MacIntyre's comment about the importance of virtues in countering the "corrupting power of institutions" is also relevant in the Bukharian community. Malakov and Rubinov, for example, repeatedly told me, "money isn't important." Although external goods are necessary, the values maintained through Bukharian tradition prevent external goods from becoming paramount. For some talented artists, external goods can

be achieved through other means and thus music becomes primarily about internal goods. Roman Tolmasov, for example, used to play weddings in Uzbekistan, but now runs a cotton bleaching factory. He plays regularly—every day for at least two hours—but only *tanbūr*, not guitar or *tor*, and “only for myself.” When I saw him perform, he played almost completely turned away from the audience, and in discussion with me, he made it a point that this way of positioning his body demonstrated that he was playing primarily for his own satisfaction.

According to MacIntyre, external goods are necessarily limited. Because there is only so much prestige, status, and money to go around, professional musicians engage in rivalries and competitions. It is standard for musicians of a certain rank to criticize other artists while indirectly or directly praising their own abilities. But for the most part, rivalries do not seem to negatively affect music-making or interpersonal relationships. Bukharian musicians are also vying as group for external goods beyond what can be gained solely within the community, and it is in their interest to cooperate with each other for a larger slice of the pie.

#### **6.4. Ethics and Community Values**

A tradition perpetuates the specific values that a community deems relevant. The ethics and values transmitted in Bukharian repertoire are multifaceted. The *acts* of memorization and learning music and literature are ethical, regardless of the content—in other words, playing an instrument, singing, and reading are ethical endeavors in and of themselves. Bukharian parents send their children to learn musical instruments or to sing in Persian at Roshel Amin’s school, to learn dance at Malika Kalantarova’s school, or to

study Jewish practice at yeshiva. But the *content* and substance of the memorized repertoire is also important. Memorized repertoire has much to do with a person's character, as one draws upon these resources when interacting with others.

One of Roshel Rubinov's teachers of prosody, Professor Abubakr Zuhuriddinov of the Mirza Tursunzoda Institute, told him, "every hofiz [great singer] must know at least a hundred ġazal-s to a hundred rubo'i-s" (Rubinov 2002:7). When I asked him about this, he explained,

Ģazal-s also, rubo'i-s also. **Minimum. You must know one hundred ġazal[s], minimum, one hundred rubo'i[s] minimum.** For one hundred situation[s], different situation[s]. **Different situation. You [are a] singer. Your level must be a little bit [higher] than [that of] regular people. Everybody will sit with you and talk with you, you have to show your level. . . . Sometimes they will [make you] give [a] speech for the memorial day [i.e., anniversary of someone's death], something. You have to know [these things] by heart.**

The forms of ġazal and rubo'i already imply elevated topics and sophistication. According to Rubinov, any ġazal will do.

ER: **But** it's not necessary for it to be a ġazal of Hafez . . .

RR: **No, no, anything.** Ģazal-s of Hafez, ġazal-s of Kamal-i Xujandi, ġazal-s of Rudaki, ġazal-s of Ferdowsi, ġazal-s of Roshel Rubinov, ġazal-s of Ilyos Mallaev. **Anything.**

ER: **But you must have it in your brain . . .**

RR: **Minimum.**

ER: For speeches.

RR: **Yeah.** It is necessary to become a wise (purdon, lit. “full of knowledge”) hofiz. *Purdon*. **You know what it means,** “purdon”? “Yak xīl odamon purdon, yak xīl odamon nodon” [“One kind of person is wise, one kind of person ignorant”]. Purdon **means you must be smart.**

Ignorant people [are] **everywhere. They don’t know what to do, they don’t know even one ġazal or one rubo‘i, they don’t know how to learn.**

The form of this exchange also expresses the content. Rubinov explained to me that in order to be learned, I must memorize ġazal-s and have them at my disposal when conversing or giving a speech. In the process, he quoted a ġazal. In this case, it is a line from one of his own, “Panj panja barobar nest,” which I translated and which he knew I would recognize.<sup>6</sup> Shared repertoire becomes a basis for communication about shared values.

The ethics of music and texts are intertwined. At performances of maqom, ġazal-s are sung, and knowledgeable audience members often sing along or otherwise engage the

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6. Rubinov also showed his knowledge of Mallaev’s work with a *muxammas* on Mallaev’s ġazal “Suhbat-i dono” (see Chapter 4). “Suhbat-i dono” means “discourse of wise people,” and the ġazal conveys a similar sentiment to the lines Rubinov quoted from “Panj panja barobar nest”—simply, that the company of smart people is preferable to that of stupid people.

poetry, spurred on by the musical context. The music and poetry work together mnemonically. Maqom pieces exploit the poetic structure of a ġazal, as each couplet is assigned to new registers and separated with instrumental breaks. At two different concerts, I sat next to Shumil Tolmasov (Roman's father and Avrom's brother), who recited to me each couplet of a ġazal in the instrumental break preceding its performance. He would lean over to me, recite the couplet, and ask me if I understood the meaning. Several times he would repeat the couplet, stressing certain words. In this process, the music and poetry became a means for Tolmasov to interact socially, teach moral lessons, and fully engage the performance.

