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# Islamic Reflection in Tatar Folk Dance

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines to what extent Islamic influence is preserved in Tatar folk dance. Majority of Tatars are divided into Tatars- Muslims (Sunni) and Tatars- Christians (tat: Kryashen). I have chosen dance practices of Tatar Muslims because of personal attachment to it. Tatars accepted Islam as their religion in 922. Even though entertainment activities were under the control of the religious leaders, people found time for singing and dancing. However, the representation of the dance elements and the latitude of the movements have been shaped according to the norms of Islam and further on by the respective ideologies. The aim of the dissertation is to analyze people's awareness about Islamic reflection and norms in dance and to see what shapes 'folk dance' nowadays.

My field work was conducted in July-August 2016 in Tatarstan, Astrakhan, Kirov Oblast and Chuvashia. Data collection contains video recordings, photographs, participant and non-participant observations and interviews. During the research, following questions were raised up: Do people see any connection with Islam in Tatar folk dance? What are the main features of Tatar folk dance? Further, I formulated my questions according to the respondent's position and relation to dance in general. Finally, the study discusses the dance elements that characterize the religious influence based on the ethnochoreological analysis.

Key words: folk dance, staged dance, Islam, Tatars, ideology, safeguarding

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Рэхмэт!

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

(tat: ): - means Tatar language. In the dissertation it is used in order to translate 1) from Tatar language into English language 2) from English into Tatar language (to show the native name)

USSR - Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

DD- Dance Database

PD- Photo Database

VD- Video Database

# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

The conceptualization of “Tatar folk dance” and the message it delivers to a public is a debatable issue if to look at the historical timeline of the nation. In my dissertation I cover an image of Tatar folk dance created by scholars. Plus I look at its usage on the stage by local communities in urban and rural societies examining the religious perspective of dance.

Several details must be mentioned primarily. The terms ‘folk’ and ‘traditional’ in case of this work are used interchangeably. Besides, I name the ‘Tatar folk dance’, not only meaning that it is danced in the rural areas, by non-professional dancers and in any occasion, but in reverse, the term ‘folk’ now can bear the concept of ‘staged-folk’ dance as well. Thus, when I write Tatar folk dance it can mean Tatar folk-staged dance. The reason is that ‘character dance’, which was suggested and practiced by Igor Moiseyev is not figurative in public and amateur dance studios. Therefore, we observe that the border between ‘folk’ and ‘staged’ is fading with time. Folk elements which were transitioned into a staged version on time did settle down. In addition staged formations and ‘ballet’ elements vice versa shifted into the folk representation of dance.

## Structure of the dissertation

The framework of the dissertation consists of the intended plan, final topic, and presentation of the geographical location, the methodological approaches, and the research question, fieldwork discussion, analysis of the empirical data and the summary of the whole dissertation. All interviews were conducted by me. Interview transcription from Tatar and Russian languages are of my translation. Due to language differences translation is not necessary word by word, but reformulated according to stylistic formulas of English language. Used interviews are in the citation marks and have an italic font. Supplementary material, full list of the interviews, videos and photographs can be found in the database in the appendix part.

Chapter one introduces the main concepts and key words of the dissertation. At the beginning it briefly gives the throwback of how I came up with the given topic. Further it discusses the origin of Tatar ethnic group, its classification, brief historical path and connection to Islam.

Chapter one reveals information about the methodological techniques such as: interviews, participant observation, ethics and self-reflective analysis. All of them were used in order to collect relevant material. It also describes the locations and its people where the fieldwork was conducted.



Chapter three underlines the conceptual and theoretical presentation of the researched topic. Particularly it explains such concepts as ‘folk dance’, ‘heritage’ and ‘generational transmission’ in relation to Tatar folk dance and its connection to religion.

Chapter four goes back to 1993 and brings information from the past which is still relevant in 2017. It discusses and gives the analysis of the collected material, and answers the research question.

Chapter five is a summary of the whole dissertation. It highlights some suggestions discovered throughout the dissertation. Moreover, it provides a space for the further research.

### **Historical glimpse**

Trace of a dance history from the medieval ages brings us an impression of constant change in dance culture according to the norms, rules and nation ideologies. Changes may carry different impacts. For instance, in general an effect of globalization and colonization on any culture leaves a permanent stigma which may be vanished only by taking into the consideration the old values and reviving the old traditions without being ashamed. These are the indelible facts in ethnic culture we perceive in XXI century.

The rule of the Russian Empire and lately the Soviet regime scattered ethnic groups who were compactly segregated from one another on the territories of nowadays Russia, Caucasus and Central Asia. The people from the mentioned regions bore a significant value of their culture, which further integrated into the fusion of both cultures: Soviet and ethnic/traditional. This brought the changes of different kinds. On one side it opened a new prosperous and developed future, which financially and morally was supported by the Soviet authorities. Consequently the ideas and psychological influences were also directed from the authorities. By this means ethnic and religious identities compelled to be abandoned. Therefore, majority of people lost and/or forgot their roots. Cultural and religious supplements were replaced with equality and uniformity. One of the most influential rays of light in the Soviet reign was the Ensemble of Folk Dances of the Peoples of the Soviet Union formed in 1937. It was founded and run by Igor Moiseyev for 70 years. The idea of it was to spread the traditional features of each ethnic minority who lived at that time on the territory of USSR. Basically, Moiseyev choreographed folk dances in a very professional way by mixing folk and ballet technique (Shay 2002; Prevots 2003). Borrowing the model of Moiseyev Dance Company the rest of the Soviet Republics created their own model of the State Folk Dance and Song ensembles. They encompassed Western and folk dances of the Soviet Union. Professional dance companies took the very ingrained characteristic of specific nation

and transformed it into the staged choreography which generalized the whole concept of folk dance, the same way as Moiseyev did.

My concern in the research is that the dance generalization leads to misunderstanding of culture and misconception of nation perception. Moreover, westernization and new media has a considerable effect on shaping the folk and staged dances. The case of Tatar folk dance is not an exception. Seeing on YouTube amateur dance groups performing folk dance for the sake to perform and create a show, triggered me to look into the norms and concealed meaning of Tatar movements.

As I mentioned above, ideology is one of the domains that shapes the culture. For example, the researcher in Muslim revival in Tatarstan Liliya Karimova wrote that Tatar Muslims were a subject of the 'world domination by Mongol, Russian and Soviet empires that left Tatars in minority' (Karimova, 2013:40). Culture walks along with the development, ups and down of the nation. Therefore, I found it crucial to bring the special attention of the Islamic influence on Tatar dance movements on to the surface.

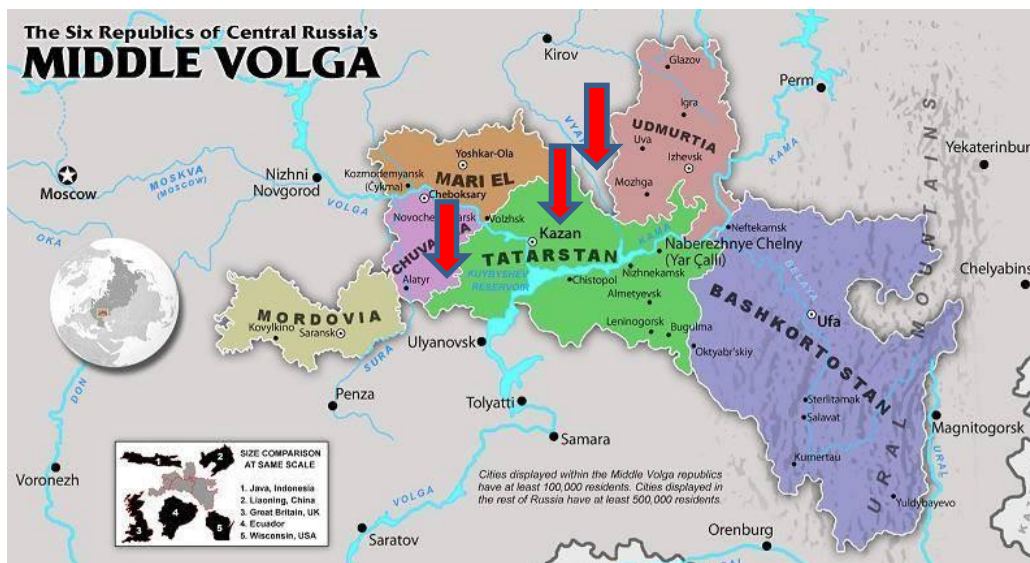
Nowadays one can find a number of ethnographic works about ethnic, traditional, staged and national dances of the Post-Soviet States done by ethnochoreologists, ethnomusicologists, ethnographers and choreographers. Nogaeva.L.I (Bashkir's Dances), Badmaeva.T.B (Kalmyk's Dances), Karabanova S.F (Dances of the Far East People), Malmi V (Karel's Dances), Bikbulatov K.M (Dances of Saratov Tatars) just to mention some (Umerov, 2012:8). However, more recent and detailed investigations are necessary in order to fill the gaps left with the time. Regardless Tatar situation with dance and its position in the society before it started to be documented by the soviet scholars Middle East suffered as well. No sufficient documentation left since XIX century. Here the situation echoes with Tatars. Following factors as "conservative elements and fundamentalist religious sects, governmental policies" became the reasons of extinguished dance forms (Alzayer, 2004:25). To have a small impact into the field of dance anthropology and on Tatar dance research in general I conducted an ethnographic fieldwork.

