



UNIVERSITY
OF CENTRAL ASIA

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND HUMANITIES UNIT



A critical part of the mission of the University of Central Asia (UCA) is to help the different peoples of the region preserve and draw upon their rich cultural traditions and heritages as assets for the future. The custodians of traditional knowledge are aging and with limited resources, this knowledge is under threat from several forces including scarce resources, migration and outside influences. The University's Cultural Heritage and Humanities Unit (CHHU) is advancing that mission by preserving and promoting the rich and diverse cultural heritages of the region through research, documentation, archiving and support of regional scholars. Currently located at UCA's Bishkek office, the Unit will move to UCA's new campus in Naryn.

Objectives

The Cultural Heritage and Humanities Unit was created to:

- Preserve rich and diverse cultural heritages through research, documenting, archiving and supporting work of regional scholars;
- Enhance understanding of socio-cultural and historical processes in Central Asia and contribute to international academic discourse on the region;
- Serve as a knowledge hub for scholars, researchers, students, musicians, cultural practitioners, tradition bearers, stake holders and decision-makers;
- Enhance UCA's academic programmes in the School of Arts and Sciences, including the undergraduate Central Asian Studies minor;
- Enrich cultural engagement and activities across UCA's three campuses.
- Promote cultural diversity, pluralism and understanding across cultures and generations in Central Asia; and
- Promote Central Asian cultural heritage internationally through English translations of fundamental oral, literary and ethnographic works.

Research Themes

In partnership with other stakeholders, UCA research fellows are capturing and preserving existing information and cultural collections, while generating new dialogues and narratives on cultural heritage and identity in Central Asia.

Key research themes include:

- Cultural traditions: continuity, adaptation, and change
- Oral and literary expressions of culture
- Music
- Religious and philosophical heritages of Central Asia
- Local and regional histories of Central Asia
- Cultural diversity, pluralism, and interethnic relations
- Archaeology
- Architecture

Increasing Access to Central Asian Oral and Literacy Heritage

To increase awareness of and access to Central Asian traditions, the Cultural Heritage and Humanities Unit is transcribing and translating fundamental Central Asian oral and literary works. This process of documentation and dissemination will enrich both academic and artistic initiatives. Initiatives include transcribing and translating seminal Central Asian literature into English and the national languages of the region and producing ethnographic documentary films.

Cultural Heritage Book Series

The UCA Cultural Heritage Book Series promotes understanding across cultures and generations by supporting Central Asian scholars conduct original and high-quality research, and publish and disseminate their work to regional and international audiences. UCA, with its partners, also supports the development of resources on Central Asian cultural heritage by other publishers.

CULTURAL HERITAGE BOOK SERIES



Architectural Odyssey: The Safarname of Nasir Khusraw

Munavar Mamadnazarov

University of Central Asia & The Institute of Ismaili Studies, Aga Khan University (Russian, 2017)

The book presents an analysis of medieval Islamic architectural monuments described in the Safarname (Book of Travels) of Nasir Khusraw, 11th century Persian and Tajik poet, philosopher, traveler, and preacher who travelled from Khorasan to the countries of Near and Middle East, Asia Minor, North Africa and Muslim shrines in Arabia for seven years in search of new knowledge about the world and the essence of life. The author recreates the architectural environment in the middle of the 11th century by illustrating the phases of Nasir Khusraw's travels through 300 photographs, drawings, and maps of the traveler's routes.



Funeral Laments of the Pamiri Kyrgyz Living in Turkey. As Lingua-Folkloristic Primary Source, Analysis and Texts

Sulaiman Kaiypov

University of Central Asia (Kyrgyz, 2017)

This fundamental book deals with *koshoks*, funeral laments of the Pamiri Kyrgyz living in the Van region of eastern Turkey. The author presents rich and original texts of *koshok* which he recorded during his fieldwork conducted from 1997-2007 on the language, folklore, and ethnography of the Pamiri Kyrgyz, who first moved from their homeland in the Pamir mountains of Afghanistan to Pakistan in 1978 and then to Turkey in 1986. The *koshok* texts presented in this book will serve as valuable ethnological, ethnocultural, and lingua-folkloristic source for ethnologists, ethnographers, folklorists, linguists as well as for students of Ethnology and Philology.

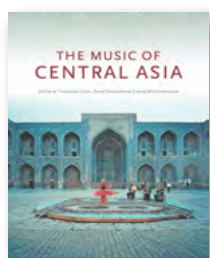


Proverbs and Sayings of the Pamiri Kyrgyz Living in Turkey. As Lingua-Folkloristic Primary Source

Sulaiman Kaiypov

University of Central Asia (2017, Kyrgyz)

This book presents more 6500 authentic examples of proverbs and sayings that were recorded in their spoken form by the Pamiri Kyrgyz community living in the Van region of Turkey. The work is the result of many years of field work by the author and attempts to record and analyse the multi-faceted genres of oral tradition according to the highest academic standards.



The Music of Central Asia

Edited by Theodore Levin, Saida Daukeeva and Elmira Köchümkulova

*University of Central Asia & Aga Khan Music Initiative, Aga Khan Trust for Culture
Textbook published by Indiana University Press (English, 2016)*

This beautiful and informative book offers a detailed introduction to the musical heritage of Central Asia for readers and listeners worldwide. The book balances “insider” and “outsider” perspectives with contributions by 27 authors from 14 countries who explore the diverse musical traditions of nomad and sedentary dwellers; the transformation of music and culture from the past to the present day; and the important role music has played in the history of Central Asia. From the Pamir Mountains of Tajikistan to the Kazakh steppe, the old Silk Road city of Bukhara, and the urbane arts scene of contemporary Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, music and musical life come alive through vivid writing, copious illustrations, and 189 audio and video examples available on a companion website. Profiles of musicians, listening guides, study questions, and an illustrated glossary of musical instruments make The Music of Central Asia an indispensable resource for both general readers and specialists.



