Muzyczna Jurta śladami Tatarów

Music From The Yurt Following Traces Of The Tatars



Muzułmański Związek Religijny w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej
Najwyższe Kolegium

Muslim Religious Union in Poland
The Highest Board

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Białystok 2011
Wydanie I / Edition I

Muzyczna jurta – śladami Tatarów
Książeczka o muzyce tatarskiej z płytą CD

Music from the Yurt – Following Traces of the Tatars
A booklet on Tatar music with a CD

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Dear Readers and Listeners!

It is with the greatest pleasure that I present to you the publication on Tatar music with CD, which is entitled Music from the Yurt – Following Traces of the Tatars. It is an effect of one of the cultural projects realised by the Highest Board of the Muslim Religious Union in Poland, as well as of a 2-year collaboration with the music group Ansambl Peregrinus.

For us Tatars, it is a special pleasure that a group of young musicians from Wroclaw decided to research a little know field, which is that of Tatar music. On the basis of available materials, the ensemble elaborated a programme of five compositions that have been presented during dozens of concerts in Poland and abroad. It is significant that the Tatar repertoire was favourably received by the Tatar community during concerts in Suchowola, Białystok, Kruszyniany and Wrocław. Audiences listened to the arrangements of oriental melodies and sounds with great interest. This positive reception brought fruit in the form of the idea of recording a CD and preparing a publication dedicated to the music and tradition of the Polish-Lithuanian Tatars. Thanks to the subvention from the Ministry of the Interior and Administration in 2011, together we managed to make our dream come true – a publication and a CD with nine compositions were created.

I hope that the prepared material will take you on a journey into the world of Orient, the representatives of which have been a part of the Polish society for over 600 years.
I wish you then that during listening you see before your eyes true to life yurts of wanderers, a quiver on the back, the tramp of horses, the sound of wind and a handful of steppe sand.

Mufti Tomasz Miśkiewicz
Chairman of the Highest Board
of the Muslim Religious Union in Poland

YURT – (from Turkish) a round tent of nomads from the Eurasian Steppe, covered with leather or fabric.

Music of the Tatars

And now I could tell you about matters and customs from those regions, it would be a too long subject though, so I shall shorten the story. Yet, I want to tell you another and miraculous thing, as you can hear.

(Marco Polo, *Description of the World*, chapter XXV)



Playing Tatars [1]

The music tradition of Tatars is probably a fusion of Turkish, Mongolian or Finno-Ugrian elements (especially Hungarian music). Tuning, intonation and rhythmic rarities have common features with the traditions of Turkish music and of Finno-Ugrain nations living in the region on Volga, which let us assume that there is a connection between the lyric Tatar melodies and historic musical epic works of the pagan epoche. Nevertheless, the most distinctive feature of the Tatar music is the pentatonic scale which places it much closer to the music tradition of China or Vietnam. The Tatar folk music includes instrumental dance music, laic songs, as well as religious music.



Pentatonic scale from c1- c2

Musicologists distinguish various forms of Tatar compositions: songs on local topics (takmak), common village songs (*avyl koe*) and town songs (*shekher koe*), which are melodious, of regular metre and moderate tempo. There were also love songs which were very modest using allegories, not speaking about the loved one directly. Takmaks were funny, laudatory or derisive. Young people liked to sing them.

Equally popular were two-part lyric songs, joining slow and vivacious melodies. Old songs-tales, called baits, were transmitted orally from generation to generation. Most often they were performed by older men who had seen and heard a lot – so they were able to pass authentic memories from the past. Both in takmaks, as well as in baits a text is the most important. A simple melody is of a minor importance.

The main type of song was a long lyric or lyric-epic work called *uzunk koy*. Such compositions had an 'undulant' melody (without big interval jumps) and freely improvised (in a melismatic way) basic sounds, as they had a tendency to changeable measure and asymetric structure. Comic songs and dances (*kiska koy*) were distinguished by concrete metre and rhythm, a small range of melody and lack of ornaments. We owe the aforementioned systematics to S.G. Ribakov. In his publication, Muzika ipesni uralskih musulman, published in Saint Petersburg in 1891, he introduced the division between *uzunk koy* (a long song) and *kiska koy* (a short song). The publication contains many examples of Tatar songs.

In the Soviet times, there was the heyday of songs about everyday life, enriched by new rhythms. These compositions were created under the influence of professional music, folk music of other nations, as well as, most probably, the 'trend' caused by the ruling political system. The modal basis of Tatar compositions is the pentatonic scale, built from five tones. According to research, originally singers would sing songs a capella (without instruments). However, in the 20th century this tendency gradually ceased, and vocal compositions were

[1] Source: www.uiuc.libguides.com/content.php?pid=194317&sid=1628780

usually performed with the accompaniment of an accordion or a bayan. There were also songs with elements of polyphony. Typical folk instruments are: flute kurai, kubyz (a kind of a Jew's Harp), accordion, bayan, garmun, dumbura, mandolin, domra, gusli, tambourines and hand drums (for example Tuur).

Instruments used in the Tatar music



Gusli – a traditional Russian instrument related to zithe[1]



Domra-soprano – a string plucked instrument of Ukrainian origin[5]



Dumbura – 2-string plucked instrument[3]



Garmun – a type of accordion (an instrument from 1878, similar to a bayan)[8]



Tuur – a type of Mongolian hand drum[2]



Bayan – a type of accordion[6]



Tambourine[9]



Manodlin[4]



Kurai flute (a traditional Bashkirian and Tatar instrument)[10]



Surnai flute (a traditional instrument from Kyrgyzstan)[11]



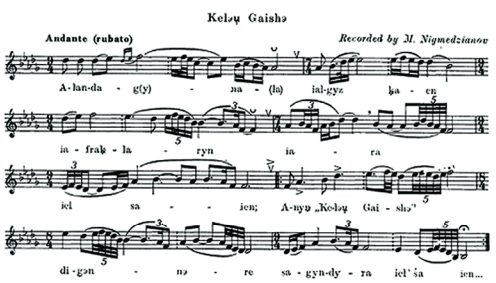
Kubyz – a type of a Jew's Harp[7]

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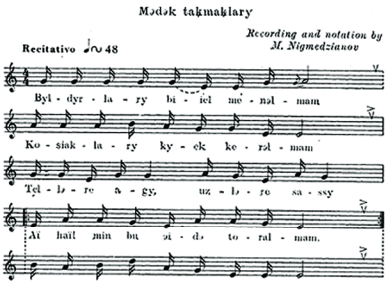
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The most significant collection of Tatar songs was published between 1964 and 1982 by Mahmud Nigmedzyanov, a Tatar musicologist from Kazan. He published over 800 songs in Tatar and Russian languages. We owe to him many authentic transcriptions and interpretations of Tatar folk songs. In his works, he included songs for special occasions (wedding, work, play, military songs), and he also transcribed in original keys a big number of instrumental pieces and dance melodies.