## **My intentions**

Ethnographic fieldwork demands full immersion into the community one aims to study. In my research I wanted to look at Tatar folk dance elements that are believed to being marked by religious influence. Through the life stories of my respondents and observations of informal and social dancing I was intending to collect kinesthetical knowledge and to find out how the

practitioners and their community interpret the meaning of particular dance motifs. Even though people used to perceive the meaning of the movement as something sacred or well-grounded it is not essential and deep- in movement itself. It is rather “attributed to movement by people who are part of the larger activity and depends on knowledge of the cultural system, such as male and female roles in movement, social status, social structure and access to politics and power” (Kaeppler, 1999:22). Consequently, my purpose was to pick this essential meaning which can barely be understood just by watching the dance.

Being under the Erasmus + scholarship I had to choose the place to conduct my fieldwork other than my home country. Knowing that Tatars are disseminated all over the world I decided to go to the heart of Tatar people to Tatarstan, Kazan. Since my fieldwork had a ‘right on spot’ structure, all further journeys were unplanned, nevertheless gave me more sufficient empirical data. The maps.1, 2 below show exact places I have been to during the fieldwork.



Map.1 Middle Volga territory of Russian Federation



*Map.2 Astrakhan, Russian Federation*

It is a hard process to conduct an ethnographic fieldwork in a country which gradually becomes more industrialized, developed, modernized; which grasps all new technologies and implement them into the different spheres of social life. Researcher Tehindrazanarivelo who conducted his research in his birthplace found out that way of life had been already discarded by globalization and one of the purposes of the researchers was to “[...] revalidate our traditions, which had been ‘roughed up’ by modernities” (1997:54). Less folkloristic accuracy stays in traditional life of local people in villages and towns. Inner migration brings back to rural area the other way of thinking. Old traditional ‘devises’ are getting displaced with the new ones. Thus, to find old traditional costumes, music, recordings is a hard task. The only preservation stays is the memory. American anthropologist Adrienne Kaeppler made a good point saying, “system of knowledge is socially and culturally constructed- created, known and agreed upon by a group of people and primarily preserved in memory” (1999: 379). During my field work I wanted to scrutinize actual life of people and their memories in order to reach the results. Such approach can help to see how deep globalization penetrated into the folk life and especially into the folk dance.

### **Finding My Topic**

In order to explain the reason for choosing Tatar folk dance, I would like to provide with my personal story, which influenced the way I started to perceive and relate to Tatar folk dance.

In 2008 I graduated from the high school in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. In one of the conferences at school I accidentally got to know about Tatar diaspora, which belongs to Assembly of Nations of Kyrgyz Republic. Since I am ethnically Tatar, it appeared very fascinating to me. Later, I joined dance group of the traditional Tatar dance “Yashlek”. It was led by Russian choreographer. In the summer of 2008 our dancing group participated in the annual World Forum of Tatar Youth in

Kazan, capital of Tatarstan. For the gala concert several dances from our repertoire were chosen. Nevertheless, after the last general rehearsal the main choreographer of the festival approached to us and said: "you should not dance without the trousers, we are Muslims. Do not show your legs". We were not aware of trousers before. No one notified us the nature of the folk dance and how the Tatar communities think that it needs to be danced and how the proper costumes should look like. We felt very ashamed. Right after the trip we sewed trousers and recreated some moves. The conclusion of that story is that being far from the native land and culture tends to bring forward representation of the elements that the communities of origin find to be wrong. Therefore, it triggered me to learn about the initial norms of Tatar folk dance, which would enable me to bring them back to Tatar diaspora. Many people are not paying attention to the small details which are actually significant in the folk dance. Therefore, when morals and norms of the communities of origin are suspended folk dance loses its attachment to its roots.

That situation also made me to think and realize that despite the previous ideology Islam still seems to have a significant influence on the way how to perform Tatar folk dance. Religious issue concerning Tatar folk dance will be discussed later in the dissertation. Furthermore, the data I obtained truly increased awareness of my own culture and identity. According to Kaepler, in order to understand yourself better, you need to dive into other sociocultural system (1999: 378).

The reason I concentrate my attention on folk-staged dance is that compare to 'pure' staged dance, folk bears centuries-old traditions. Staged dance might cover the core meaning of the motif with perfectly choreographed movements, which can give an impression of perfection, nevertheless swallowing the very meaning of it. Professional dancer and associate professor Harriet Lihs described folk dance as a collective dance that evolved from tribal rituals, especially in non-Western countries. It does not matter to which part of the world people go; they will find that dance is the main activity in celebrations on different occasions. Onward the author said: "Some of these dances embody centuries of traditions, while others appear as the latest trend; either way, they have a lot to tell you about the time, place and culture of the place you are visiting" (Lihs, 2009:23). It is never too late to collect dance material, because it changes through the time and gets new colors.

As I mentioned before I used ethnographic research. It means that researcher needs to get into the village, urban quarter or other place to gather information that will be useful. I was planning to conduct my field work in Tatarstan in Kamyshly village. However, the location has been changed due to unpredictable circumstances. The person expressed his desire to help and find

accommodation and people apparently did not take his words seriously and disappeared. Therefore, the structure slightly changed and I ended up finding all institutions and sites to go by my own. Finally, thanks to my family's friends I found a place to carry out my fieldwork. It turned to be in Kirov Oblast, which is situated in a border with Tatarstan. I spent a month visiting two Tatar villages: Srednie Shuni and Sosmak. As a snowball more opportunities came up later. After finishing with one site I went to Astrakhan to see Sabantuy celebration and surprisingly was lucky to be invited to the concert of the folk ensemble "Miras" led by the researcher, ethnographer and choreographer Umerov Daulyat Ismagilovich. Further, I by chance was advised by Radik Mullgali the researcher and the worker from the World Congress of Tatar to check out and extract some information from the Republican Center for Development of Traditional Culture. Working with archives I found out about "Mishar" ensemble led by the Chairman of the Council of the public organization of the regional national-cultural autonomy of the Tatars of Chuvashia, ethnographer and choreographer Gibatdinov Farit Abdullovich. Thus, my last destination was Chuvash Republic, Urmai village where "Mishar" folk ensemble is based. More information about these sites and groups can be found in chapters two and four.

I observed people's behavior, the way they talked, what they wore and how they communicated with each other. All that composition formed image of the community and helped me to look upon the way people represent their identity and all its components.

### **Topic importance**

The Republic of Tatarstan as well as other subordinate regions which has been under the power of Tsarist Russia in 1462-1696, Russian Empire in 1689-1917, Russian Soviet Federated Socialistic Republic in 1918- 1920, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1921- 1990 and now Russian Federation from in 1991 were exposed by Russification and partial loss of the soul and essential features of the traditional cultures. Tatars were exposed to assimilate and integrate with Russian and other neighboring countries. One of the harshest ways of doing so was baptizing of Tatars after the conquest of Khanate of Kazan in 1552. Hereafter when Catherin II took her throne Tatars had a freedom of keeping their Muslim faith. Moreover, it was used in the very different directions. Being a Turkic people and knowing Tatar language Tatars could easily communicate with the rest of the peoples from Central Asia and Caucasus region. Therefore, Tatars started to set up commercial, education and religious link between Russia and Central Asia in particular (Lazzerini, 1993).

The reasons for such dissemination were political objectives, which led first to weakening of ethnic identity, self-assertion and ideological features, and then to appraisal of nationalistic movements. Authors, researchers and choreographers of Russian territorial origin might be biased in their works, because it is hard to look at one culture from aside, even if it is your own. Perhaps, this is my conjecture. However, I assume that having an outsider position is not always a disadvantage. As a researcher I try to understand the problem of semiotic loss in Tatar Folk dance.

Many scholars might omit religious reflection in dance, especially when people who dance it belong to Islamic faith. Stereotypically people who practice Islam have a tendency either to negatively perceive the art of dance or separate religion and entertainment, putting the latest into the frame of a “sin” or “shaitan dancing” (tat: demon’s dance). Such expressions were gathered and heard during the field trips and from different people throughout my life. On that base I want to denounce through this dissertation that being followers of Islam do not restrict the right to dance, unless it follows particular traditional norms. Umerov in his expeditions also found connection of the Islam ideology and entertainment. In his questionnaire which he published in his book about Tatar ethnic dances one of the questions sounds as: “Whether the same material can be found elsewhere, where and with what differences (the degree of preservation, the changes that were exposed, the influence of Islam, the influence of the USSR, the existence after)” (Umerov 2012:11). Scholar observed that many ritual songs and dances had been forgotten and irretrievably lost. Umerov claimed that

*It is still possible to find people who are kept by tradition. Thanks to the collected information, the everyday and religious views of the Mishars became clearer. So, according to the stories of the informers Fatikhi Sadykovna Tugusheva (born in 1955) and Golzhikhan Yusupovna Akchurina (born in 1949), the girls danced separately from the boys, i.e. Played where no one sees them. The separate pastime of men and women seems to be connected with the prohibition of Muslim clergy for entertainment mass events. This is a period of struggle against paganism, because of which many ritual dances were lost. But still, despite the ban, many collective dances and games continued to exist in everyday life were of a different, entertaining character, rather than the magic that was the basis of dance folklore (Umerov, 2016)*

Everything is dependent. However, if the purpose is to safeguard or present once culture the very careful approach is needed in order to do so.

## **Research question**

My final version of the research question became a result of the combinations and exclusions of the sensitive and critical expressions connected to faith. Scrutinizing all my data after the field work I came up with my final research question that sounds: “*Are there restrictions in Tatar folk dance based on religious conception which are still preserved?*” Within the following chapters I am analyzing and discussing gathered material in order to answer the research question and support my argument and conjectures.