Poems teach ethics, morality, and virtues. In "Panj panja barobar nest" ("The five fingers are not the same"), for example, Rubinov extols those who do not compromise their integrity in exchange for bribes or favors with the line "I never eat a meal out of obligation," (*az oš-i pur-i minnat hargiz naxuram albat*), explaining that it is preferable to live simply and humbly, "It's better I eat bread and water" (*behtar bar-i man yavġon*). He praises those who refrain from gossiping and speaking too freely, writing, "Silence is golden and blabbing is feeble-minded" (*Xomušī adab ast-u purġūī kamaqlī ast*). He reminds people of their brief time on earth, explaining, "Everyone in the world is a guest, God is the host" (*hama ba jahon mehmon/xoliq ba jahon mezbōn*). In his "Har kas ba xud ovora" ("Everyone is busy"), he decries the way people run around, worrying and being dissatisfied, without ever resting and taking time for the important things in life.

Beyond ġazal-s and maqom repertoire, texts and forms shared by all Jewish communities convey Bukharian Jewish religious values. Learning liturgy, Bible stories, teachings in the Talmud, and other texts develops a person's Jewish religious character.

Rubinov once described the wisdom of one Rabbi, Igal Ben Ḥayim, by his deep knowledge of religious texts.

One type [of person] knows **by heart** Šaḥarīt, Minhāh, °Arvīt, **by heart**.  
**Sometimes I see [a] Rabbi [without a book]. . . . It's difficult. I know**  
**one Rabbi, Ben Ḥayim, if other Rabbis have questions, they [ask him]**  
**. . . he says, take *this* book, *this* page, *this* paragraph. . . .** He has it in  
 his mind, in his memory (*dar fikraš, dar yod dorad*)!

The ḥazzan brings life to Jewish texts, and in some cases, inspired performances of Jewish music can make someone religious. Yosef Munarov, after being urged to attend synagogue by one of his friends, told me that he became religious after hearing the beautiful voice of a ḥazzan named Yakov Meirov. He now assists with ḥazzanut at various synagogues in Queens, and works at Beth Gavriel in other capacities.

The idea that music can help spread religious values is at the core of many Jewish contrafactum practices. Setting poems with religious content to secular local melodies has been a highly valued practice of mysticism-informed Judaism at least since the publication and spread of Israel Najara's songs in 1587. Najara proudly broadcast the fact that his Hebrew songs were modeled on Ottoman and other melodies, and gave the non-Hebrew incipit as a musical direction for the singing of the hymn (Tietze and Yahalom 1995:14; Shiloah 1992:123, 153; Avenary 1979:186-90). His goal in applying religious texts to secular melodies was, in short, to encourage his fellow Jews to praise God with catchy tunes. Lubavitchers, in this same spirit, have combined many local melodies (in both Europe and the United States) with religious lyrics, the act of adaptation imbued

with the proper intention and spirit (Koskoff 2001:73-79). Similarly, the Syrian Jewish repertoire of *pizmonim* is one of Jewish texts in Hebrew set to secular Arab melodies (Shelemay 1998).

The Bukharian repertoire of Jewish texts set to maqom melodies is related to these and many other Jewish contrafactum repertoires, although the status of the Persian language is somewhat unusual. Generally in these repertoires the sacred language of Hebrew replaces the secular, vernacular tongue, but Persian has both sacred and secular associations for Bukharian Jews. On the one hand, Persian is the Bukharian Jewish mother tongue and hence a vernacular by which the meaning of the Hebrew original can be generally understood. On the other hand, Persian and *°arūz* meters are associated with the esteemed classical, spiritual, and even religious poems of Hafez, Rumi, and others. Especially in New York, where fewer and fewer Bukharians are speaking Persian, the language has become associated with the Central Asian past and tradition.<sup>7</sup> Youngsters are taught to sing in “Bukharian” in order to keep their heritage alive. Thus, Persian-language texts on Jewish themes may rival Hebrew-language texts in terms of cultural value.<sup>8</sup>

In his religious poems, Ilyos Mallaev has continued this tradition of ethical text setting. The poems express uniquely Jewish values and ideas regarding holidays, sacred

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7. Language associations are different but just as complicated in Israel, where Hebrew is also a vernacular.