Music traditions of the Tatars are internally very diverse, which was a fact also proved by Nigmedzyanov. He researched, among others, music cultures of the Kazan Tatars (Tatarstan) and the Tatars from the Orde settled at the rivers Volga and Oka in Russia. Example number 1 is a melody of the Kazan Tatars, of the uzunk koj type (a long song). Example number 2 is a melody of the Volga Tatars, an ancient wedding songs (a form of takmak).



Example no 1



Example no 2

Mahmud Nigmedzianov, Some Style Characteristics of Tatar-Mishar Musical Folklore, [w:] Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, T. 9, Fasc. 1/2 (1967), s. 21-32

The differences in a musicial material are clear. In the second example we have simple rhythmic values: 𝅘𝅥𝅯 𝅘𝅥 𝅗𝅥 and the invariable metre 4/4. The first example is characterised by the variable metre (9/4, 7/4, 8/4), and ornaments such as triplets and quadruplets.

What is the Tatar music like in practice?

In spite of its simplicity (pentatonics) – it is unexpected! It differs largely from the Oriental music of the Middle East which uses quarter-tone as one the basic elements of music. In order to explain what a quarter-tone is, let us imagine that we hold a guitar in our hands. An instrument that is well-known in the European circle. The real ancestor of a guitar was a lute (oud) which was created as a string instrument around 5000 years ago (according to one of the legends). A guitar in the present shape (unlike a lute) has frets, which define tones. The distance between frets is called a semitone – the smallest distance that can be achieved on a guitar and the smallest interval (distance) in European music. A lute, as a non-fret instrument, is more versatile because we can play on it distances smaller than semitones. Fingers of the player have to 'find' the sound by themselves. Violin, viola, cello or double bass have a similar construction. If we divide a semitone into two, we get two quarter-tones which are absent in the European music. The basic difference between semitones on violin and semitones on lute is such that the neck and the fingerboard of a violin are smaller than those of a lute, and that is why it is difficult to achieve a good, clear sound on a violin. A semitone on a violin is a much smaller distance for the fingers of a player, than on a lute or a guitar. Achieving a clear semitone (and especially a quarter-tone) on a violin is much more difficult, and facetiously it is often said about beginning violinists that while learning, usually they get only 'quarter-tones' (that is: they play out of tune...).



An Arabic lute, oud

Music of the Tatars as Muslims is often associated with Oriental music where the afore mentioned quarter-tones are present. However, the facts are different. Tatars – wanderers who came to Europe from the area of Mongolia – represented musical tradition of Central Asia, and they have been faithful to it until today, which is pentatonics (the already mentioned scale that consists of five tones).

Tatars, as a nomadic nation originating from Mongolia, have also the throat – aliquot – singing. It consists of a singer producing not only one tone (let us call it the main tone), but also aliquots of that tone, and so we hear a few tones at the same time produced by one singer.

A tone produced on an acoustic instrument is composed of many component tone. The tone vibrate. Frequency of vibration shows the pitch of this tone. For example, the note A vibrates with frequency between 435-445 Hz. This CD was recorded with instruments tuned to the A of the frequency 443 Hz.

In the European tradition, the aliquot way of singing is not practised and that is why songs performed by the Mongolian vocalists (solo or choral, or accompanied by instruments) sound very exotic to Europeans.

Artistic music

The first Tatar opera, Saniä, was performd in 1925 in Kazan. It was composed by Soltan Gabashi together with Vassily Vinogradov.

Worth mentioning are also such Tatar composers as: Salix Säydäş, Cäwdät Fäyzi, Mensur Mozaffarov, Nazib Zhiganov, Sofia Gubaidulina. The final composer mentioned is also one of the best worldwide-known composers of the 20th century, who creates very suggestive music. Characteristic features of her style are experiments in choosing instruments for her compositions and a strong presence of religious motives based not only on the Tatar tradition.

Among performers of Tatar music, it should be not forgotten to mention Zulya Kamalova, a versatile artist who origins from Tatarstan. She plays guitar, sings in Tatar and Russian, and also writes songs in English. She permanently collaborates with the group Children of the Underground, with which she gives concerts all over the world. She lives in Australia.



Zulya Kamalova
(www.zulya.com/gallery.html)



Sofia Gubaidulina
(www.lastfm.pl/music/Sofia+Gubaidulina/+images/2442942)

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(Prepared by Piotr Michałowski)

Music traditions of the Polish-Lithuanian Tatars

Analysis of source materials, as well as interviews with historians and people who remember well the interwar time, the post-war period and also the following years, bring us an image of the Tatars. As a group, they did not create their own music style, nor cultivate traditional melodies; they did not have instruments characteristic for the Tatars or for people living on the territories of Bashkiria, Tatarstan and Crimea.
The Polish-Lithuanian Tatars today, as well as in old times, like to celebrate, and the awoken awareness and pride from their ethnic autonomy resulted in the fact that they tried to create their own artistic ensembles that would present Tatar music and dance (which was a difficult challenge due to the lack of their own folk creative works).