## **Information to know**

Folk dances of one culture are quite diverse but there are also many common patterns. Every nation has its own folk history and it includes functional and typological unity of holidays, customs and games. One of the biggest agricultural Tatar holidays is Sabantuy (tat: Saban- plough, Tuy- holiday). It comes from the ancestors who were pagans. In the past, it was taking place when people were seeding. This is one of the holidays which up until nowadays strongly keeps its traditional features. During Sabantuy the main activities are sport games, singing and dancing. This holiday strongly defines Tatar ethnic identity. It is also celebrated by other Middle Volga peoples. Moreover, this holiday is affected many national features and traditions including dances and songs. Choreographer and a researcher Vladimir Gorshkov (2001) wrote that Islam did not allow much dancing, but nevertheless Tatar folk dance lived among people and was always loved by them. However, because of the Islamic restrictions Tatar national dance did not spread much.

Gorshkov Vladimir was a Russian famous choreographer. He used to be ballet dancer and choreographer in the Soviet Union time, later worked as a dean in the Institute of Culture and Art of Republic of Tatarstan. I was lucky to meet him in summer of 2011. In my interview with him Gorshkov said that “history, identity and culture are built from the different bricks. Those bricks are collected from the nearby countries and cultures. We may see how one culture is intertwining with another. Interpretation and interaction are natural things for traditions including dance. One culture cannot be isolated from another. For instance: Russian and Bashkir cultures influence Tatar traditions, while Chuvash and Tatar cultures influence Kalmyks and so on” (Takutdinova, 2012:21). On that issue Giurchescu stated that “[...] the phenomenon of migration, seasonal work displacement or commuting may also contribute towards the explanation of diffusion and integration of dance types and styles” (Giurchescu.A, 1999:49). In fact, nowadays many people move from villages to big cities to find a job and simply to look for a better life. Thus, economic and social factors play its important role in dance transmission, construction and preservation. Old generation who possesses the dance knowledge of Tatar folk dance one day will pass away



without passing their knowledge. The reason might be the absence of younger generation in the village. Thus, after a while dance yet will not present the form of vernacular dance. Consequently, its path adopts new and vicarious variation of the folk dance.

Beside dance assimilation, the structure of dance can be also an important feature to look at. It can be explained in several ways, for example as a scheme that shows the way in which dancer passes through the whole dance. Figures in dance usually have meaning and may be presented in the form of circle, triangle or line. In my case, the distance a girl and a boy stay apart from each other can probably represent particular relations. Therefore, dance in space can be also taken into the consideration. Williams explained the notion of time and space in dance as:

The creation of meaning is above all embedded in human relationships: people enact their selves to each other in words, movements, and other modes of action. All selves are culturally defined, as time and space themselves are culturally defined. Time and space are never simply there; they are continually cut to fit the agenda of the moment (Williams, 1999: 29)

We may find spatial and temporal evolution of Tatar folk dance examining closely the historical facts and ideological perspectives of the people. All the elements of daily life can greatly affect the representation of particular people through their folk dance. Various authors show how structured system in dance helps to study each movement or idea of the dance part by part. "Type of music, the association of poetry, and the association of performance influence movement and must be taken into account when whole dances are considered" (Royce, 2002:71). All those elements are very important in understanding dance of the particular society. Further in the chapter I am going to write about who are Tatars and their connection to Islam.

### **Who are Tatars?**

For the first time the ethnonym "Tatar" appeared among the Mongolian and Turkic tribes in the VI -IX centuries. In the XIII century, the Mongols, who created the Golden Horde, were subdued by the tribes, including the Turks, who were called Tatars. In the XIII and XIV centuries, the Kypchaks, who predominated in the Golden Horde, assimilated all other Turkic-Mongolian tribes, but adopted the ethnonym "Tatars". The European peoples, Russian and some Central Asian peoples also called the population of this state. The term was consolidated as a common ethnonym only in the second half of the XIX and the beginning of the XX century (Lazzerini, 1993)

Majority of Tatars title themselves according to the geographical location for instance: Volga Tatars, Astrakhan Tatars, Siberian Tatars, Crimean Tatars etc., or according to self-name as:

Mishar, Kryashen (Tatars Christians). By the time of the 1926 census, most of modern Tatars called themselves Tatars. In recent years, a small number in the Tatarstan and other regions of the Volga region call themselves Bulgars or Volga Bulgars (ibid).

## **Language**

The Tatar language belongs to the Kypchak-Bulgarian subgroup of the Kypchak group of the Turkic branch of the Altaic language family and has three main dialects: western (mishar), middle (Kazan-Tatar) and eastern (Siberian-Tatar). The literary norm was formed on the basis of the Kazan-Tatar dialect with the participation of Mishar. Until 1927 the Tatars used Arabic graphics, replaced in 1927 by the Latin alphabet, and in 1939 - Russian Cyrillic alphabet with the addition of special signs. Many words after converting into Islam have an Arabic root and/or borrowed from Arabic language.

## **Religion**

The majority of Tatar believers are Sunni Muslims of the Hanafi schools of Islamic thought, ‘the oldest and typically perceived as most liberal of the four main Sunni schools of law (*madhhabs*)’ (Karimova, 2013:40). The population of the former Volga Bulgaria was Muslim since X century and remained so in the Horde, thus standing out among the neighboring peoples. Then, after the entry of the Tatars into the Moscow state, their ethnic identity became even more intertwined with the religious one. Part of the Tatars even defined their nationality as "meselman", i.e. Muslims (Lazzerini, 1993).

## **Costumes**

Islam has its dogmas and norms. As I talk about woman in dance the allusion about dressing norms for Muslim woman should be addressed. I will briefly mention it further. There are several requirements for woman’s dress which are mentioned in Qur’an and Sunnah. The first requirement is ‘Extent of Covering’. Mainly, all parts of woman’s body should be covered except hands and face. The second requirement is ‘looseness’. It means that the clothes should not be tight and draw the shape of woman’s body. The third requirement: thickness. This requirement denotes that the fabric needs to be thick enough, so the skin would not be visible from the outside. Finally, the fourth requirement: overall appearance. The clothes should not attract men's attention. ‘The Qur'an clearly prescribes the requirements of the woman's dress for the purpose of concealing *zeenah*’ (arb: adornment) (Badawi, 1969). Penny Alzayer reminded in his book "Middle Eastern Dance" that in XIX century even the "American women were still tightly laced into corsets and the sight

of a female ankle was considered risqué" (Alzayer, 2004:22). Foremost the appearance of woman performing for the public turned out to be labeled lewd character.

Important to mention is the fact that all ethnic groups, which belong to Muslim community, designed their own veiling and dressing traditions according to the climate they live in, traditions and customs of their country. Therefore, traditional costume does not always correspond to all the norms; however it tries to respect some. For instance, basic Tatar folk costume more or less corresponds the Islamic norms. A woman wears pans under the dress, has traditional hat or veil tight specifically in Tatar manner and has the long sleeves in the dress. Very often apron is the significant element put on top of the dress. The picture below illustrates the family of urban Tatars.



*Pic.1. Tatar urban family. Photography of the end of XIX - beginning of XX century*

The ways people dress navigate their movements. Thus, it creates possibility either to demonstrate your costume and freedom of moves in the dance, or on the other hand to hide certain parts of one's body. Historical excavations conducted by archaeologists in Tatarstan revealed unique small sculptures of people with traditional cloth. Archeologists could identify a man who was in a squatting position and his hands were hidden behind a back (Gorshkov, 2001). Archeologists hypothesized that this dancing style was affected by Islamic restrictions. They suggested that Tatar people would meet up at night, secretly in groups and dance without making much noise. Women used to hold scarf while dancing, because it was believed that if a scarf is taken from the lady's head, it shames her dignity. While ladies hold their scarves, men dance with their hands open or sometimes they hold a tubetey (tat: skull cap) (Gorshkov, 2001: 18, 19, 20, 21).

According to Gorshkov (2001) different dancing styles in Tatarstan could be found. People who lived in the villages only danced when they had free time. Usually that happened during Sabantuy celebration. People who lived in the cities had more of a rhythmic and slow motion dance. They loved demonstrate their jewels and could have fun days as well. Village costumes differed from the ones in the city, villagers had bachata (bast) on their legs, with poor material, dress that closed their knees and on their head they had a scarf (ladies), shirt, jacket, trousers, tubetey. City people had their cloth made with high quality material; they spent a lot of money trying to look good. Ladies had *kalfak*, (special hat) on their head and *chitek* (tat: leather shoes). In the cities ladies also showed there social status by demonstrating their rich embroidery (Gorshkov, 2001).

Earlier I provided my personal story, which influenced the way I started to perceive and relate to Tatar traditional dance. It became my motivation in investigating deeply the connection of religion and dance. Thus, it is hard to argue that dance cannot be affected by ideology. Moreover, it can change the behavior, aesthetics and what is the most important, body technique. The next paragraph will present a brief summary of the Islamic roots in Tatar traditional dance.

