



## ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WOMEN AND ISLAMIC CULTURES

### Women in Folk Music: Central Asia

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- ❖ Central Asian folk music refers to the traditional music of the people in Central Asia. There are distinct traditions (i.e. instruments, melodies, and songs) within folk music in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. The first evidence of female folk singers in Central Asia was documented in the ninth century.<sup>1</sup>
- ❖ Although some weddings are gender-segregated and do not include female musicians in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, the majority of women participate in the majority of music rituals at weddings.<sup>2</sup>
- ❖ Shovkat Mamadova, an Azerbaijani folk singer who was famous in the early 1920s, is considered to be “the first woman singing on stage before the Soviet revolution.” She founded the Musical Notes Publishing House and Baku Theatrical College in 1923.<sup>3,4</sup>
- ❖ In Kazakhstan, the first major folk star in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was Mayra Shamsutdinova.<sup>5</sup>
- ❖ In 2007, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture and Smithsonian Folkways Recording produced *Bardic Divas: women’s voices in Central Asia*, the first CD of newly recorded music (as opposed to licensed tracks) from the region to appear on a Western record label. The CD features 13 women whose voices and instruments revitalize older traditions, and reinterpret musical performance genres once reserved for men.<sup>6</sup>
- ❖ In 1993, Malika Ziyoeva, one of the most famous dutar players in Uzbekistan, founded the first female dutar ensemble in the known history of Uzbekistan. The dutar is a traditional two-stringed instrument found in Iran and Central Asia.<sup>7</sup>
- ❖ Salamat Sadikova, a female musician, is known as “The Voice of Kyrgyzstan,” and the leader of the coordinating council for the El-Ene (Mother Nation) Party in Kyrgyzstan. She has also received multiple awards such as the honorary title of the People’s Artist of Kyrgyzstan.<sup>8</sup>
- ❖ Manizha Davlat, a female Tajik pop-folk singer, is considered to be one of the most popular artists in Tajikistan and Afghanistan according to a 2007 poll in Kabul. Although she has not performed since 2006, she is very active in working with wedding music and the cassette industry in rural areas of Tajik.<sup>9, 10</sup>

<sup>1</sup>[https://books.google.com/books?id=9yTFnuWQKvkC&pg=PA594&lpg=PA594&dq=central+asia+female+musicians&source=bl&ots=4DGMf3IXvU&sig=H6HVQthUa5mYYAQw91y\\_XvU1aQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi1rovHpZ7MAhUDyWMKHYB0Dio4ChDoAQgcMAE#v=onepage&q=central%20asia%20female%20musicians&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=9yTFnuWQKvkC&pg=PA594&lpg=PA594&dq=central+asia+female+musicians&source=bl&ots=4DGMf3IXvU&sig=H6HVQthUa5mYYAQw91y_XvU1aQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi1rovHpZ7MAhUDyWMKHYB0Dio4ChDoAQgcMAE#v=onepage&q=central%20asia%20female%20musicians&f=false)

<sup>2</sup> <https://books.google.com/books?id=otEQCgAAQBAJ&pg=PA17&lpg=PA17&dq=tajikistan+women+musicians&source=bl&ots=-tEB2QV2eU&sig=N1MWaZPgRurWRlbe5y6Y0N5rzKQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjX0tvLm57MAhUVzWMKHXQFPDwAQ6AEIMDAG#v=onepage&q=tajikistan%20women%20musicians&f=false>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.jstor.org/stable/852531?seq=12#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](http://www.jstor.org/stable/852531?seq=12#page_scan_tab_contents)

<sup>4</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shovkat\\_Mammadova](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shovkat_Mammadova)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.kazakhstanlive.com/5.aspx?sr=4>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.akdn.org/akte\\_music\\_bardicdivas.asp](http://www.akdn.org/akte_music_bardicdivas.asp)

<sup>7</sup> [http://media.smithsonianfolkways.org/liner\\_notes/unesco/UNES08306.pdf](http://media.smithsonianfolkways.org/liner_notes/unesco/UNES08306.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.topentity.com/salamat-sadikova/>

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.wikiwand.com/en/Manija\\_Dawlat](http://www.wikiwand.com/en/Manija_Dawlat)

<sup>10</sup> [http://ligne13.maisondesculturesdumonde.org/sites/default/files/fichiers\\_attaches/spinetti-2007.pdf](http://ligne13.maisondesculturesdumonde.org/sites/default/files/fichiers_attaches/spinetti-2007.pdf)