8. A similar attitude toward language can be found in the Lubavitcher community. Hebrew has the highest spiritual value, but Yiddish, associated with Eastern European culture and the revered Rebbes of the past, also has potential for prayer and devotion (Koskoff 2001:80-81).

texts, holy sites, and devotion to God. Simultaneously, they communicate distinctly Bukharian values through the use of the Persian language, *‘arūz* meters, and *ğazal* form. Mallaev, like Najara, indicates the melody to which his poem is to be sung, drawn from the storehouse of Central Asian melodic repertoire. And in another similarity to Najara, the ultimate destination of these poems is the ears and minds of a specific Jewish community. Ezro Malakov, Avrom Tolmasov, Ilya Khavasov, Roshel Rubinov, and Mallaev himself have set Mallaev’s poetry to music, performed the compositions in public, and recorded them. CDs of these poems have been distributed freely (for example, at one of Beth Gavriel’s *Simḥat Torah* celebrations). By placing this music in the hands of fellow Bukharians, Mallaev and his cohorts are encouraging their fellow Bukharians to listen to religious, rather than secular, music—or to at least have that option readily available.

The form and structure of Jewish repertoire also contain ethical meaning. Koskoff, for example, has shown how the structure of Lubavitcher nigunim conveys Ḥasidic cosmological precepts (Koskoff 2001:88-90). The value inherent in order and structure is one of many communicated in the structure of maqom and the Jewish service. Everett Fox characterizes order as one of seven major themes in Genesis: “*Order/ Meaning in History*: By means of stylized or patterned chronology . . . it is suggested that human events are not random but somehow planned” (Fox 1995:3). The word for the prayerbook, *siddur*, comes from the Hebrew root *sdr*, which appears in words related to order and structure (Elbogen [1913] 1993:6-7).<sup>9</sup> For Jews, the ability to perform

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9. Compare also the Passover *seder* (“order” or “fixed arrangement”), which refers

prescribed, ordered sets of instructions is considered a religious quality that is uniquely human (as opposed to animal). As described in Chapter 4, the principles of order and sequence are fundamental to the composition of the Jewish prayer service and the Šašmaqom. So while these repertoires embody and reflect the importance of order to the Bukharian community, the idea of order as a virtue is perpetuated and communicated through practice of music and prayer. The order of the Šašmaqom is not always respected in modern performance contexts, as Bukharians perform individual šu<sup>o</sup>ba-s as standalone compositions. However, the value of order is maintained in other aspects of performance, such as the ritual tuning before a performance and the arc-like contour of most maqom ensemble programs.

Finally, Bukharian repertoire contains and teaches the value of community. The importance Jews place on community is easily found in the *minyan*, or quorum of ten adult men (over the age of bar mitzvah), which is necessary to properly perform the three daily prayers of Šaḥarīt, Miṇḥāh, and <sup>o</sup>Arvīt. Prayer is seen primarily as something that needs to be done communally and in public. At the same time, the voice of the individual is important, and worshippers are encouraged to seek their own style and pace for performing prayers. In maqom performance as well, Bukharian musicians audibly express their own unique styles within the overall ensemble texture. The typical combination of instruments in similar ranges but with different timbres (i.e., tor + ġijak + nai), and the combination of voices singing the same melodic line but with different

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to the linear structure of the meal.

ornaments and treatments, also reflect the value of balancing individual expression and community harmony.

### **6.5. Connecting the Bukharian Diaspora**

Although geographic dispersal presents challenges to a group's sense of community, diasporic conditions can greatly intensify, and even create, an idea of tradition and unity. If identity is formed through otherness, situations in which groups come into contact with each other, such as diasporas, often strengthen ideas of "us" and "them." Music, literature, dance, dress, food, customs, and belief systems become thought of as tradition and elements of an identity rather than simply taken-for-granted aspects of life. Jews have had ample opportunities to develop diasporic culture, living as "others" in scattered locations (but, significantly, usually living together in neighborhoods, ghettos, or generally concentrated conditions), under perpetual risk of assimilation, forced conversion, and/or extermination. Communities may become increasingly concerned with preserving and maintaining their "traditions" under the threat of losing one's culture and having one's identity subsumed, and as a result, diasporic communities may perpetuate music and customs long forgotten or ignored among those living in the less self-conscious place of origin.<sup>10</sup> The concern that Bukharian Jews feel about the possibility of losing their way of life is an important part of recent creative activities such as *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns*, *Levicha Hofiz*, and books about Bukharian history, as well as institutional support for Roshel Amin's maqom

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10. Compare, for example, the Indo-Caribbean diaspora (Manuel 1997/1998:26-27).

school and newly-developed classes in the “Buxori” language held at the Bukharian Jewish Community Center.

The contemporary Bukharian diaspora is especially complex. There are coexisting homelands—ereṣ Yisrāēl, Central Asia, and the nation-state of Israel—and strikingly varied attitudes towards each one. The classic homeland of the Jewish diaspora, ereṣ Yisrāēl is kept alive in Jewish liturgical texts (prayers in the °Amidāh, for example, speak of rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem and the ingathering of the dispersed exiles), some newly composed poems, and the discourse of Bukharians taken with the ideas of Ḥassidism; at the same time, because of their long-standing position on the periphery of the Jewish world and pride in their own religious practice, Bukharians often have an ambivalent stance towards a notion of a central authority for world Jewry. I have frequently encountered a “multilayered message” (Cooper 2004:101), in which the idea of ereṣ Yisrāēl and one Jewish People is coupled with a rhetoric that extols the Bukharian minhag and attempts to reorient the Jewish “center” to Central Asia.