### **Islam and Tatars**

It was hard for me to find an academic literature which discusses the topic of Islam in Russia in connection to dance. One of my assumptions is that being a Republic under the Russian governance creates an objective and common ground to mark different aspects of cultural life as a unifying form. Never the less, Islam is still alive in some of the societies and Republics in Russia. For instance, majority regions in Caucasus follow Islam, and Ural- Volga areas are highly populated with Muslim people as well. However, it remains untouched and un-researched in terms of dance though. Perhaps the reason is the term ‘dance’ itself, which is believed to be ‘prohibited’ in Islamic states (Shay, 1995: 64). Nevertheless, we cannot deny religious path of Islam in Russia. Tatars converted into Islam in 922 (Gorshkov, 2001:12). It happened in Bulgaria. However, after the reign of Tsar Ivan in XV century many Tatars forcefully were converted into the Christianity. Nevertheless, those who managed to remain Muslim strongly kept their faith until they could freely express it. Consequently, Bulgar state, which was populated by Bulgars (nowadays -Tatars), became the first Muslim subject inside the Russian Empire (Cavendish, 2002). During the interview Umerov shared his thoughts about Islam and Tatar dance by saying that:

*In general, various entertainment activities are banned in Islam, but national choreography itself is a pagan echoes. It is all about hunters and circular dances. People walked in a circle as shamans asking for rain. After that it gradually transformed into the children games, which further turned into songs and dances.*

*They spoke recitatives, all sorts of takmaks (ditty). In Russia, Islam was already in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, before the conquest of Genghis Khan. However, Islam was spread only among the rich people who were engaged in trade, manufacture. It was very rare for an ordinary peasant to go to the mosque. The rich did not allow their children and relatives to conduct entertainment. They all were sedate. But the rural population, despite the fact that the mullah banned the entertainments, were singing and dancing*

*(Personal communication, Umerov, Kazan, 07/18/2016)*

Nowadays, the majority of Tatars follow Islam even though Tatarstan as well as Chuvashia are not Islamic states. Nevertheless Islam is an inevitable part of the daily life of Tatar communities, especially for those in the villages. However, before the revolution in 1917 the situation was opposite. Basing on the interview with one of my respondents, urban Tatars strictly followed Sharia Law, whereas villagers were not much educated. Dance researcher Anthony Shay, in his works tried to see how dance is perceived in Muslim community and if it is a dance per se? He found out that:

Dance is seen by most Muslims as the least of the arts, if indeed as an art form at all. Many writers comment on this negative view of dance without elucidating the sources for their statements. The austerity and rigidity of Islam did much to discourage music and dance and waged a relentless war against (Shay, 1995: 64)

I would argue here, that depending on the country and century dance can be observed differently. Certainly, Islam has only one 'face', but politics of the country and its historical background makes Muslims to look at the phenomenon of 'dance' differently. Peoples integration into one another, especially in the multiethnic countries reshapes the meaning and dance patterns.

Shay furthermore highlighted that the holy book of Muslims Qur'an "makes no definitive statements concerning music or dance, nor does it overtly place prohibitions on either. Islamic attitudes toward dance and music are more complex than some of these writers would have us believe" (Shay, 1995: 65). Thus, we see that this is the verbal notion that dance is 'prohibited', however in fact no word is written about it in Qur'an. My respondents in the field were a bit skeptical answering the questions about the religion and Tatar traditional dance. Though, those who found the words to comment on this used the concepts of modesty and modest gender communication. That establishes a common knowledge about the norms in the traditional Tatar dance, which base on the verbal transmission. Further, I will discuss my experience in the field and the methodological approaches I used.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Field work

Ethnography pushes us to know more about the world, about cultures and people. To collect solid material I used participant observation method. Anthropologist Drid Williams explains participant observation as “living with one’s chosen people for at least 12 month” (Williams 1999:28). In contrast, Kaepler in the description about dance ethnologists mentioned that they usually do not spend extended periods in the field like anthropologists do (1999:378). Kaepler highlighted her point about the participant observation and said that “our bodies and eyes learn about the distinctive ways in which people move” (1999:379). Therefore, practical knowledge is never odd when it comes to the dance research.

Unfortunately, due to the time limit I have spent only two months in the field. Participants were people who identified themselves as Tatar, presumably of any age. Concerning gender, I preferred to focus on female’s restricted movements. The reason is that in majority of couple or mass dances the girls are those who have more concealed movements, which in my opinion create vision of limitation and restriction. Nevertheless it is well known fact that shyness in staged dance is peculiar to majority of countries and communities.

### Study area

The main emphasis of this chapter is devoted to discussing the methodology and my experience during the field work being an insider and outsider at the same time. Among all possible methods in the social research interview, video and photo recordings served as the most advantageous methods for the dance research. Participant and non-participant observations played as supplementary methods. In addition to this the contextual part collected in the field is taken into consideration as well.

Through this work I aim to get closer to observing the field work. From all the data I collected the most fascinating for me became Tatar- Mishar dances ‘*Altyn Basu*’ (tat: Golden Step) and “Recruit’s dance” from Chuvashia, Uрмаi village. These dances belong to Tatar- Mishars are a sub-ethnic group of Tatar ethnicity. They are spread all over Volga and Ural regions. Nigmedzianov, the Tatar ethnochoreologist in his article underlined: “The peculiarities of traditional Tatar-Mishar folklore allow us speak quite definitely of their genetic sources being different from, though related to, those of the Kazan Tatars” (Nigmedzianov, 1967:23). Chapter

four will elaborate more on the traditional form of the specific movement and/or gestures in Tatar-Mishar dances.

The chosen community and dances appeared to be relevant, because in my opinion they may represent an example of the preserved and concealed features in dance. Moreover, I would like to concentrate attention on the several female gestures which implicate the religious influence. Furthermore, I look at the gender perspective as well, since the communication between man and woman in the dance is considered to be one of the significant issues in every society. Therefore, the phenomenon of proxemics will be partially discussed as well.

Most of my respondents except the village in Chuvashia identified themselves as Kazan Tatars. Kazan Tatars embrace generalized Tatar culture as a whole. Thus, when generalization of the culture overlaps with global culture it does not mirror the specificity of the Tatar traditional culture anymore. Therefore, in sub-ethnic groups which are still considered to be Tatars, one is able to find old and precise features which cannot often be visible on a surface.

## **Research Strategy**

In order to determine necessary objectives and to convey delicate features out of my topic the qualitative approach played significant role in providing me with its strategies. Foremost, as far as my research is applied to ethnographic fieldwork, with the main emphases on dance research, I stressed my attention mostly on interviewing and video recording. Moreover, it was a descriptive study and dealing with people became a central task. Such methods as participant and non-participant observations were crucial part of my research as well.

## **Interviewing**

As I mentioned above the qualitative approach became a key in investigating my topic. It provided the close look into the local perspectives of the study group. Amongst diverse range of methods, first I focused on interviewing. Most often I had one-to-one in-depth interviews which helped me to learn more about the person with the partial involvement into his/her life. According to the Data Collector's Guide "in-depth interviews are optimal for collecting data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives, and experiences, particularly when sensitive topics are being explored" (Mack.N, Woodsong.C, M.Macqueen, Guest.G, Namey E, 2005:2). The religious aspect of my topic was one of the sensitive parts. However, I discovered later it was not the only sensitive moment. It is rather delicate, because demands more mindful and attentive look at one self. Besides, it can lead to theological explanation. Dance played as a link to connect the story line. However, another sensitive moment I faced in the fieldwork was more connected to reality and

current disposition of the dancers. While conducting one-to-one interview with couple of old ladies, suddenly the theme of the discussion turned to the intimate and personal stories such as death, sterility etc. I found my respondents in the very contrasting situations: crying, laughing, yelling, and complaining. Also unintentionally I had group interviews. This is an efficient source in receiving broad overview of the current situation. It happened to me in Srednie Shuni village. I came to take interview from the director of the cultural house and apparently finished it having 2 other informants. During the interview they were desperately complaining about politics, local governments and economic instability. Certainly, those issues were connected to the cultural policy and material sources in supporting folk art in the village.

The majority of my respondents were women, although I had the interviews with men as well. They also possessed competence and enough knowledge in my topic. Overall I had 12 interviews. One of them was in a form of a questionnaire. Since I was acquainted with the Depute head of the Council of Muftis of Russia, I have sent the form via e-mail. Another interview was a video record, and 10 others had a semi-structured form of interviewing. All 10 interviews were voice-recorded with the previously asked permission. All the recorded interviews have already been transcribed. Having interviews partially in Russian language, and partially in Tatar language, I have transcribed the same way and translated some parts into English language. Thus, my transcriptions are mixed up with three languages. Some of the interviews are transcribed word by word; some of them explain only the general idea or the necessary aspects. The approximate duration of the interviews was about 1 hour to 2.30 hour long. Here are some of the questions which I asked:

- Can you remember how you were dancing in your young age?
- Wearing long dresses and pants underneath is it a matter of religion or a style of life?
- How well is dance culture developed in your village? What methods do you take to teach your child a folk dance?
- What do you value in Tatar traditional dance most?
- Why do girls usually cover their face during Tatar traditional dance?
- Is there a relationship between religion and Tatar traditional dance?
- Do you observe youth dancing a folk dance?
- Do you transmit the folk dance to another generation? Who taught you? What kinds of Tatar traditional dances exist?
- Do you see any difference in a way the young generation dances a folk dance?
- Do you think pre-revolutionary dances were different then now?
- When did couple dance become widespread?



According to the competence in a religion and/or dance field the questions could vary. If my respondent was in the story of her life I kept listening and asking according to the topic. Once I noticed that the theme could be related to dance it was a hook for me to change the questions. There were moments when I had no time or space to prepare the list of questions, therefore the line of the conversation was not perfectly consistent. The place of conducting the interview also mattered. The noisy room, where the rehearsal went on, as it happened with choreographer of the 'Miras' dance group in Kazan constantly disturbed the wave of thinking and focusing. However, in other times the place for conducting an interview was a private house of the participant or the cultural house of the local village.

### **Filming and Photographing**

Photography and filming pertain to visual ethnography. Bryman called visual materials as photo-elicitation. Author maintained that photo could be taken both by researcher and participant. (Bryman, 2012:455). In Sosmak village I had an experience using some possible techniques in photographing. One of my interviewees was taking photo of me; also we tried to take picture on auto regime. So, I tried to be more open with my respondents in that sense, I showed them the pictures I took, we discussed the best posture to make etc. Certainly, before making recordings and filming I asked permission. If I got a refuse, I tried to persuade them to film only their legs, if it was a case, so the face will not be visible. On such agreement I filmed the most significant parts. In general all of my respondents except two, who only allowed me to film their legs, gave their consent to me.