Balls

In the Tatar tradition, joyful events like holidays were celebrated in a very festive way – they would start with a prayer in a mosque, visiting family graves at mizars (cemeteries), and end up with meetings with relatives or other people in the houses of prayer, as well as with balls. The first party for members of this ethnic minority was organised in the end of 1890s in Vilnius – it was a great ball that brought together people not only from the borderland or the Kingdom of Poland, but also from distant Russian guberniyas. In the interwar Poland, the tradition of balls was continued; their patrons were branches of the Cultural-Educational Union of Tatars in Poland, community boards, as well as Tatar squads of the Riflemen's Association. The most famous balls were organised in Vilnius, Nowogródek, Słonim and Iwie-Murawszczyzna. They took place also in such towns as: Kleck, Lachowicze, Mir, Iwanowo and Kruszyniany. In Vilnius, the balls were organised in rented spaces, while in smaller towns – they could be found in local clubrooms, fire stations, and even in private houses.
After the 2nd World War, the tradition of Tatar parties came back to life – first, as simple dances in Bohoniki and Sokółka. People started to meet at bigger parties only in the second half of the 1950s which were organised by the Tatars from Sokółka, and afterwards from Białystok. Such meetings were organised also by the Tatars who settled down in the Western territories and at Pomerania. Among the most famous were:
- August 1962 – Gorzów Wielkopolski – in the ball participated Tatars from the Western territories and Pomerania;
- 20 September 1969 – Gdańsk – in the ball participated Tatars from all over Poland;
- 21 July 1974 – Białystok – the biggest ball in the post-war Tatar history;
- 20 July 1979 – Białystok – a ball that ended celebrations of the 300-year anniversary of the Tatar settlement in the region of Białystok;
- August 1980 roku – Białystok – a ball organised during the Ramadan Bayram holidays, which meant also a return to the tradition of ceremonial meetings during Muslim holidays.

The balls did not differ from Polish parties. Already before the 2nd World War, participants would dance to the rhythm of the current hit songs, and the repertoire included, among others waltz, polka, mazur, oberek and folk melodies. Sometimes great balls were started with a polonaise.

Dancers were accompanied by music played – depending on the venue – by hired groups or village musicians[1]. As dr Miśkiewicz writes: *According to the Słonim traditions, to every bigger ball a military orchestra was invited. Also some folk melodies were tried out: from Crimea and from the regions after Volga, which were propagated mainly by the Tatar mmigrants of Russian origin. However, they were not much appreciated by the Polish Tatars.*

Although the melodies evoked their emotions and touched them, most of them preferred Polish melodies which had accompanied them all their life[2].

After 1945, during parties and balls there were Polish hit songs played, as well as those from before the war, and often also the borderland songs were sang – often in Byelorussian. In 1970s and 1980s, as well as nowadays there are hired music ensembles that played the greatest Polish and foreign pop hits.

In the last years, a tradition of balls organised on the occasion of the Ramadan holiday has been restored. In 2009, 190 people celebrated together; in 2010 – 187, and in 2011 – 170 people. Contemporary balls are favourable for consolidation of the Tatar community from different Polish cities, for integration between generations, as well as sustaining a culture that has been cultivated for dozens of years.
Today, as well as before, balls are a perfect occasion for maidens and bachelors to meet each other – many couples get married after such balls.

Music Attempts

In analysing artistic creations of the Tatars, the research of a historian such as Dr Aleksander Miśkiewicz is important. Due to the fact that among Polish-Lithuanian Tatars, works that prove original provenience are rare, he asks a question: „Would there, among the members of this community, be no persons with artistic taste and who would be not sensitive to beauty?". Yet, he denies it – many Tatars would occupy themselves with playing instruments. However, they did no develop their talents, and did not consider their artistic work seriously. Miśkiewicz indicates that even in intellectual families, where music lessons belonged to the common education of children, other professions were chosen. He mentions though the significant fact that only once was a composer's talent revealed. In 1935, a composition of Maria Achmatowicz-Kryczyńska, *A Night Waltz*, was published[3].

Tatars involved themselves in artistic activities. It is worth mentioning some professional musicians – the Bohdanowicz siblings from Białystok, who played string instruments; Emil Buczacki who performed at the Silesian Theatre in Katowice; Zbigniew Korycki – a choreographer at the Wrocław Opera; Dżemil Szczęsnowicz who performed at the Music Theatre in Szczecin. There are also girl-musicians from the Buńczuk Ensemble: Elwira Szahidewicz – guitar, Oliwia Bukin – flute. Presently, Maciej Mucha from Białystok is a professional musician, trumpeter who graduated from the Fryderyk Chopin Academy of Music in Warsaw (2007) and from the Department of Composition, Interpretation, Education and Jazz at the Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music in Katowice (2007).

[1] Compare the whole fragment about balls, A. Miśkiewicz, *Tatarska legenda. Tatarzy polscy 1945 – 1990*, Białystok 1993, p. 56 – 58; A. A. Miśkiewicz, J. Kamocki, *Tatarzy słowiańszczyzną obłaskawieni, Kraków 2004*, p. 147 – 150.

[2] A. Miśkiewicz, *Tatarska legenda. Tatarzy polscy 1945 – 1990*, Białystok 1993, p. 58.

[3] Idem, p. 61 – 62.

Artistic ensembles

Before the 2nd World War the Tatars tried to create amateur music ensembles at clubrooms. This initiative aroused many controversies among the community, as this kind of activity had not been known and practised before. Old generations perceived artistic performances as a betrayal of religious laws, and considered them drawing from laic tradition, which was strange to the Tatar society. Such opinions resulted from an ignorance of life and customs of Muslim nations, among which folk songs and dances have been present. Before an artistic ensemble could be created, it was often necessary to convince Tatar families to allow their children to perform.