A multilayered attitude is not uncommon among different Jewish communities, although the complexity of such a stance is brought to the fore when communities are marginalized and when they encounter other Jewish communities—situations in which the Bukharian community has increasingly found itself in the past few decades. Yuhan Benjamin readily acknowledges the *plov* of Jewish culture, a stance which simultaneously embraces Jewish diversity, such as the ways Jews in different areas developed other repertoires that drew on local music, and legitimizes the practices of the Bukharian community. As Cooper rightly points out, the situation of the Bukharian Jews presents a possible alternative to the center-periphery paradigm still dominant in Jewish

thought (2004:95-96), and resonates with increasingly prevalent ideas about diaspora, such as the rejection of a “center” and classical longing for the homeland (recently found in some discussions of the black diaspora, e.g., Gilroy 1993 and Hall 1994). Themes of longing for life in a past homeland, often related to geographic concentration and a desire to simply live life as one wants without self-consciousness and constant reminders of otherness, regularly surface in diasporic repertoires, and may or may not reflect an *actual* desire to physically return to a geographic location. Bukharian Jews can prefer to live in the United States, celebrating Jewish diversity and the uniqueness of Bukharian diasporic culture, while simultaneously maintaining the notion of *ereṣ Yisrāēl* as a spiritual center and necessary reference point of general Jewish unity, as that notion has been an integral part of Bukharian diasporic culture itself.

But unlike some homelands that exist only or primarily in diasporic lyrical imagery and collective memory, *ereṣ Yisrāēl* is also a physical place and life there is a real option for Bukharian Jews. A significant Bukharian presence in Jerusalem and other places in present-day Israel dates back to the early settlers of the *šəḫūnat ha-būxārīm* in the 1880s. Since about half of the Jews who left Central Asia during the collapse of the Soviet Union went to Israel, most New York Bukharians have at least some family there and travel between New York and Israel is commonplace. New York Bukharians stay abreast of Israeli current events and politics (often through the Russian-language TV station RTVi). For recent immigrants in Israel and New York—especially Bukharians in their twenties, thirties, and forties—the possibility of moving again remains strong, and the other diasporic center is usually a first choice. Recently, twenty families from Queens have announced that they will be immigrating to Israel along with Rabbi Mikhoel

Borokhov (Beckerman 2006). In addition to the pull of family friends, and work opportunities, constant war—especially since the al-Aqsa Intifada in 2000—and a generally higher standard of living make New York desirable, while intense Zionist attitudes draw people to Israel. In the words of Roshel Juraev, a Bukharian guitarist who lives in Ramla, “without war, Israel [would be] better [than New York], but today, New York is better” (*bī jang, Yisrāēl behtar ast, lekin aknun, New York behtar ast*).

Bukharian Jews also have a complex diasporic relationship to Central Asia. Jews set down powerful roots in Central Asia over centuries of continuous residence, and many Bukharians born in Central Asia (particularly in Bukhara, Dushanbe, Samarqand, and Shahrīsabz), easily exhibit nostalgia for their homes. Yet, when asked about their history, Bukharian Jews will often downplay Central Asia as a Homeland by characterizing life in Central Asia as *golūt* (exile), explaining that the community originally came from Iran (itself a diasporic location of the first Jewish diaspora), and contrasting the good life in the “new home” (the United States) with the difficult life in Central Asia. Recent Bukharian migration from Central Asia and the generations-long condition of Jewish diaspora coexist: “Jewish experience often entails ‘multiple experiences of rediasporization, which do not necessarily *succeed* each other in historical memory but echo back and forth’” (Jonathan Boyarin quoted in Clifford 1994:305).

Further examples of diasporic ambiguity can be found among Bukharian Jews. The Bukharian community left Central Asia *en masse* to escape hardship and persecution, but only once have I heard a Bukharian Jew speak in unequivocally negative terms in the way, for example, my own grandparents and great-grandparents would speak about life in Ukraine or Poland. Many Bukharians retain personal and economic ties to Jews and non-