One of the techniques I used in photographing was still movements. While my respondents were replying to my questions showing particular movements, I was listening and was taking pictures at the same time. Some still movements showed precise position of the element. Upon such factor Van Zile wrote:

one of the most obvious values of movement notation is its ability to freeze an activity that occurs in time.[...] it might require hundreds of still photographs to suggest the kinds of motion sequences that can be represented in detail in several pages of a notation score (Judy Van Zile, 1999:85)

The example of this technique can be seen inside the Labanotation analysis. Additionally, the whole data of the material I gathered in the fieldwork can be found in my database with the more detailed description.

## **Insider and Outsider**

The position of insider and outsider is crucial to mention. My case is interesting because I can be seen from the both positions simultaneously. Since I worked with my own culture I possess no kinship relationship with Tatarstan, with its way of communicating, living, moral and cultural values. Even though I am Tatar from Kyrgyzstan, I can occupy position of the outsider. Giurchescu gave a very important explanation on the issue of insider and outsider:

[...] working in one's own culture has both advantages and handicaps. On the positive side, I have experience of the socio-political, cultural and economic contexts, more specifically a perspective on dance system from neighboring areas and reference terms to which I can relate when placing collected data in context (Giurchescu, Kröschlová, 2007:45)

To relate myself to both insider and outsider helped me in different occasions. For example, as an inside I spoke one of the local languages, which is Russian. However, I was not that fluent to speak and comprehend Tatar language. Bearing in mind that the language is a “key to movement, it is noteworthy to look at it more carefully” (Kaeppler, 1999:382).

Moreover, the number of informants who spoke only Tatar language was considerably high. Therefore, I asked my friend who spoke Tatar language to assist me during my field work. My assistant Bekeeva Asel was able to go with me to Astrakhan and Kirov oblast for a couple of days. One of the challenges of being an insider was the feeling of having some knowledge in my mind, or already prepared answers even if they were different. As Giurchescu claimed: “A negative point, however is that important details, considered obvious, can easily be overlooked” (Giurchescu, Kröschlová, 2007:45). Therefore, I had to suspend my own perception of the culture, my background knowledge and thoughts. The important thing for me was to accept all information and actions from my respondents which generated into the sufficient pile of new work. Nevertheless my interviewees sometimes understood things differently and gave absolutely irrelative answer. Moreover, I had cases when interviewees hid some important details which could influence my data. Therefore, to reach the point of ‘truth’ was to ask as many times as possible the same question, but in a paraphrased way. Though, I had two- three examples when the interviewee developed the topic, whereas the answer in the very beginning for the same question was very short. On the other hand, I never knew where the truth was and what the reality was. Buckland interpreted truth as “a kaleidoscope of possibilities and, in the field, it depends who is lifting that kaleidoscope to his or her eye, when and in which direction it is pointing” (Buckland,

1999: 205). Emic dimension of studying movement, if to speak about dance ethnologists, cannot be taken for granted, if one was able to integrate into the community. Another scholar Andree Grau wrote: "... to realize an adequate and truthful ethnographic account, the admittance of the truth of 'unreality' is essential; only through an implicit internalized knowledge of local cultural standards can meaningful units of analysis can be extracted" (Grau, 1999: 172). Author gave in that claim an understanding of how it is meaningful to extract knowledge from the very core of the researched subject not to be too subjective and irrational.

It is a long process of getting information and familiarity with different aspects of everyday life including politics, art, theological views, economy, and even philosophy of ordinary people. Socially constructed movements are embedded into all previously mentioned aspects. Movements being influenced by external potency determine dance as it is in reality.

One of the advantages of being insider was that "this opened some doors and gave direct access to certain key people, but also prevented from associating openly with others" (Tehindrazanarivelo, 1997: 57). Another advantage of being only ethnically and partially culturally insider, but generally outsider, was that continuous curiosity and uncertainty of people's behaviors, unprotected places and other suspicious factors triggered the research into more vibrant way. An anthropologist Tehindrazanarivelo experienced that even being insider can bring you unanticipated results. He wrote that his research "brought him to place he did not intend or anticipated before" (ibid). I did not expect to conduct a field work in four places, but life circumstances brought me there. Being resident of multi-ethnic Kyrgyzstan, I embedded diverse cultures and the representation of Tatar stage folk dance bears different character compared to one in Tatarstan and Chuvashia. Therefore, my position as an insider came down to minimum.

### **Ethics and Data Records**

Any group or individual has its privacy: personal information, voice, photographs, etc. It is very necessary to notify respondents about anonymity of their private data given to the researcher. Nevertheless, convert cases may happen and interviewee may ask to be acknowledged or to be shown and heard. That can give researcher a chance to input more information into the project. However, one should not forget about basic ethical principles. For instance, a researcher needs to be aware if his research can hurt someone or in opposite, can bring a benefit. Another important rule is to respect, trust and be honest to one you have an interaction with (Hoppy, 2015). These can give an access to the valuable information which may be only obtained through the revelation.

According to Giurchescu ethic dimension of the research involves several aspects such as: copyright for recording and quoting the name of informants, preventing manipulation, misuse of field work results etc. (Giurchescu, 1999:51). Under certain conditions all those aspects mentioned above should be discussed beforehand in order to avoid critical situations. The significant efforts in gathering data were directed to interview recordings, because people were considered to be first source for present and alive situation. To freeze my data I was using small voice- recorder and my phone with voice-recorder in case of unforeseen circumstances. Such circumstances happened when the battery of the voice-recorder finished in the middle of the interview. Therefore, my phone was always charged and ready to replace down voice recorder. Before obtaining the information I introduced myself, my intentions, aim of the research, where the information they give will go afterward and finally I asked their permission to record their voice or/and them is case of video records. Hall claimed: “tape-recorder is not only a tool but also a sign” (Hall, 1999:129). In one of the lectures in the beginning of February 2016, professor Gediminas said that dance was an extension of the mind. It could reveal what was concealed inside of the person. Our mind is not a blank paper there is always a place for something. Later this something becomes our movement. A voice of the interviewee and his or her thoughts were very significant tools to portrait the dance. Therefore, I needed to be very accurate in asking permission to record my informants. Ultimately, I transcribed all gathered interviews to prepare them for the analysis part. Moreover, I informed my respondents that after completion of the research I would eliminate all the recordings and that their voice would not be distributed anywhere.

Another ethical issue is an outfit. Since my focus group was diverse I needed to be prepared for the big range of ages and social statuses. For instance, when I was interviewing old people, it was better to wear something that covered my knees and shoulders. In Tatar culture it is considered to be inappropriate to dress half naked being in front of the elderly people. When it came to the conversation with religious leader I wore veil, or scarf on my head. With such attitude I expressed respect and form trustful environment. In the next paragraph I want to talk about the self-reflection and challenges I faced with during conducting the field work. Nothing goes smooth from the very beginning. Researcher always encounters challenges in order to confront with the reality and have a desirable result.

### **Self- reflection**

In all kinds of scientific works there is a place for self-reflection and challenges. Especially it happens with the applied social sciences where the outcome depends on people and other contextual circumstances. The summer fieldwork itself is a challenging thing. The first reason is

time. Majority of people are on vacations, and cannot come to their work place just for you. The second reason is familiarity with space. Getting used to the new place and its people took time and brought depression. Hence, here came mental ballast and necessity in high level of communicative skills. It helped to find a right person who served as a gatekeeper, introduced yourself in a way, not to embarrass your respondent, to cope with the problems on spot and immediately find a way for keeping and continuing the discussion on a right track.

One of the main challenges I faced with during conducting my fieldwork was language barrier. Paradoxically, being a representative of Tatar ethnic group, but being raised up in Kyrgyzstan among multiethnic people whose spoken language was Russian, I had a hard time in having a full conversation in Tatar language. I could understand half and communicate in a basic level though. Nevertheless, the lack of knowledge of the local language brought me to either miscommunication during the interview, or worth to negative attitude toward me. The miscommunication problems were solved right away by asking to repeat or by repeating the same what they told, but in Russian language, so they could correct, or check that I understood them. One of the inauspicious interviews I ever had happened to me when I was in Sosmak village, Kirov oblast. In my plan I also intended to include imam because of the topic relatedness. I was curious about his interpretation of dance and his involvement into the cultural life of the village. Moreover, it was valuable for me to have an opinion from the religious leader concerning 'contemporary' representation of the folk dance. Also, what did he find to be 'not acceptable' or 'out of the norms' could bring me critical perspective about my topic. So, I found one in Sosmak village. Beforehand I was told that he was a bit suspicious in communication with woman. Nevertheless, it was in my interest to contact him. In spite of his reputation in the village I decided to experience my luck. It was Friday, the holy day for Muslim people when they visit a mosque. Knowing the ethical norms I needed to be dressed before the man I wore trousers, dress on top covering my body, veiled myself, took my field diary and went to the mosque during the time of pray. I did not enter and was waiting outside until men would finish and go out. Two men, one in his 50s, other was around 70 year old were the last and were about to lock the fence when I approached them. I greeted them in Tatar language, introduced myself and the aim of my research went on in Russian language. Apparently, both were not fluent in Russian. However, the youngest started yelling at me speaking with a very angry intonation and in a fast manner:

*Do you have a document or not? From which organization are you? I need to know everything! Now it is a different period. Who has sent you? You must have a document proving where do you work, who sent you etc.?*

*(Group Interview, Sosmak village, 07/ 22/2016)*

Unfortunately, I acknowledged what he has said to me only after coming back from the field. I asked a friend of mine to help me with the translation. Luckily, my voice-recorder was on, because I knew in advance that probably I would have some troubles with comprehending his replies. I was trying to explain my good intentions, but he never listened and did not pay attention on what I was saying. After his rapid speech, he sat on his bike and abruptly sneaked away in a dust of the road. I felt disappointed and failed. If only I knew better the local language I could explain and maybe persuade him to give me a short interview. Subjectively speaking, from the other side there was one more problem under the cover. Due to the current political and religious instability all over the world, religious leaders feel very unsafe. Perhaps, he could think I was a journalist or a foreign agency worker who came to check him. I noticed it from his faltering voice and stuttered speech.