Active members of the amateur artistic movement had to face a serious problem – lack of their own folk tradition, that of the Polish-Lithuanian Tatars. They did not have songs, nor dances, and poems in Polish or Byelorussian could not be taken as separate creative works. Therefore, artisitc ensembles composed their repertoire on the basis of the Polish folklore which was known to them. Widely known were the dances – kujawiak and krakowiak, as well as songs, including Polish national songs. Works of Polish writers were used, especially those with Tatar motives, for example Crimean Sonnets by Adam Mickiewicz or Beniowski by Juliusz Słowacki. Here, the most valuable is the research of Dr Aleksander Miśkiewicz, so we recommend a fragment of his book which is dedicated to the Tatars in the interwar period:

It was also thought that the repertoire of the artistic ensembles was enriched with Crimean and Volga folk works. Especially one of the Volga Tatars, Kiembir Kiembirow, made efforts in this direction, propagating the folklore of his nation. And so, some amateur artistic ensembles often performed songs – once Polish, once Tatar. The latter ones, despite some emotional attitude presented by the performers, remained incomprehensible both for the singers, and also for the audience. Ignorance of Tatar languages – Crimean and Volgan, which differ from each other – resulted only in memorisation by choral ensembles strange texts and quite complicated melodies. It was quite tiresome and it did not evoke much interest. Also Tatar dances were tried out, but again facing serious obstacles – even because of the lack of a good choreographer who could properly prepare dancers completely unfamiliar with Eastern dance. Besides, it was impossible to prepare proper costumes, not knowing all elements that they consisted of. Help of some enthusiasts from the circle of Tatar immigrants was not sufficient[4].

Particular artistic ensembles were organised among the Tatar squads of the Riflemen's Association which were created in Nowogródek and Słonim from 1933. Their aim was to shape patriotic feelings to Poland, and at the same time maintain traditions of their own religion. The brightest moment was a performance that inaugurated the new training year of the Riflemen's Association on the 4th of October, 1936. In the artistic part, all squads from Nowogrodek, as well as the dramatic section of the Tatar Riflesmen performed repertoire with Polish folk songs and dances. The audience was captivated by the performance, and asked it to be repeated. The success of the Tatar youth belonged to the biggest achievements of the amateur artistic movement of the Polish Tatars[5].

[4] A. Miśkiewicz, *Tatarzy polscy 1918 – 1939. Życie społeczno – kulturalne i religijne*, Warszawa 1990, p. 108-109.

[5] Idem, p. 113 – 114.

It is interesting that in the 1930s, the Tatars from Dobrudża in Romania visited the Polish-Lithuanian Tatars. During guest performances, they sang and danced among others in Warsaw, Vilnius, Nowogródek, Halicz and even in Poznań. On the 7th of December 1936, they performed in Słonim during Bayram. They presented dances and songs of the Crimean Tatars and Turks [6].



Artisitc ensemble of Tatar youth from Słonim. Source: : A. Miśkiewicz, Tatarzy polscy 1918 – 1939. Życie społeczno – kulturalne i religijne, Warszawa 1990.



Text in the photograph: „Long live young Słonim artists!!!" – an artisitc ensemble of Tatar youth from Słonim, 1930s (arch. AM).

Artistic ensemble BUŃCZUK

Buńczuk is a horse tail, wrapped with a rope made of coloured horsehair, fixed on a long flagstaff and surmounted with a metal ball. It was used as an Asian military sign, usually in the Ottoman Turkey when declaring war.

Maciej Konopacki's attempts to reactivate a Tatar artistic ensemble in Białystok in the years 1970s and 1980s found resistance of the Tatar society. Initiatives of that kind were boycotted due to fear of discovering one's own origins, which – in the context of Polish dislike to the Soviet Union (in which the biggest number of Tatar families lived after the borders had been changed in 1945) – was justified.

The next attempt of creating an artistic ensemble presenting the Tatar tradition and culture was taken only in the end of the 1990s – in 1999 when, under the influence of the chairwoman of the Białystok Muslim community, Halina Szahidewicz, the idea of creating a group was born. A Tatar children-youth ensemble was established.

It took its name, Buńczuk, during performances at the Summer Academy of Knowledge about the Polish Tatars in Sokółka in August 2000. Initially, it was characterised only by vocal recitation, with Oliwia Bukin playing flute and Elwira Szahidewicz playing guitar and singing songs in Polish. Only after some time, the language was changed into Tatar.

Halina Szahidewicz also taught to the young people recitation of fragments of Quran and poems of Tatar poets in their mother tongue. The first presentation took place on the stage of the Voivode Centre for Animation of Culture, and afterwards – in a cinema hall in Sokółka. The initiative was very successful among young Muslims living in Podlasie, and soon started to develop – Tatar songs and dances appeared. Some choreographies were taught by a professional dancer, Lewiza Bigbułatowa. Original Crimean costumes were made in an embroidery workshop of Ajsza Osmanowa in Simferopol.

[6] See: M. Radecka, *Moje wspomnienia* (1), [in:] „Przegląd Tatarski" Kwartalnik społeczno – kulturalny, no 3, 2011, p. 16 – 21; M. Radecka, *Moje wspomnienia* (2), [in:] „Przegląd Tatarski" Kwartalnik społeczno – kulturalny, no 4, 2011, p. 20 – 21.





Artistic ensemble Buńczuk (KM)

Members of the ensemble are Tatar children and youth at the age 6-25. In three sections: a recitatory, a vocal-instrumental and a dancing one, there are 28 people. Most of them are from Białystok, but there are also persons from Sokółka, Suchowola and Krynki who come to Białystok when a more important performance is going to be prepared.

The programme of Buńczuk includes works of Polish and Tatar poets, as well as poems dedicated to Tatars written by Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Słowacki, Selim Chazbijewicz, Musa Czachorowski, Wiesław Kazanecki, Jan Leończuk, or Stanisław Kryczyński among others. There are also Tatar, Turkish and Polish songs, costume dances to the melodies based on motives from Crimea, Bashkiria and Tatarstan. The national artist of Bashkiria, Mamina Guzel, was the author of choreographies to Bashkirian melodies.

Children and youth could develop their dancing skills and get to know better the traditions of their own ethnic group during dance workshops realised with the financial support from the Podlaskie Voivodeship Marshal's Office and the Municipal Office of Białystok in the years 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2011.