Jews in Central Asia and visit regularly. One Bukharian, who described himself as a refugee, showed me pictures of anti-Semitic graffiti spray-painted on his house in Uzbekistan and told me of rocks being thrown through windows at his brother's wedding; at the same time, he was planning to visit Uzbekistan later that year with his family. One common reason for a visit is a *ziyorat*, or pilgrimage to the resting place of one's ancestors; sometimes these trips are organized by travel agents and advertised in the back of *Bukharian Times*.<sup>11</sup> Some families I know are aiming to bring their U.S.-born children to Central Asia to acquaint them with the land. When dignitaries from the Uzbek or Tajik government visit the United States, Bukharian Jews are often asked to perform for them. Thus, although Bukharian Jews emigrated as an ethnic group in a short span of time to flee danger, their lives—and the musical ramifications thereof—can be contrasted with people living in refugee camps (Reyes Schramm 1989), those who left their homes because of genocidal atrocities, and those whose diasporas are rooted in slavery and completely involuntary migration. Simultaneously, the New York Bukharian Jews are unlike those diasporic communities that took shape over many decades, such as the Chinese Americans in New York City (Zheng 1993). In some ways, the current Bukharian diaspora might be considered an intensification of the traveling and trading that was historically a part of Jewish life in Central Asia, but more research is necessary to elucidate the particular historical relationship of Bukharian Jews to the land, other ethnic groups, and majority Muslim society of Central Asia.

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11. In Central Asia, the term *ziyorat* also applies to a pilgrimage to the tomb of a saint (Levin 1996:182-83).

In the Bukharian community, professional musicians have a special role as community representatives, and the presence of Bukharian musicians is often requested in various locations of the diaspora for concerts or special events such as the opening of a new synagogue. This has been the case, for example, as Bukharians increasingly develop communities in other U.S. cities, such as Atlanta and Denver. The travels of musicians can circulate and increase the presence of repertoire. Ezro Malakov, Avrom Tolmasov, and other New York Bukharian performers regularly travel to Israel, Europe, and Central Asia to give concerts, make recordings, or work on musical projects, and Bukharians from abroad travel to New York. Mass media enables the products of professional musicians to travel across vast geographical distances without the musicians getting on a plane. *Eternal Music of Bukharian Jewish Hymns* is a product of diasporic interaction, coordinated by Malakov in New York, Ari Babakhanov in Germany, a team in Uzbekistan, and publishers and sponsors in Israel. Bukharian repertoire is easily available on Internet sites such as [www.bjews.com](http://www.bjews.com) and [www.bukharian.com](http://www.bukharian.com).

A core repertoire has emerged that connects the Bukharian populations dispersed throughout numerous countries and cities. The same songs can be heard in Israel and New York; I heard older standards such as “Qurbon olam” next to newer ones such as Roshel Rubinov’s “Tanbūr manam” and Ilyos Mallaev’s “Yalalum” at a tǝfillin bandon celebration in Israel. Maqom styles and compositions give listeners a chance to remember or imagine their shared Bukharian homeland of Central Asia. New compositions often hark back to Central Asia, as with Ilya Khavasov’s “My Samarqand,” an ode to that city

sung in Russian over an up-tempo zarb-i ufar.<sup>12</sup> In addition, some styles might be evoked to life in Central Asia without any Central Asian characteristics. Ilyos Mallaev and Muhabbat Shamaeva, like many of the Bukharian professional musicians on the New York scene, were already well-traveled before coming to the United States. Shamaeva's North Indian-style singing of "Ey, xonum" can be related to their visits to India and the presence of Indian music and Bollywood films in Central Asia as well as the substantial Indian diasporic community living side-by-side with the Bukharian Jews in Queens.

Other repertoire items and styles celebrate and reflect new places of residence, new institutions and pressures, and the reality of today's global society, in which diaspora is commonplace. In song lyrics, instrumental combinations, and CD packaging, musicians aurally and visually represent the multiple homes and homelands of contemporary Bukharians. In Israel, where Sephardic and "Mizrahi" (Eastern) Jews<sup>13</sup> have a strong presence, Bukharians often perform with pan-Sephardic instruments like the darabukka or in the pan-Mizrahi style, marked by guitar melodies harmonized in thirds and rhythms commonly found in Arab music, such as



(relevant examples can be heard on *Yosi Niyazov* [n.d.]). Although more research is necessary, the inclusion of Spanish-language songs in the repertoire of Bukharian Jews

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12. Other songs written in New York that celebrate Central Asia are Albert Narkolaev's "Dushanbe," Muhabbat Shamaeva's "My Uzbekistan," and Roshel Rubinov's "Shahrisabz."

13. "Mizrahi," meaning "Eastern," is a blanket term used to describe Jews from locations east of Israel such as Iraq, Iran, and Central Asia.

seems to be local to New York City, likely stemming from New York's importance as a central site of immigration for Latino communities and the high interest in Latino culture among Bukharian youth in Queens.

Ilyos Mallaev has eloquently expressed the Bukharian diasporic experience in his poem "Yalalum." The resonance of these words is evident in the popularity of the musical setting, which is performed regularly in New York and throughout the Bukharian diaspora. Significantly, Mallaev has written two versions of the poem. In one, written in 1992, the verses describe immigration to America (Mallaev 1999:360-62).