In my opinion the situation happened not because of his status, but rather because of the language problems and perhaps because of his personal attitude. However, in the chat with another imam I received very positive and legible answers.

Another challenge evolved throughout an interviewing process. I noticed me being confused when the track of my preliminary set of questions turned to the wrong direction. Seeing that my respondents had no answer and idea about my topic or else they gave very short answers, I needed to make up any kind of question to keep up the conversation and to go on. Consequently, those made up questions did not make any sense. Since, I used a semi-structured interview I tried to follow the list of questions, in order to be consistent. As a result, the different intellectual level, proficiency in Russian language and knowledge concerning the topic of dance, which is usually performed, but not spoken, my respondents went far from what was expected. Sometimes, interviewees simply did not know or did not want to answer those questions and the topic of the interview became absolutely different. That is why there were moments when I constantly switched from one subject to another to avoid silent situations. From time to time unnecessary stringent/ deep/ detailed questions were part of the discussion which did not make any sense as well. For instance, one of the questions: “how you danced before, when you were young?” I consciously knew that their reply could not give me the whole picture in order to compare the

dance 'before and after'. However, I just stuck to it and kept asking. Hence, it is important to be accurate in preparation and development of the discussion to avoid uncomfortable situations.

The next chapter will be divided into three paragraphs. They will present a description of the locations where the field work took place.

## **Location**

For the proper anthropological fieldwork the ideal period of staying in one place is one year. However, I did not have that possibility with time. Though, I planned to visit only one village and spent there all my time using thick description and concentrating only on it. Fortunately or not, due to the circumstances, I ended up with four sites in 2 months which were mentioned above. Even though I traveled inside Russia I still strictly followed my plan in methodology and managed to make deep investigations of the particular people and dance groups. Further in this chapter I give explicit description of these places and people.

## **Kazan**

Kazan is a developed city with the good infrastructure and high standard of living. Since economic situation of the country is increasing, support forward culture and sport is rising as well. The capital is full of diverse, interesting and often busy people. Coming from Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, which is considerably smaller in size and population, Kazan becomes a mega polis in contrast to it. One can find anything according to his or her preferences. Tatarstan is a fusion of Western and Eastern cultures. Therefore, no one is offended living there. You always can find a mosque, and not very far there is a church. In the streets you can hear mix of Russian and Tatar languages. Russians in the shop may respond you in Tatar language, and opposite do Tatars. Though, everyone has a unique common 'Kazan' accent. I caught up this accent very fast and it maintained in my voice for a long time after the fieldwork. Kazan inspires, it gives a different vibe to create innovations and explore new things.

During first several weeks I visited National Library of Tatarstan, Lobachevskiy's library etc. I was eager to find some theoretical background for my topic, or at least previously made researches. Unfortunately, I only found some books with the dry descriptions of Tatar dances or else it was general information about the costumes, manners and styles. Moreover, being an international student, librarians did not allow me to take books home, even though I went through the registration process and had access to the library. Another disadvantage for me was to find desired books. Moreover, some of them were written in Tatar language, which I barely

understood. Nevertheless, I figured out that there is a lack of material connected to my topic. In opposite, that situation triggered me to investigate it in a more accurate way.

In case of finding the respondents the snowball technique appeared to be the most befitting and beneficial one. This technique aims to increase the number of informants following the recommendations of the previous interviewees (Hoppu, 2015). As it was planned, my hosts and people I previously knew in Kazan suggested me other people who I could talk to and film.

In one of the days I switched on my network connections and called one of the employees from the World Tatar Congress asking for an advice. I met this person and he immediately recommended me to visit National Center of Traditional culture. Right away he gave a call to the director and I arranged meeting with her. This center is located inside the Ministry of Culture of Tatarstan. The whole 5<sup>th</sup> floor is decorated with photographs from the expeditions conducted by local ethnographers and employees of the National Center of Traditional culture. Umerov Davliat Ismagilovich was one of them. He became my respondent who shared his valuable information with me in the upcoming days in Kazan. Umerov participated in the expeditions for gathering data in the places of compact residence of the Tatars, collected description of the traditions and ethnic dances. More concrete records from my interview with him and with the director of this center would be made as a supported argument further in chapters three and four. Beside photographs this center owns video archive with all collected material from the folk festivals like “Tugaryak Uyen”, “Shoma Bas” etc., and also ethnographic expeditions. Getting permission to access their archive I went through 30 Tatar dances performed by Astrakhan, Perm, Kryashen, Chuvash and other dance ensembles throughout Russia. Mostly, I was looking at the costumes, proxemics between girls and boys, and authentic features which were not similar to Kazan- Tatars. One dance caught my attention. It was a dance performed by the dance ensemble from Chuvashia directed by Abdulla Farit Gibatdinov. Though, I was not allowed to copy the material without the permission of those who were filmed, therefore I used my notebook to transcribe significant elements and points I had seen. Having in mind this restriction of coping I forgot about this dance for a while.

Afterwards, with the help of Zavgarova Fanzila Khakimovna, the director of the center, I got in touch with Umerov Davliat Ismagilovich. Besides being an ethnographer, he is the head of “Miras” ensemble in Kazan. His group was based inside the school and apparently was preparing to celebrate their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Nevertheless, deliberately the concert was planned to be held in Astrakhan, because Umerov was born and started his teaching career there. On July 18, I barely found the school where they usually had rehearsals. That day he forgot about our meeting and postponed interview to another day. Finally, I managed to talk to him and observed the rehearsal



dedicated to 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and future festivals. Still, until this time I was struggling about the site for my fieldwork. My expectations about the arranged village were not clear. Therefore, I kept asking people where it was better to do my research. Consequently, most of the locations were chosen randomly or by chance. The only village in Kirov oblast was preliminary planned, because of the accommodation. Since my goal was to talk to old generation of people who lived in the sub urban areas/ villages, the idea of booking a hostel or hotel was automatically excluded. Nevertheless, in a couple of days I moved to Kirov oblast.

### **Kirov Oblast (Sosmak, Srednie Shuni)**

The first destination and the only option I had at the beginning was Sosmak village which belonged to Sredne-Shunskiy region of Viatsko-Polianskiy district. This is one out of five Tatar villages which is situated in Kirov Oblast, Russia.

Sosmak village was suggested to me by my parent's friends who had distant relatives there. One of the advantages of the village is its location. Geographically Kirov oblast lies on the border with Tatarstan. It is 135 km from the center of Kazan, where I temporary lived during my field work. Therefore, my Kazan acquaintances kindly drove me until Sosmak village and introduced me to my host "family". It was an old couple around 75 years old. None of them had connection with dance and art in general. However, 'abika' (grand-mother) played a gatekeeper role and helped me with finding some of the potential respondents. The village is relatively small. It has one mosque, the shop; pharmacy and library were at the same building with the club. The club is the sort of cultural house in the village. It hosts all possible events, competitions and concerts. It has its director, manager, local choir, musician, youth who usually participate in the events and other people who tried to be involved in the cultural life of their village. Back in time, for many years, club played an enormously important role in social- cultural life of people. It was a first place where villagers could watch TV, whereas no one except the club could afford it. It gave a room for acquaintanceship and further relationship development. Finally, it was and it is a place for the expressive art. People used to go there and still go to such kind of village club to learn dances, sing and perform in the concerts. I was lucky to visit this place in the very first day of my field work. Since my first respondent was senior lady Soniia 'apa' (tat: auntie) who was one of the choir singers, she invited me to the birthday party of their harmonica player. It happened at the day of my arrival and took place in the club. Even though from the very first minute the research took very active form, I only managed to grasp my camera and the notebook. Questions and the order of the planed research were omitted, because of the time and rapid replacement of the interviews. Already during the first day of my stay I got to know about the neighboring village Srednie Shuni,

which considered to be as “big brother” for Sosmak village. Srednie Shuni club is always in the constant contact with Sosmak club. I got a chance to see the celebration of Sabantuy in Srednie Shuni village, conducted 7 interviews and got acquainted with Damira Amirkhanova. Damira apa is a former director of the school in Srednie Shuni village, a former choreographer and cultural club worker. Finally, the more important is that she is the one who introduced dance in these two villages. In 2016 she made a workshop on Tatar folk dance for the cultural workers of Srednie Shuni and Sosmak villages. She said that in Tatar case dances were brought through the games such as ‘Apipa’, ‘stanok’, ‘Sahib Jamal’ etc. She transmitted her knowledge to the next generation for the sake of preservation. She thinks when she will pass away she does not want to carry all what she knows about the dance with her. (Personal communication, Damira apa, 20/06/ 2016). During our interview she shared her knowledge with me and we were practicing those songs and dances which she considered to be folk and already forgotten. All respondents whom I met during my fieldwork in Kirov oblast always referred to Damira apa. Everyone said that only she could tell me a lot of information about our dances, because she was the one who spread her dance knowledge among many generations. Her dance background started in Kazan, during student years.