Halina Szahidewicz (arch. HSz)

The founder and tutor of the ensemble is Halina Szahidewicz (a teacher by profession). Presently, she is the chairwoman of the Muslim Community of the Muslim Religious Union in Białystok. She has been performing this function continuously since 1993. She has been involved in the work for the Tatar community for many years. Her activities include not only administrating the community and its daily issues, but also cultivating Tatar traditions and customs. She is an organiser of numerous meetings and workshops for the Tatar society. Halina Szahidewicz is one of the founders of the Common Council of Catholics and Muslims that acts, among others things, for the mutual learning of the history and traditions of both religions. She is a member of the editorial board of magazines „Pamięć i trwanie" and „Przegląd Tatarski". Thanks to her efforts and involvement, there were numerous publications published, such as: *Podlaski Szlak Tatarski* (Białystok 2008), *Wierzę w kismet* (Warszawa 2010) by Teresa Zaniewska, as well as *Tatarskie wierszowanie. Oto moje dziedzictwo* (Wrocław – Białystok 2010).

Buńczuk Ensemble performed in such places as Białystok, Krynki, Opole, Warsaw, Wrocław, Szczecin, Gdańsk, Gdynia, Puńsk, Biała Podlaska, Cracow, Zakopane, Pieniężno, Mszana, Troki, Vilnius, Poznań, Sokółka, Palermo. The ensemble presents its artistic programme during events organised by the Muslim Religious Union in Poland, Tatar Union of the Republic of Poland, city authorities and also on invitation in events dedicated to the Polish Tatars.

Especially worthy of not are two performances: during the visit of Charles, Prince of Wales, in Kruszyniany (16.03.2010), and also during the inauguration of celebrations of the 85th anniversary of the Muslim Religious Union in Poland, in the Presidential Palace in Warsaw (17.02.2011).

The rule of the ensemble is that regardless of age and level of involvement, all dancers, musicians and recitators are always members of the group. Some people due to their professional duties, new place of stay or studies do not perform on stage, but they come eagerly to see performances and occasional meetings. A large number of people dance occasionally after rehearsals with younger members of the ensemble. Presently, most presentations are performed by a group of 3-4 teenagers and 6-10 girls in the ages of 8-12.

Ansambl Peregrinus

The musical ensemble who has prepared this programme based on traditional Tatar music is Ansambl Peregrinus (literally, 'a wanderer') from Wrocław. It was started in 2008 on the initiative of Piotr Michałowski and Beniamin Głuszek (students of the Wrocław School of Jazz and Popular Music by that time). The musicians debuted during the Wrocław Convention for the Interreligious Dialogue, at the Museum of Architecture in Wrocław in 2008. Michał Bednarz played percussion at that time. Presently, the ensemble includes 6 musicians – students and graduates of the Academy of Music in Wroclaw and the Wrocław School of Jazz and Popular Music.

From the beginning of its activities, the ensemble has been involved in intercultural dialogue, musical education and popularization of music by presenting illustrated concert programmes and leading classes for children and youth in a pedagogical programme „Among known and unknown instruments". The ensemble has given numerous concerts in Poland and abroad (among others in Germany and Italy), successfully presenting traditional music culture – from Oriental and Tatar music to Sefardic music and medieval pilgrim songs .

The music of the ensemble is a journey in time and space through Oriental cultures of the Middle East and the Mediterrean. It is a music journey from ancient Persia and Iraq, through medieval Sefardic and Mauritanian Spain, until baroque, Christian Europe – in arrangements of the contemporary, open Europeans. The ensemble is interested in Oriental music as much as in the Polish folk music and its contemporary arrangements, as well as promotion of the heritage of the Silesian music tradition. In the repertoire of Ansambl Peregrinus, there are pieces from collections of such ethnographers as Józef Lompa or Juliusz Roger.



Ansambl Peregrinus

Some significant performances of the ensemble:

2008

- May – Wrocław – the Wrocław Convention for the Interreligious Dialogue, organizer – Wrocław Muslim Centre for Culture and Education, the hall of the Museum of Architecture;
- May – Wrocław – 4th Days of Muslim Culture – a Day of Open Mosque at the Wrocław Muslim Centre for Culture and Education;
- December – Wrocław – the final gala of the intercultural project „A Legend about Abraham", the auditorium of the Papal Theological Faculty.

2009

- April – Wrocław – celebrations of the 393rd anniversary of Miguel de Cervantes Saavadera's death „Cervantes – European Heritage", „Ośrodek" club at the Capitol Theatre;
- May – Wrocław – 5th Days of Muslim Culture, organizer – Wrocław Muslim Centre for Culture and Education, the hall at the Edith Stein House;
- June – Wrocław – International Theatre Festival „The World as the Place of Truth" – organizer the Grotowski Institute, the hall of the Song of the Goat Theatre;
- December – Wrocław – a concert „Chanukah impressions and not only", compositions inspired by Jewish melodies of the Sefardic Spain, Hassids from Podole and contemporary klezmers – organizers: Association Academy of Imagination – Programme of Theatre Activities from Wrocław and the Jewish Community from Wrocław, a hall of the IMPART Art Centre.

2010

- May – Drezno – „Speech of Instruments", or European history in music – an author's programme referring to important compositions and historic moments in Europe, including the Silesian and Saxon neighborhood. A concert within the framework of the celebrations of „A Day of Europe" – organizer DWSSP „ASESOR" from Wrocław, the hall of the Museum of J.I. Kraszewskiego;
- May – Wrocław – „Music of the Golden Age of Islam" Palestinian and Syrian music, music culture of old Mauretania – a concert within the framework of the 6th Days of Muslim Culture and the Night of Museums, the hall of the Ethnographic Museum;
- May – Suchowola – celebrations of „Days of Tatar Culture – history and contemporaneity of the Polish Tatars" – organizer the Highest Board of the Muslim Religious Union in Poland, the hall of the Community Culture Centre;
- May – Białystok – the 4th Podlaskie Days of Muslim Culture – The Day of Turkey, a concert of Oriental and Turkish music – organizer the Highest Board of the Muslim Religious Union in Poland, the garden of the Muslim Culture House;
- August – Białowieża – Festival „Peretocze 2010 – Kultura ludów puszczy" ['Peretocze 2010 – the Culture of the Primeval Forest's People'] – a concert „Tatar Orient" – organizers: Foundation „Orthodox Music" from Hajnówka, Białowieski Culture Centre, Department of PTTK in Białowieża;
- August – Kruszyniany – Festival of Tatar Culture 2010.