Dar dast-i rafiq-on gul-i navrasta-i noz,  
 Mo ro bigiriftand bo tabassum pešvoz,  
 Az Osiyo dar Amriko kardem parvoz,  
 Šoista, Malika u Muhabbat, Ilyos,

Aknun zi šumo manam judo-i nakunam,  
 Yak lahza xayol-i bevafoi nakunam,  
 Mo ham ba šumo, šumo ba mo dust bošem,  
 Be bazm-i šumo kaif u safoe nakunam,

Parvoz-i baland kaif-i par-u bol mišavad,  
 Dar mavj-i havo sohib-i iqbol mišavad,  
 Dar Amriko har kas, ki biyoyad šab-u ruz,  
 Mehmon-i man-u Rahmini Nektol mišavad,

Rahmin Nektol u Mulo Ishoq-i Rabbai,  
 Pešboz bigirem šumo ro bo tanbūr-u nai,  
 Boloi jamoat ču misol-i posbon,

Dar har suxan-i šumo biguyem: Labbai!

[Translation:]

In the hands of friends, young beautiful flowers,  
They greet us with smiles,  
We flew from Asia to America,  
Shoista, Malika,<sup>14</sup> Muhabbat, Ilyos,

Now I should not be separated from you,  
Let me not think unfaithful thoughts for even one moment,  
Let us become your friends and you become ours,  
I would not be happy without your celebration,

The long flight becomes the joy of wing and feather,  
In the billows of air one becomes a prosperous master,  
In America everyone that comes night and day,  
Becomes my guest and that of Rahmin[i] Nektol,<sup>15</sup>

Rahmin Nektol and Mullo Işhoq [Yehoshua] our Rabbi  
Let us greet you with tanbūr and nai,  
Head of the community like a watchman,  
To your every word let us say: Labbai!<sup>16</sup>

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14. Sometimes Muhabbat (who sings “Yalalum” with Ensemble Maqam) sings “Ezro” here instead of “Malika.”

15. Raḥmin Nektalov is one of the leaders of the Bukharian community.

16. “Labbai” means “I am at your service!”

Mallaev wrote a different version celebrating the land of Israel as the Jewish homeland (*vatan*) for his collection of commissioned religious poems (Mallaev 2003) and the recording *Ereş Isroel* (2003).

Xok-i vatanam ču dur-u gavhar bošad,  
 Ruxsor-i madino toj-i bar sar bošad,  
 Tōrāh ba yahūdī čun sim-u zar bošad,  
 Bar čakka-i mo mudom gul-i tar bošad,

Šodi mīkunem dar vatan-i gulgun-i mo,  
 Ovarda šab-u ruz ba zabon nom-i Xudo,  
 Boz mītalabam bar vatanam umr-i baqo,  
 Xok-i vatanam malham-u dorui-u davo,

Mo mītalabem sulh-u adolat gardad,  
 Har banda mudom soğ-u salomat gardad,  
 Har ruz-u šab-i vatan ba rohat gardad,  
 Turo-i xazina dūr zi ofat gardad,

Isroel-i mo bigašta bo šuxrat-u šon,  
 Ham nom-i Xudo ba mo mudom vird-i zabon,  
 Qurbon mekunem baroi ū mo dil-u jon,  
 Ū sohib-i har maxluq-u ham rui-i jahon,

[Translation:]

The soil of my homeland like a pearl and jewel,  
 The visage of the City a crown atop a head,  
 Torah to a Jew is like silver and gold,  
 On our side is always a dewy flower,

I am happy in our bountiful homeland,  
 God's name is brought day and night to my tongue,  
 Again I request for my homeland eternal life,  
 The soil of my homeland inspired and healing and medicine,

We ask for peace and justice to return,  
 Every devotee always should be healthy,  
 Comfort to the homeland each night and day,  
 Keep the Torah of treasure far from calamity,

Our Israel has achieved fame and dignity,  
 And God's name is a habitual phrase for us,  
 We sacrifice our heart and soul for Him,  
 He is the master of every creature and person.

The ideas expressed in these two versions of “Yalalum” coexist. Mallaev expresses his love for his newfound home in the United States and for the spiritual homeland of his people, Israel. There seems to be no pressure to choose between one or another loyalty. Similarly, Bukharians in New York City engage, maintain, transmit, combine, and expand multiple repertoires with multiple associations. The incorporation of diverse items into personal repertoires and, in turn, the repertoire of the community, means that Bukharians have increased possibilities and options within a context of Bukharian tradition. “Yalalum” is subject to various treatments according to the situation. On *Bukharian Jewish Folk Music* (1998) and in concert, Ensemble Maqam performs the first poem in a maqom style and instrumentation. The recording of the latter version of “Yalalum” (on *Ereş İsroel* [2003]), sung by Ilya Khavasov, adopts the manner of tui

repertoire, combining maqom principles, Jewish themes, a typical tui-band 6/8 zarb-i ufar, and contemporary production aesthetics. The resulting synthesis represents a Bukharian identity that is connected to the past but adaptable to the realities of migration and upheaval. This Bukharian identity, as heard and performed in musical repertoire, combines a sense of otherness and a sense of belonging to larger narratives and societies, such as those of the Jewish people and the United States.

