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**Music of the Turkic-speaking world, performance and the
Master-Apprentice system of oral transmission**

**International Workshop and Conference
SOAS, University of London, UK (3-4 February, 2006)**

The conference and workshop aimed to establish a new study group within the International Council for Traditional Music for regular meetings and workshops. In fact, as far as I learned from the participants in the previous Conference, the idea to run such an event came in August 2005 at the ICTM conference in Sheffield, when a large number of scholars were attracted by the unity of thought and approach applied to neighbouring areas of research. It was considered important to pool efforts to discover key issues of cultural phenomena of oral traditions expressed within the master-apprentice training system. The workshop and conference was advertised in autumn 2005, at the same time as the key speaker was invited.

This event sponsored by SOAS, the British Council and the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in UK was organised by Razia Sultanova (SOAS) and scientific board (Dorit Klebe University of Berlin, Germany; Janos Sipos, National Academy of Art, Hungary; Keith Howard, Alexander Knapp and Rachel Harris from SOAS). Using a network established within the Turkic speaking world, the aim of the first meeting was to bring to London distinguished scholars from West and East to build the theory, concept and practical model of area's training system in oral musical tradition. The forthcoming volume of edited book with Conference papers is to prove it.

The culture of the wide area of the Turkic-speaking world stretches from South Siberia to the shores of the Mediterranean and comprises the art and music of numerous different ethnicities (among them Yakuts, Tuvans, Hakassians, Kirghiz, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Uyghurs, Turkmens, Karakalpaks, Azerys, Tatars, Bashkirs and Turks). Music within this vast (and little known) area of research is based on the phenomenon of oral transmission and on the particular setting of the master/apprentice (*ustâd/shagird*) relationship. Such relationship provides skills for the learning of performance through long hours of individual tutorial sessions: to achieve in music of the Turkic speaking world one needs a guide, a master, with whom a disciple learn how to play and perform music through personal contact, from hand to hand, from heart to heart.

The International Workshop and the Conference had had two parts: the Workshop and the Conference. The workshop on 3d February was introduced by the Keynote speaker Professor Hiromi Lorraine Sakata (University of California) in her talk on "The musical legacy" and was followed by the Concert at Brunei Gallery which

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brought together musicians from Turkey, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, China and UK. Among performers were the ensemble *Nihavend* (a London-based group performing traditional Ottoman Turkish art music), the well-known Kyrgyz bard (*manaschi*) of the *Manas* epic cycle Saparbek Kasmambetov, the lute *dutâr* duo composed by Razia Sultanova and Alyssa Moxley (*ustâd/shagird*) from SOAS, shaman based repertory of Galiya Kasymova (*Kaleke*) and Gulzhan Amanzhol from Kazakhstan, astonishing violinist Sabina Rakcheeva from Azerbaijan and the London Uyghur Music Group (featuring ethnomusicologists Stephen Jones and Rachel Harris).

The second day, 4th February, took place the Conference, as usual divided in sessions. During the first session, focused on Central Asian and South Siberian culture, Carole Pegg (Cambridge University) introduced her paper: "Situating the Altai Urianghai bard: inheriting talent and culture". Galina Sytchenko (Novosibirsk Conservatory, Russia) spoke on: "The problem of 'Master-Apprentice' oral transmission in the epic and Shamanic traditions of Turkic people of southern Siberia." Third in the group, Liesbet Nyssen (International Institute for Asian Studies, the Netherlands) examined the subject: "Oral transmission in music of Siberian Turks: how to become a Khakassian storyteller." Alexander Knapp (SOAS) ended the first session with a topic on: "Learning to Chant the Bible in the Bukharian-Jewish Tradition."

The second panel, focused on Central Asian and Caucasian area, was opened by Saida Elemanova (Kazakhstan State Conservatory) that exposed her research experience in a paper entitled: "Galiya Kasymova and the study of folk music." Saida Daukeeva (SOAS) examined the questions of "Master-apprenticeship within conservatory training: revival of *qyl-qobyz* in Kazakhstan." Fattah Khalig-Zada (Azerbaijan State Conservatory) spoke about: "The Master/apprentice relationship in Azerbaijani *ashiq* Music." Rachel Harris (SOAS) had given a talk on "'Like a kung fu school': the master-pupil relationship in Uyghur music."

Next panel was opened by Slawomira Zerańska-Kominek (Institute of Musicology, Warsaw University, Poland) with her paper entitled: "The model of musical training in Turkmen epic tradition." Feza Tansuğ (Yeditepe University, Istanbul, Turkey) talked on the subject of "Classification and distribution of folk music in the Turkic sound world." Dorit Klebe (University of Berlin, Germany), spoke about: "Master-apprentice training system among the *saz* players of the Turkish Diaspora in Germany." Giovanni De Zorzi (Conservatory "Cesare Pollini", Padua, Italy) submitted a paper "The role and training system of *Ney* performance in the *Mevleviye Sufi* brotherhood under the Ottoman Empire."

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Last session, covering Afghanistan and Azerbaijan area, was opened by John Baily (Goldsmiths College) who had given a speech entitled: "Playing the *Ustad*: the rhetoric of musical legitimization in late 20th century Herat." Michail Maltzev (SOAS) exposed his field research observations in a paper entitled: "*Hazaragi* music in Kabul: The case of *Ustad* Safdar Tawakuli." Sanubar Baghirova (Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Art) shared her experience on subject "Traditional music performance in Azerbaijan: stages from initiation to profession." The panel and the conference were concluded by Janos Sipos (National Academy of Art, Hungary) paper entitled: "The preservation of the musical heritage of the Turkic speaking world by computer aided comparative software."

The groundbreaking SOAS experience was successful not only in its Workshop-Conference scientific task, but also in making scholars meet each others, so that it's really possible to announce to the world that a brand new study group entirely dedicated to the oral tradition music of Turkic speaking world is born: congratulations, good work and warmest wishes to the team!

Giovanni De Zorzi

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