2011

- October – Palermo, Italy – concert of Tatar music during the opening of the exhibition „The Tatars – Muslims in the Republic of Poland", the garden at the San Giovanni degli Eremiti church;
- November – Wrocław – concert of Tatar music during the opening of the exhibition „The Tatars – Muslims in the Republic of Poland" and „Mosques on the lands of Poland, Lithuania and Belarus", the hall of the Ethnographic Museum.

Musicans



Piotr Michałowski (arch. AP)

Piotr Michałowski – guitars, Arabic lute oud

Piotr is the leader and founder of the group Ansambl Peregrinus. He graduated from the Cultural Studies at the Wroclaw University (2007), as well as from the Wrocław School of Jazz and Popular Music in the class of guitar conducted by Witold Żuromski (2011), and he completed the postgraduate studies „Administration and in Culture" (DWSSP „ASESOR" (2010). He is a manager of culture, a coordinator of Polish and international cultural projects, authorized with the European Diploma in Cultural Project Management (Association Marcel Hicter Brussels – National Culture Centre in Warsaw).

He studied musicology at the Wrocław University. For many years, he has run educational, animation and artistic activities in Poland and abroad. He has given concerts among others in: Germany, Italy, Romania, Slovakia, Bosnia and Hercegovina. He is especially interested in the intercultural and interreligious dialogue. He composes theatre music, making numerous preparations on the electric guitar. He deals with the popularization of music and theatre among people of all ages, living mainly in the countryside. He collaborates with many musicians, creating Polish and international music projects.

Michał Bednarz – drums

Michał graduated from the Wrocław School of Jazz and Popular Music in the class of Zbigniew Lewandowski. Presently, he is a student of the Karol Lipiński Academy of Music in Wrocław. He participates in numerous Wrocław projects on the borderland between jazz, funk, rock and ethnic music. He is a session musician, and also a teacher in the school Rock, Blues & Heavy in Wrocław.



Michał Bednarz (arch. AP)



Szymon Caban (arch. AP)

Szymon Caban – double bass

A double bass player from Wrocław. He graduted from the Ryszard Bukowski State Secondary Music School in Wrocław, and also Zbigniew Czwojda's Wrocław School of Jazz and Popular Music, in the class of Maciej Garbowski. He plays with Mateusz Puławski Quartet and Ansambl Peregrinus, as well as in many other jazz compilations.

He is an architect with specialization in historic preservation, connected with the Polish-Egyptian Archeological and Preservation Mission in Deir el-Bahari in Egypt.



Marcin Dudek (arch. AP)

Marcin Dudek – clarinet, flutes

Marcin was born in 1981 in Oleśnica. He is a culture animator, instructor of music groups. Multiinstrumentalist. Since 1998, he had given concerts with folk, pop and jazz bands. He has been a member of Ansambl Peregrinus since April 2009.



Kamila Romaniuk (arch. AP)

Kamila Romaniuk – viola

Kamila comes from Żary where she started her music education at the age of 8. She went to high school in Wroclaw, and she graduated with distinction from the Karol Szymanowski Music High School in the viola class of Professor Zbigniew Czarnota with whom she is presently studying at the Karol Lipiński Academy of Music in Wrocław.

As a chamber and orchestra musician, she has given concerts in many places in Poland and abroad (among others: Spain, France, Belgium, Lithuania, China). She collaborates with the Soloists of Wroclaw Ensemble Ricordanza, the Sudecka Philharmony, as well as the artistic agencies Pro Musica and Presto. Since 2008, she is the viola section leader of the Wroclaw Youth Orchestra. She started collaboration with Ansembl Peregrinus in December 2009, and in that moment she entered the world of Oriental sounds and also improvised music.

Rafał Łuc – accordionist

Rafał graduated from the Royal Academy of Music in London and the Karol Lipiński Academy of Music in Wrocław, where presently he is also a Ph.D. student. He is interested in all kinds of music, from rock to the newest works in contemporary and experimental music. Through his activities, he tries to promote accordion, mainly collaborating with composers on new solo and chamber accordion repertoire. He has given concerts in most of Europe, as well as in the USA.



Rafał Łuc (arch. AP)



Concerts of the ensemble (arch. AP)

Music from the Yurt – Following Traces of the Tatars

A CD Music from the Yurt – Following Traces of the Tatars, is premised on a presentation of chosen Tatar melodies from Crimean, Bashkirian, Kazan and Mongolian collections, arranged by the ensemble. The idea of the presentation is to pass to the listeners the impressions of Marco Polo from his journey along the Silk Road, as well as a journey in time and space through the territories of the Golden Horde.
The point of contact between the Orient and the Occident, experiencing infinity of the horizon, understatement, the scent of sunrises and sunsets, yurts of wanderers, a quiver on the back, the tramp of horses, the sound of wind and a handful of steppe sand – all this is the source of the Tatar music. Of special interest on the CD are two compositions arranged in a jazz and experimental way: Hamada (Syrian and Oriental inspirations) and Qaşıq&Dare (a fusion of tradition and modernity – a piece played on a guitar with a teaspoon).