Musical repertoire is a product of human activity and social interaction. As historical circumstances change, individuals and groups alter their repertoires to maintain continuity with the past and a sense of community. New poems and melodies are added to repertoires, individuals apply their personal styles to familiar compositions, and ways of playing, thinking, and behaving are passed from one person to another, being newly interpreted in the process. Topics relating to repertoire and music can also be crucial to a community's history. Bukharian Jews in Queens explore these fundamental issues with a particularly high level of self-awareness about the important role repertoire plays in sustaining a community and keeping its values relevant. Bukharian Jews will no doubt continue to create, perform, and transmit repertoire with vitality and flexibility.

## APPENDIX A. Internet Resources for Audio Examples

- Bjews.com (or bukharianjews.com). Bukharian Jewish Global Portal.

Navigate to the “Music,” and then click on the “Bukharian Jewish Music” folder

for many relevant selections available in mp3 format, including:

- Roshel Amin, “Čul-i ʿiroq,” from *Sado-i dil bo ovoz-i tanbūr*
- Yuhan Benjamin, “Popuri,” from *Non-i padar*
- Ilyusha Khavasov, “My Samarqand” and “Remix,” from *My Samarqand*
- Ezro Malakov, three selections from *Eternal Music from Bukharian Jewish Hymns* (the “Yāh ribūn ʿālam” on this site is a different version than the one discussed in Chapter 4)
- Ensemble Maqam, “Mahvaš-i nozuk” and ten other selections from *Bukharian Jewish Folk Music*
- Yosi Niyazov, “Yakumin ki mīdonad,” from *Yosi Niyazov*
- Roshel Rubinov, “ʿArūs-i zībo,” “Tamanno,” and “DJ Mike Remix,” from *Tamanno*
- Muhabbat Shamaeva, “Bukharian Wedding Song,” from *Yalalum*

- Boojle.com.

Navigate to the music section of this website for streaming RealAudio files of pertinent recordings, including:

- Ochil Ibragimov, “Čapandoz-i navo” (select “Ochil Ibragimov (2)”)

- Ilya Khavasov, “My Samarqand,” from *My Samarqand*
  - Albert Narkolayev, “Azizam,” from *Azizam*
  - Nargis, “1001 Nights,” from *Desert Rain*
  - Avrom Tolmasov, “Girya,” from *Girya*
- Bukharian.com.  

The music section of this site has several selections available as streaming RealAudio files, including recordings by Yuhan Benjamin, Barno Işhoqova, Ensemble Maqam, Ilya Khavasov, Ezro Malakov, Shoista Mullojanova, Albert Narkolaev, Yosi Niyazov, Roshel Rubinov, Muhabbat Shamaeva, and Avrom Tolmasov.
  - Smithsonianglobalsound.org.  

Any selection from a Smithsonian Folkways recording cited in the dissertation (*Central Asia in Forest Hills N.Y., Bukhara: Musical Crossroads of Asia, Invisible Face of the Beloved: Classical Music of the Tajiks and Uzbeks, and The Silk Road: A Musical Caravan*) is available for purchase and download from this site. Browsing by geography to “Uzbekistan” will return the most results. Another option is to select “Culture Group: Bukharan.”
  - Websites of Bukharian musicians.
    - www.neriyeaminfund.com has samples available for download from Roshel Amin’s and Neryo Aminov’s recordings, as well as ordering and

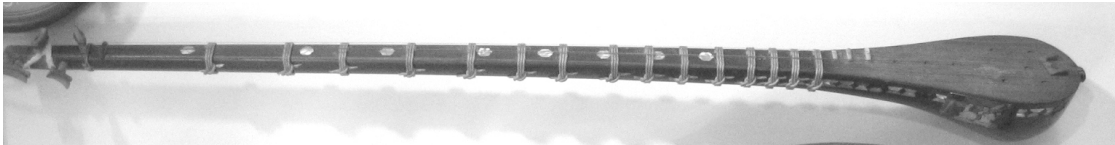
purchasing information. To navigate to directly to the samples, the URL is [http://www.neriyeaminfund.com/cd\\_casets.htm](http://www.neriyeaminfund.com/cd_casets.htm).

- [www.yuhanny.com](http://www.yuhanny.com) has Yuhan Benjamin recordings available for download and purchase.

## APPENDIX B. Musical Instruments

### Tanbūr

Usually, today's tanbūr has one melody string and three drone strings (older tanbūrs have two drone strings), is about 46" from end to end, and is made from mulberry wood. The melody string is played with a metal plectrum called a *noxun*. The sato is an almost identical instrument, with a slightly larger resonator and five strings. It is often played upright and with a bow.



### Doira

The doira is a frame drum with jingles attached to the inside rim. The doira player holds the instrument with thumbstraps attached to the rim. The instrument is tuned by heating the membrane; today, this is generally accomplished with a space heater.