What I found out to be important were the economic and political issues that created a hindrance for the development of culture in these communities. The first reason was villages geographical and political belonging to Kirov oblast, but not to Tatarstan. Therefore, they could not receive proper funding from the government to support Tatar culture. The second reason was non-appreciation. They were asked to perform in the festivals, to create new concerts, but the salary for their job was extremely low. Consequently, to sustain the high level of cultural representation and moreover to think about such peculiarities as religious norms in the dance is far over the horizon. Youth, according to the answers, create the choreographies for their dances simply copying them from the internet. Nevertheless one can find Tatar dances in the local disco in the club. Usually it goes in the first part and then youth turn off the light and dance on the modern beat. Overall, the experience in Kirov oblast made me look at my research from economical and political sides as well.

### **Astrakhan**

The chance to travel to Astrakhan evolved very suddenly. Scrolling down in the social network ‘*Instagram*’ one picture caught my attention. There was a photo of two girls wearing traditional Tatar costume and under the photo the description was written. It contained an invitation for the annual traditional holiday of Tatars “Sabantuy”. Since it was the end of the summer and the period to celebrate this event had passed, I decided not to miss the chance to see and participate in this

event. Astrakhan is one of the ancient cities in southern Russia. For two days in Astrakhan, I spent almost two days in train with the stops and train changes to reach it. I went there with my assistant Bekeeva Asel who helped me with carrying and setting the equipment and sometimes supporting conversations during the interviews.

On the same day after reaching the place, we headed to Sabantuy. Just entering the place I was stopped by the journalist from the local TV. They asked me to give interview to them. I briefly told about Sabantuy holiday and shared a bit about myself. Though, my expectations were higher, compare to what I saw. First, what captured my eye was incredibly small number of people. Second, considering the fact that majority of Tatars are Muslims, on the market shelves one could find only pork meat. Third, there was a very quiet music, unattractive for the people. When concert had started I switched on my camera and started to film dances. I observed dances “on” stage, and “off” stage. I filmed both occasions, and even got chance to participate with local people in circle in the “off” stage dance. Worthy point I saw there was dance transmission. I observed how one lady, perhaps an organizer, because she was very pushy and active, “forced” audience to join common dances. Sometimes she took youth to dance with them. Most of the time youth became embarrassed, because they could not perform and imitate traditional dance. The lady seeing this problem started to teach them on spot, pointing on her movements and by talking and couple dancing she transmitted her knowledge of common Tatar movements.

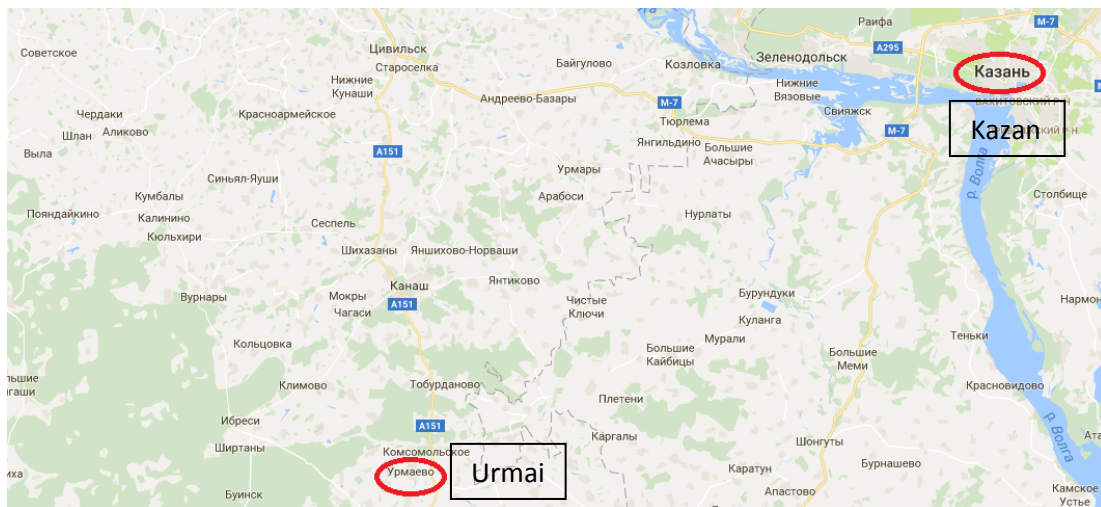
During the second half of the day on July 30, my assistant reminded me to give a call to Umerov, because his ensemble supposed to give an anniversary concert in Astrakhan. He picked up the phone and kindly invited me to their concert. I asked permission if I could film, he agreed.

The concert of “Miras” ensemble took place in the youth theatre. Children performed the half of their repertoire, which included dance of Marfeev Tatar-Kryashen, Pitryach chabatasy dance, Astrakhan Tatar dance, Kazan Tatar dance, dance suite and Tatar Samara dance and others. I was admired and impressed by the way choreographer could accurately combined folk motifs with the stage structure. Hence, coincidentally the trip to Astrakhan brought me solid information of how one could create a professional choreography maintaining the style, norms and character of the dance basing on the grounded data.

### **Chuvashia (Urmai village)**

Interesting story happened to me while I was searching for another place to conduct my field work. I was not fully satisfied with the results I found so far. Therefore, I went through my diary and recalled one video I watched in the archive of the Center of Traditional culture. I called them

and asked for the appointment. During the discussion I expressed my curiosity concerning the ensemble where girls danced with the handkerchiefs veiling their face and the beginning of the dance started with the *takbeer* (God is the Greatest) / *zikr* (*dhikr*) (remembering the name of Allah) sang by boys. The head of the archive started to search contacts for me, and found only the name of the choreographer and the location of the group. She suggested me to find him in the social network 'VKontakte.com'. The whole evening I was chatting with him explaining the aim of my research and planning the trip. His dance group is located in Republic of Chuvashia in Uрмаi village which is 156 km by car from Kazan. The map of the place can be found below.



*Map.3 The depiction of Uрмаi village, Chuvashia and Kazan, Tatarstan*

I spent almost three hours by mini-bus to reach the place. Gibatdinov had to leave after the day of my arrival, however said that I could come and have a look at their traditional dances. I arrived in the afternoon, found a cultural house. It was placed next to the mosque. I entered and realized that everyone was already waiting for me. He organized our meeting in a very serious and adorably professional way. On my arrival his assistant served me a tea with pastry. Then, in a quick mode he started to ask questions and asked other 8 people to come on stage. The harmonica player stayed down the stage and accompanied where it was needed. I did not have time to prepare my tripod and questioner. I grasped my camera and started to film.

Whole interview lasted for about three hours non-stop. Ensemble “Mishar”, the name of the folk group showed me almost all their repertoire. It included folk songs, dances, circle dances with lyrics, solo songs, a narrative about the wedding ceremonies, detailed explanation of ‘*Altyn Basu*’ dance and story about the ‘*Recruit’s dance*’. Moreover, I had a chance to learn the choreography of the last dance. I asked if I could transmit it to my students in Kyrgyzstan. He agreed without

any questions. This participant observation helped me to feel this dance and to be for a while one of them. After the discussion and dances we went up-stairs to see the costumes room. Most of the costumes were new and upgraded. Gibatdinov arranged accommodation for me in advance. He asked Rezilia Sereneeva, a singer, one of his students to host me for one night. In fact, the days in Urmai village gave me the answers and object lessons that the movements with appropriate norms on Tatar traditional dances were still existing, being performed and also transmitted.



*Pic. 2. Ensemble "Mishar" in Urmai village, Chuvashia, Photo by Khisamov Ilnar, 08/10/2016,*

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Conceptual background**

#### **Heritage Perspective**

Culture is changed, dance as well has a tendency to develop and transform. Nowadays the concept of ancestral heritage is being vanished through the time. Moreover, it might be forgotten and never revived. Still, one can find glocal culture in a remote area of one country. This means fusion of modernity and local cultural features. In one of the works Kaeppler underlined that "movements given by the gods and ancestors may be perpetuated as cultural artefacts and aesthetic performances even if their meanings have been changed or forgotten as reference point for ethnic or cultural identity" (1999: 384). Certainly, it is a positive marker of the preservation one's culture

with relation to ethnic identity, although the essential meaning has gone. Supporting this idea professor and ethno choreologist Egil Bakka (1999) observed that people revive their heritage to represent the past, though it is never be the same. Additionally professor Bakka wrote:

If there is a desire to re-present folk dance as a contemporaneous phenomenon rather than as a museum piece, then it is immediately confronted by the demand to adhere to western aesthetic conditions of continual development and individual, creative originality (Bakka, 1999:79).

Nonetheless, it is not justifying the fact that folk elements as dance and song should be meaningless and lose its vernacular spirit. In opposite, the task of each generation is to transmit the knowledge of the meaning rather than to give only the practical side of it. Especially, when people deal with intangible cultural heritage (ICH) the responsibility to bear any of tradition becomes twice harder. Tangible heritage may be stored and passed physically from one person to another. It also may be kept for the long period of time and when the necessary occasion is taken out. However, intangible heritage is hard to store and it needs continuous revision and practice. It can only be kept in the memory of people. Dance as one of the ICH elements needs very careful way while transmission happens.