It is also interesting to note that the ensemble has an authentic traditional instrument – the Arabic lute, the oud, brought from Egypt in 2009 thanks to the collaboration with the Polish-Egyptian Archeological and Preservation Mission in Deir el-Bahari in Egypt.
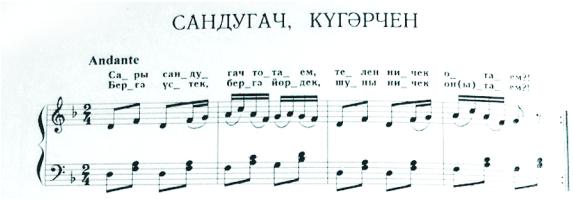
Compositions:
Arrangements: Ansambl Peregrinus
Leader of the ensamble: Piotr Michałowski

1. Kukułka [A Cuckoo]
The opening piece is of Bashkirian origin. Initially it was a dance played on the kurai flute with accompaniment. It has a joyful character. It is in 2/4. The piece is also performed by the Buńczuk ensemble from Białystok, but Ansambl Peregrinus added solos to the composition. The kurai flute was exchanged with a recorder which resembles the sound made by the kurai and surnai flutes. Trills (ornaments) played by the viola and the flute are an attempt of imitation, and they refer to the title cuckoo. A strong point of the piece is also the percussion solo, showing richness of the whole set of percussion instruments, and being a kind of an overture to the richness of sound of the whole CD!

2. Eski Qırım [literally,'Old Crimea']
The introduction is played on the Arabic lute, oud, the sound of which is associated with a joyful, but also a nostalgic character of the piece. Simple harmony (key: C-major) and melodics can be bring on our mind melodies from famous films about the Wild West. However, here we can talk only about „The Wild East" where horizon-wide prairie turns into the infinite steppe (maybe of the Akerman), the Colorado Canyon – into the Great Canyon of the Crimea, and the Yukatan Peninsula – into the Crimean Peninsula. This is a composition from the Crimean collection.

3. Sanduğaç – Kügärçen [literally, 'a nightingale – a dove']
This piece is in 2/4. Key D-minor. It is from the Crimean collection. A nightingale symbolises sweetness, love, inspiration, but also sadness, sorrow and death. A common motive in Persian poetry is Gul u Bulbul (literally, „a rose and a nightingale"). An interesting note is that a Polish poet, Adam Mickiewicz, who visited Crimea a few times, was called Bulbul. A dove is a symbol of divine purity and innocence, but also jealousy, cowardice and stupidity. As perverse as the symbolics of these birds is, so is our interpretation of this musical subject. It starts quite

innocently. The subject played on a guitar and a double bass in unison. Then percussion, accordion, viola and clarinet join. The nightingale is led by the viola, and the dove – by the clarinet. In the third part of the piece, they dialogue with each other. Here appears a danger though... A steppe falcon approaches, symbolised by a guitar! The nightingale and the dove try to escape from the predatory falcon that attacks several times (guitar solo). Finally, the birds manage to run away, they fly and sing continuously repeated motives (ostinato of the viola and the clarinet). The danger is over...



Fragment of the notes from the piano elaboration

4. Music from the Yurt

The title composition. It is in 2/4. Key F-major with modulation up to E-flat major. This is a typical folk melody where all instruments shine. The dynamic part is opposed to a slow one, after which a viola starts the second, accelerating theme, which sounds as if from Johann Strauss's works! Opposite from the original version, a mandolin is exchanged here with a guitar, and a bayan – with accordion. This is a piece from Tatarstan.

5. An unfinished ballad about eternal gardens

A piece in key D-minor, from the Crimean collection. The idea is taken from the „Gardens of the East", a poem by a Tatar poet Selim Chazbiyevich (born in 1955 in Gdańsk). The garden is one of the most important motives of his poetry, as well as one of the main subjects of European poetry. Return to a garden is associated with nostalgia and melancholy; we return to the garden of childhood, to the land of order and innocence. A garden appearing in a dream usually symbolises a transition from the earthly world into the beyond. Such is our life... like An unfinished ballad about eternal gardens.

(...)
Nur – the God's light penetrates
through those who are hungry for the Truth
and tear the fetters of life as horses break snaffle bit
longing
for an ocean of grass, scent of herbs

Nur the God's light
infiltrates inner gardens
with tender longing
for Infinity

Forty mystic
stations between a dream and reality
are conquered by the seekers
until they find and they become
and the Light can be an afternoon
autumn sun
which will be testified by tress
that are leafless
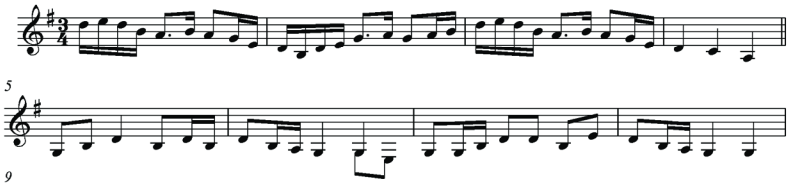
(Selim Chazbijewicz „ Gardens of the East" – frag.)

6. Qaşıq&Dare (read 'kashik&darey' – literally 'a spoon and a tambourine')
A piece based on a Mongolian theme. The introduction is played with a teaspoon on an electric guitar! The sound of a guitar has been inspired by a string instrument gusli (a kind of a zither and cymbals). The background music is an ostinato motive, played on the Arabic lute, oud. The piece is a connection of a very traditional sound with a very modern one. The theme undergoes strong modification through the preparation of the guitar, and the usage of effects that change the sound. Drums, played in an attractive and trance-like way, is maintained in a modern stream of Drum&Bass – the name connected with the title of the piece through association word play and their meanings: Qaşıq&Dare = a spoon and a tamburin). The piece proves fascinations of the musicians for the 'fusion' stylistics.

7. Atarde
An introduction on a snare drum gives this piece a ceremonial and military character. The metre is 3 /4, but through realisation of the characteristic dotted rhythm on percussion we get a stylistics close to a polonaise or bolero. Originally, the piece as played on a bayan with mixed choir. On this CD it has been arranged for viola, clarinet, accordion, guitar, double bass and percussion. Originally, it has a symmetric structure: after the accordion introduction, there is a double exposition of the theme. However, this order has been changed. After the third (preceded with an accordion introduction) and the fourth exposition of the theme, comes the double which in the fifth verse turns into a triple canon of an accordion, a clarinet and a viola. This piece is from Tatarstan.

A commentary to the piece is another poem of Selim Chazbijewicz:

„A Tatar dream"
A Pole and a Tatar live inside of me
One wears a maciejówka and the other one – a krymka*.*
In a dream, they sharpen their sword in the same way
Crazy with poetry, on the steppe of Kipczak
I fight with a Tatr sword for the Great Poland
A wolf fur coat from Lithuanian forests
fits them both in the same way.