Archaeological Map of the Eastern Pamirs (GBAO)

Mira Bubnova

University of Central Asia & The Christensen Fund (Russian, 2015)

The second in a two-part series on the unique history, artifacts and preservation of archaeological relics of the Pamir mountains, this publication is a comprehensive mapping, including a discussion of the history and challenges faced by the civilization of the Eastern Pamirs from the Middle Ages to contemporary times. Dr Bubnova's extensive fieldwork has resulted in the compilation of unique maps and illustrations, and original research on 300 monuments, including in the remote Murghab region.



The Musical Arts of the Pamirs:

Volume I: Musical Heritage of the Pamirian Tajiks,

Volume II: Musical Performance and Dances of the Pamirian Tajiks,

Volume III: Ritual Music: Birth, Wedding, and Funeral

Volume IV: Tales, Epics and Legends

Volume V: Instrumental Music and Lyrical Songs

Nizom Nurdjanov, Fayzulla Karomatov & Bahriniso Kabilova

University of Central Asia & The Christensen Fund (Russian, 2010-2015)

The Musical Arts of the Pamirs is a five-volume study on folk music, oral history, dance, and theatre traditions from the Pamir region of Tajikistan. Widely viewed as the most comprehensive work on Pamir music and heritage to-date, the series is the culmination of 40 years of field work.



Cities of the Dead: The Ancestral Cemeteries of Kyrgyzstan

Photos by Margaret Morton, text by Nasser Rabbat, Elmira Köchümkulova, and Altyn Kapalova

University of Central Asia & The Christensen Fund

Published by the University Washington Press (English, 2014)

The first photographic documentation of Muslim cemeteries in Central Asia, this collection presents ethnographic material from collaborative field research in six regions of Kyrgyzstan by American photographer and Cooper Union Professor Margaret Morton and Elmira Köchümkulova. The book and exhibition will contribute to broadening knowledge of the architectural, visual and cultural record of Central Asia within and beyond the region.



“Respect Graces the Living, Lamentation Graces the Dead”. Kyrgyz Funeral Laments and Lamenters

Elmira Köchümkulova

University of Central Asia & The Christensen Fund (Kyrgyz, 2014)

Funeral lamentations (*koshoks*) are one of the oldest genres of Kyrgyz oral tradition, preserved and practiced primarily by elderly women. The rise of fundamentalist Islamic practices and influences of globalization have put this rich oral heritage at risk. Based on extensive field research conducted throughout Kyrgyzstan, this book presents rich and diverse *koshok* texts and compares different themes, forms and styles of singing *koshoks*. It includes dozens of interviews of Kyrgyz women on *koshok* singing and its past and current significance in Kyrgyz society. An accompanying DVD contains over thirty audio examples of *koshok* and ethnographic video footages showing Kyrgyz funeral customs filmed during actual memorial feasts offered to the deceased.



Kyrgyz Herders of Soviet Uzbekistan: Historical and Ethnographic Narratives

Elmira Köchümkulova and Mamatkerim Köchümkulov

University of Central Asia & The Christensen Fund (Kyrgyz and English, 2014)

This book explores historical, socio-economic and cultural experiences of Kyrgyz herders in Soviet Uzbekistan who lived a semi-nomadic life in the Fergana valley and mountain range from 1941 to 1995. The book will serve as a valuable primary source on Kyrgyz nomadic life, culture and traditional knowledge. It presents the life histories and memoirs of two herders and includes photographs of nomadic families in the Yspy *jailoo* (summer pasture) from the 1970s and a DVD documenting a trip to the *jailoo* in 2009. The project highlights the Soviet experience, historical ties and socio-cultural relations between nomadic Kyrgyz and sedentary Uzbeks of the Fergana valley, and the role of Kyrgyz women in family and society.



Kyrgyz Instrumental Music: Analysis, Thoughts, and Opinions, Volumes I and II

Asan Kaibylida uulu (Edited and coordinated by Elmira Köchümkulova)

University of Central Asia (Kyrgyz, 2011)

This two-volume work written by Kyrgyz ethno-musicologist and *komuz* player Asan Kaibylida uulu presents findings from over 20 years of ethnographic research on Kyrgyz *komuz* music. The books contains rich narratives on the history of Kyrgyz *küü*, instrumental music played primarily on the three-stringed instrument, *komuz*, and a comprehensive study of all known and unknown, recorded and unrecorded Kyrgyz instrumental music by master *komuz* players. The volumes are supplemented by music CDs with over 100 *komuz* melodies, with narratives on their histories by the author.



Ancient Monuments of the Tien-Shan

Kubat Tabaldiev

University of Central Asia (Russian, 2011)

Based on 20 years of archaeological research in the Naryn region, historian and archaeologist Kubat Tabaldiev presents evidence of the rich heritage of the area from the Stone, Bronze, Early Iron and Middle Ages. The publication includes photographs and sketches of historical artifacts, along with accessible narrative on important archaeological discoveries. Through this work, the author intends to raise awareness on the importance of preserving key historical sites in the region.



Archaeological Map of the Western Pamirs (GBAO)

Mira Bubnova

University of Central Asia (Russian, 2008)

Part of the Archaeological Map of Tajikistan series by archaeologist, Mira Bubnova of the Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnography, Tajik Academy of Sciences, this publication focuses on the Western Pamirs, including the six administrative districts of Darwaz, Vanj, Rushan, Shugnan, Roshtkala and Ishkashim. The map contains information on existing monuments from the Stone Age through the 20th Century, and on destroyed monuments, based on archaeological evidence. The book is an important scientific contribution to the archaeological history of Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast.

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