From the back



From the front

### Tor

A double-chested short-necked lute with three double courses, a drone string, and sympathetic strings. The instrument, originally from the Caucasus and increasingly popular in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan over the course of the twentieth century, is now extremely common in Bukharian performances of maqom.



Roshel Rubinov holding the tor

**GLOSSARY**

All words are from Persian or Hebrew, except where indicated.

°Amidah	a central prayer of Jewish worship
°Arvīt	the evening prayer in Jewish worship
°arūz	classical system of Persian and Arabic prosody
ašula	song
ašula-i kalon	“great song,” a style in which singers alternate in rising tessituras and culminate in group singing
Ashkenazim	Jews who spread out from Germany (Ashkenaz)
awj	culmination, climax
bahr	poetic foot (or more generally, poetic meter)
bī mūsīqī	a cappella (lit. “without music”)
beit	couplet or line, consisting of two misra°
čang	hammered zither (not the historical vertical harp)
čola	a Jew who outwardly converted to Islam under duress
daromad	“introduction,” the beginning of a šu°ba, typically sung within a range of scale degrees 1–5. Also called sarxat.
doira	frame drum, with jingles along the inside rim
dunasr	upper octave, the section of a šu°ba typically sung within a range of scale degrees 8–13
dutor	a long-necked lute with two strings
ereš Yisrāēl	the land of Israel
estrada	pop music

foršlag	grace note (Russian, from German <i>Vorschlag</i> )
furovard	“descent,” the ending section of a šu <sup>o</sup> ba
ğazal	a classical poetic form commonly used in maqom
ğijak	spike fiddle
gōy	nation, gentile
halaxah	Jewish law and interpretation
ħazzan	cantor
ħazzanut	cantorial singing
hofiz	singer, professional singer
improvizašiya	improvisation (Russian)
joma	Bukharian Jewish ceremonial embroidered coat
maqom	suite, standard repertoire, lit. “place”
mašq kardan	to practice
minhag	custom (of a particular Jewish community)
Minħāh	the afternoon prayer in Jewish worship
minyān	quorum of ten Jewish men over the age of bar mitzvah
misra <sup>o</sup>	line or half-line of a poem (see <i>beit</i> )
miyonxat	middle line
musaf	an additional service in Jewish worship
mūsīqī, muzika	instrumental music, melody
muxammas	a five-line poetic form, sometimes based on a preexisting ğazal
nai	flute
narod	folk (Russian)

nīgūn	melody, any Jewish song in the Bukharian community
nola	pitch-bending, especially on the tanbūr (lit. “groan”)
nota	Western music notation (Russian)
noxun	plectrum, lit. “claw,” “nail”
nusah	“version,” a particular way of performing Jewish liturgical repertoire, applicable to an individual or a community
ohang	melody
raja <sup>c</sup>	line or half-line of a poem
parda	fret, division
pauza muzika	instrumental break (Russian)
piyyut	Jewish liturgical poem
plov	pilaf
pripev	refrain (Russian)
qadim	old, ancient
qofiya	rhyme
roh	way
sabuk	light
Šaharīt	the morning prayer in Jewish worship
šakl	poetic form
sarxat	see daromad
Šašmaqom	canonical Central Asian repertoire of six suites: Buzruk, Rost, Navo, Dugoh, Segoh, °Iroq
sato	a long-necked lute similar to the tanbūr, often bowed

Šəmə°	a central prayer of Jewish worship
še°r	poem, poetry
šīrāh	singing (specifically applied to Jewish repertoire)
šīr-u šakar	lit. “milk and sugar,” a poem with alternating Persian and Turkic verses
Sephardim	Jews who spread out from Spain (Sepharad)
šogird	student
soz	“instrument,” a specific kind of long-necked lute
soz kardan	to tune
sozanda	female Jewish wedding entertainer (in Bukhara)
suxan	discourse, sermon
šu°ba	distinct Šašmaqom composition, lit. “branch”
tanbūr	a long-necked lute, typically with four strings and diatonically fretted. The central melodic instrument of the Šašmaqom
tor	a double-chested short-necked lute with double courses
Transoxiana	Central Asia, “land beyond the river Oxus” (English)
tui	party, wedding, celebration of a life-cycle event
ustoz, usto	master, teacher
ustogī	mastery
usul	rhythmic cycle, typically played on the doira. Also called zarb.
vatan	homeland
vazn	meter, rhythm
vaznin	serious, heavy

xalq	folk (noun)
xalqī	folk (adjective)
xarak	bridge on a stringed instrument, lit. “little donkey”
Xudo	God
xušk	dry
yakkaxonī	solo singing
yəhūdī, yahūdī	Jew
yod giriftan	learn, memorize
yod kardan	remember
zarb	rhythm, rhythmic cycle, typically played on the doira. Also called usul.
zardūzī	embroidered skullcap

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