Atarde – a fragment of the score transcribed Ansambl Peregrinus

8. „Lwy posnęły już" [The Lions Have Already Fallen Asleep] – a lullaby
A composition inspired by elaboration of S. Vasilenko to the traditional Tatar text. Sergei Nikiforovich Vasilenko (1872-1956) was a Russian composer inspired by exoticism of Central Asia. His elaboration of a simple Tatar melody exceeds much the simplicity of Tatar folk music, yet it makes out of this lullaby an artistic piece, combining harmonic music elements with the lullaby's text.

Text:

Dark forest is long asleep
Bayu – bayu – bayu – bay
The lions have already fallen asleep,
close your black eyes,
Bayu – bayu – bay.
Your little eyes like two little stars
Bayu – bayu – bayu – bay

The moon shines, little son, it is time to sleep
Bayu – bayu – bay

Sleep, my treasure, sleep quitely,
Bayu – bayu – bayu – bay.
Sleep, little baby, lion cub, close your little eyes
Bayu – bayu – bay.

Tatar folk words

The repetition at the beginning of the piece, – chords played on accordion with long sound suggest the tension of, probably, the one who is putting to sleep, and the one who is being put to sleep. This fragment in particular is reminiscent of another lullaby: „Or che'è tempo di dormire", of an Italian baroque composer, Tarquino Merula. Elaborated by S. Vasilenko, the influence of the Russian school of the 20th century can be heard (mainly S. Rachmaninov). Created by the ensemble, the theme played on a viola is suddenly interrupted in the second part of the piece. Then the leading role is taken over by a guitar, performing elements of the theme and delicate improvisation ‚e-bow', which is an electronic bow. The sound of the guitar in this fragment creates a vibratory sound, similar to the sound of a *theremin* (electrophone), or to the sound of playing a saw (the favourite instrument of illusionists). In the third part, a viola comes back, but the theme is unfinished since the lullaby has fulfilled its task – the one being put to sleep, has fallen asleep…

9. Hamada
Literally, 'a stony desert'. This piece, which has Syrian-Turk influence, presents in a microscale the Oriental music with its characteristic quartertones, heard mainly in the part of viola and clarinet (which sounds here like an aerophone, pungi) with a characteristic solo, bringing on the mind an Egyptian snake-charmer. The solo part of percussion, in its character and sound, is similar to simple percussion instruments (used by the Tatars), such as tuur, or frame (so called hand drums). A commentary to this piece can be words noted down by Marco Polo during his journey:
„(…) when one rides through this desert by night, and it happens that someone stops and moves away from his companions (…) and later he wants to catch up with them (…), he hears the voice of ghosts, as if it was a voice of his companions (…). And often they take him away from the route in such a way that he will never find them any more; in this way already many people (…) lost themselves and died". (Marco Polo, *Description of the World*, chapter LVII)

(Prepared by Piotr Michałowski)



A session in the recording studio (arch. AP)

Ensemble's Anknowledgments

Piotr Michałowski – *I want to thank on behalf of Ansambl Peregrinus to producers of the recording, companies, institutions and particular people for their support and also to my parents, to Beniamin Głuszek for our common musical work, to Monika Jankowska, Witold Żuromski, Miłosz Kula, M. Ostrowski Sp. J. Company - Muzyczny.pl from Wrocław, AMTEC company from Wrocław, to my colleagues from the ensemble, and to all whom I did not mention, but who help us a lot!*
Piotr plays Ibanez and Gibson guitars, and he uses D'Addario and Thomastik strings.

Michał Bednarz – *I would like to thank to my parents and the whole family for their constant support, to my girfriend Weronika, to Mr Zbyszek Lewandowski, Mr Dariusz Kaliszuk, Paweł Kamecki and the school Rock, Blues and Heavy in Wrocław for letting us use the rehearsal room, Ms Beata Hoszko, Masterwork company and to all who contributed to the production of this CD.*
Michał plays cymbals made by the Masterwork company.

The material was recorded in the studio of the Wroclaw University of Technology in collaboration with the Scientific Circle, „Audio Engineering Society" – Wrocław 2011.

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Jurta w Kruszynianach 2006/ A yurt in Kruszyniany 2006 (Piotr Michałowski)



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The copy is not intended for sale.

Muzyczna Jurta śladami Tatarów

Music From The Yurt Following Traces Of The Tatars

(…) zapach wschodów i zachodów słońca, jurty wędrowców, kołczan na plecach, tętent końskich kopyt, odgłos wiatru i garść stepowego piasku (…)

(…) the scent of sunrises and sunsets, yurts of wanderers, a quiver on the back, the tramp of horses, the sound of wind and a handful of steppe sand (…)

Utwory / Tracks

1. ***Kukułka*** 3:44
2. ***Eski Qırım*** 4:28
3. ***Sanduğaç – Kügärçen*** 3:58
4. ***Muzyczna jurta*** 2:18
5. ***Niedokończona ballada o wiecznych ogrodach*** 8:02
6. ***Qaşıq & Dare*** 4:38
7. ***Atarde*** 2:54
8. ***Lwy posnęły już*** 3:49
9. ***Hamada*** 6:52

TOTAL 40:41

Ansambl Peregrinus:

Piotr Michałowski – gitary, lutnia arabska oud/ guitars, Arabic lute oud
Kamila Romaniuk – altówka/ viola
Michał Bednarz – perkusja/ drums
Szymon Caban – kontrabas/ double bass
Marcin Dudek – klarnet, flety/ clarinet, flutes
Rafał Łuc – akordeon/ accordion
www.myspace.com/ansamblperegrinus

Książeczka o muzyce tatarskiej z płytą CD – muzyka w wykonaniu zespołu Ansambl Peregrinus
A booklet on Tatar music with a CD – music performed by Ansambl Peregrinus

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Ansambl Peregrinus

MZR Muzułmański Związek Religijny w RP

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