ICH of each nation is a tremendous work of every individual of the particular community. Throughout my life I have explored and observed different cultures. Eventually I noticed how important and evocative can be simple conversation between different generations. The field of anthropology as well as the field of dance anthropology deals with societies and individuals with the relatedness to specific subject. Thus, through the real communication with people, scholars get huge range of information. Considering dance as a way of expression through the body, it also “a social fact, conveying meaning through human interactions; thus it reflects ideologies and world views” (Grau, 1999:165). Body as an archive keeps enormously interesting, occasionally very useful information. The tendency I observed among Kazan Tatars no matter where they live is following. Let us take one average family who lives in XXI century. The focus will be directed to feminine part. Why feminine? Woman is believed to be one who bears a culture and one who continues the genus. Therefore, woman needs to be solicitous in preserving, safeguarding and transmitting her culture. Interesting fact that transmission or the absent of it is a fact of economic and political situation and personal choice. Going back to Tatar case I found out that grandmother who lives in XXI century passes her knowledge to her grandchild, while her daughter is busy with the work. The mother has a very little knowledge of her traditional culture, because when she was

a child the politics of the Soviet Union implemented Russian language into the school and the Soviet culture had a power over the traditional. Moreover, the idea of atheism played a crucial role in restructuring human way of thinking and behaving. For instance in the anthropological research Karimova (2013) mentioned that by 2009 ‘Tatar women in their mid-teens and twenties on one hand and late forties and older in the other, there were fewer practicing Muslim Tatar women in their thirties’ (2013:42). Tracing this generational line it is visible that the generation after might get knowledge from their mother, because they were taught by still knowledgeable grandmother. Yet, children of the next generation might not receive the full package of cultural heritage. Eventually the heritage itself will become weaker and therefore, gradually traditional culture will disappear if no right solution on safeguarding is done. Language as an expressive form of heritage may indicate on how well traditional cultural is preserved. On my own example I would like to bring another personal story of the culture loss. I was born right after the collapse of the Soviet Union and economic situation of the country was experiencing critical period. *Perestroika* reformation movement started in 1980 led to privatization, economic reforms, and new market policies which had positive and negative impact depending on the social status and serpent behavior. The period of mid-1990<sup>th</sup> was a time of economic struggle. Most of the time youth under 26 spent their childhood with their grandparents while parents were busy to build up their career and to feed a family. Thus, in my case traditional culture was transmitted particularly at that moment. Language, traditional culinary skills, morality, and so-called Tatar spirit was gained thanks to my grandmother from my mother’s side. The same situation can be applied to dance, as it is ICH as well. For that reason consistency in transmission, without generational gaps is also a way to safeguard ones heritage. Though, cultural houses and/or clubs I have been to demonstrate a great success and play a significant role in the transmission process in the villages. For example, in Srednie Shuni village the director of the club organizes disco parties both for elders and youth. Therefore, youth by observing and imitating elders learn their folk dances. The director, Gulfia apa said that DJ plays Tatar music in the parties and people dance Tatar dances. Also Tatar discos are conducted six times per year for those above 30 years old, but youth are also frequent visitor in such kind events. Interesting conversation developed after. I asked her if she observes how the young generation dance Tatar dance. Gulfia apa replied:

- *“Of course, that is how we select choreographers for our collectives”*

Further I asked:

- “When you look at them and remember your youth and the way you danced, whether their movements differ from yours or the style and manners are the same?” To what she answered:

- *“They dance more in a Russian way! Tatars must dance as if they jump through a bump. But their movements are distorted”* (Personal communication, Gulfiia apa, Srednie Shuni village, 07/25/2016)

Consequently, as a matter of fact geographical position of the village and professional education are substantial reasons in dance variations and reformation.

### **Ideological influence**

The shape of dance is a collage of many small details. One of the important details is ideology. It is strong enough to influence people’s mind, style and way of living. For instance, from the lecture given by Professor Gediminas Karoblis I discovered for myself that Cuban hip movements were criticized in the Soviet Union (Karoblis:2016). As a visual example an intriguing film “Stiliagi” (Stylish) could brought one to Moscow in its fifties in which groups of young people had to fight for the right to be different. However, these people were always under the clampdown of the authorities and followers of strict Soviet norms. Thus, this example denoted that not only religion and/or other influential factors could affect the form of dance, but also a political ideology.

Through the fieldwork, in literature and in discussions criticism appeared against the loss of the traditional dances in the villages and the dominance of staged choreographies of folk dance. There were also voices claiming that stage presentations were not faithfully mirroring the culture of the local people.

As I mentioned in chapter one it is very difficult for choreographers to stay either on ‘pure’ folk, or make a ‘pure’ staged traditional dance. In the non-professional dance world there is no differentiation between two. However, the consequence of mindless dancing causes misperception of the whole nation from the foreign perspective and evokes misconceptualisation among dance scholars and dance practitioners. One of my interviewees from Kazan was the director of “Miras” ensemble Daulyat Umerov. The interview was held before and after the general rehearsal with the group at the high school. During the rehearsal I was witnessing his approach to the dance art, to his students. I was admired by the careful way he was explaining the meaning and the character of each dance. At the end of our conversation I was daring to ask him about what makes choreographers to create “fake Tatar dance”? Umerov replied:



*First of all, this is a methodology of teaching the staged dance and there is a need to have methodology on teaching the folk dance. Folk dance is what lives inside the folk. I try not to go far from folklore, but at the same time to stay on the professional level. Professional ensembles usually go too far from folklore; they exaggerate and create a show out of their repertoire. Simple movement can be exaggerated in triple time. Moiseyev did the same. Many people inveigh against Moiseyev, because imitating his way of dancing, amateur dance groups from the all post-soviet countries lost their uniqueness and face. Now it is opposite, it is a time of “coming back to cradle”, and this is very valuable. For instance, no one in the world can repeat and dance the same way as Samara Tatars dance “Yarmak vacy” (самарская дробь). Why? It comes with the breastfeeding. It is embodied; no one can do better than them. Everyone needs to understand this. If you imitate someone you lose your face*

*(Personal communication, Umerov, Kazan, 07/18/2016)*

Umerov raised up a very serious and significant issue on the lack of methodological approach in teaching folk dance. It is better to be taken into consideration by the academic institutions as well as amateur dancing groups. At the current busy time of technology and openness limited attention is devoted to support folk art. Therefore, learner harvest misinterpreted ‘fakelore’ by presenting it as a pure folk. In 1890 the president Benjamin Harrison signed the law to sponsor the world fair which was proposed by Solomon Bloom. The fair was exhibited in Chicago, USA. It encompassed diverse for that times range of countries from Europe to Middle East. It is also believed that this extraordinary fair has brought Middle Eastern dances to America. Nevertheless, beside the bright side to amuse and entertain the visitors, the fair was unfair to those who belonged to these countries. Working side by side with many Bloom’s artists and their reflection of what they imagined to be Eastern Culture was not what it really was (Alzayer, 2004). Thus, more devotion and ethnochoreological research is required to partially complete the classification and semiotic understanding of Tatar dance. Moreover, explicit methodological and theoretical approaches have to be elaborated. Majority of Post-Soviet states are still following the old versions of books and researches. Yet, revised and renovated articles and dance programs which can cover not only the period of Russian rule, but further back. These folk dance techniques and character would be a great contribution into the safeguarding and popularizing Tatar folk/staged dance. Mainly Tatar dance description is dated from the time of sovietisation when first professional ensemble was created and first groups of professional dancers began to do their research in Tatar dance. These talented people were Tatar choreographer, ethnographer and dancer Gai Hadjievich Tagirov and

Baskir dancer and choreographer who also greatly contributed into the development of Tatar choreography Gaskarov Fayzi Adgamovich.

In 1937 the State Song and Dance Ensemble of Tatarstan was established; comparable ensembles were framed in all Republics of the post USSR. In the 1980s, with the start of *perestroika*, shows and celebrations occurred which brought together real entertainers, some of whom have never left their villages. One of the greatest changes in Tatar traditional culture of XX century was the minimization of the more youthful era as far as its customary lifestyle. This was verifiably controlled by social/monetary components and, obviously, it facilitated with the influence by religious customs: Islam for Kazan and Mishar Tatars; Orthodox Christianity for Kryashens. The leading purposes behind the changes were the social changes toward the start of the XX century: the October revolution of 1917, the World Wars and Civil wars. Soviet atheistic system, and also industrialization and globalization in the course of the century, had the effect of underestimating new eras in regard of the old method for life. Conventional lifestyle, ethnic segments mostly vanished from working life, yet not from social life. This is appeared by the ethnic character of the Tatar melodic mindset (Almeeva 2015). Almeeva highlighted the political factors erased established customary norms with the new lifestyle.

## **Folklore**

Some similarities in connection with USSR and its influence on folk dance were found in the research of Arzu Öztürkmen (2009). Author described how European education and Western forms influenced the way Turkish folk dance “zeybek” was choreographed. Öztürkmen argued that this dance did not survived in initial form and such “controlled and ordered folk dances had been a dominant characteristic in the way folk dancing developed through the Republic’s history” (2015:112)

Author underlined that significant impact on State folk ensemble of Turkey has been made by the way soviets choreographed their dance floor patterns. Ozturkmen (2009) wrote that the most popular formations were ‘forming stars, line ups and circles opening and closing’ (ibid). Similar formations are very recognizable in Tatar folk and staged dances as well. Village clubs used to mimic the gestures, formations and character from the staged choreographies. Paradoxically, this is a reversed approach of getting dance knowledge from, so-called professionals. Folk dance once brought to the big stage, had a process of rebranding and reformatting and later on became an ideal showcase for the village dance clubs. Öztürkmen (2009) also claimed that “in the beginning folk dances were performed by peasants themselves, travelling from their own locations to Ankara

or Istanbul, to put on stage what they usually performed in their village context, at weddings, holidays and in farewell ceremonies for soldiers” (ibid). As we may see the last mentioned echoes with the *‘Recruit’s dance’* choreographed by Gibatdinov in 1991. According to Gibatdinov’s words all fundamental elements were gathered by him in Urmai Village in 1987. It was a time when he started to research Tatar Mishar dances.

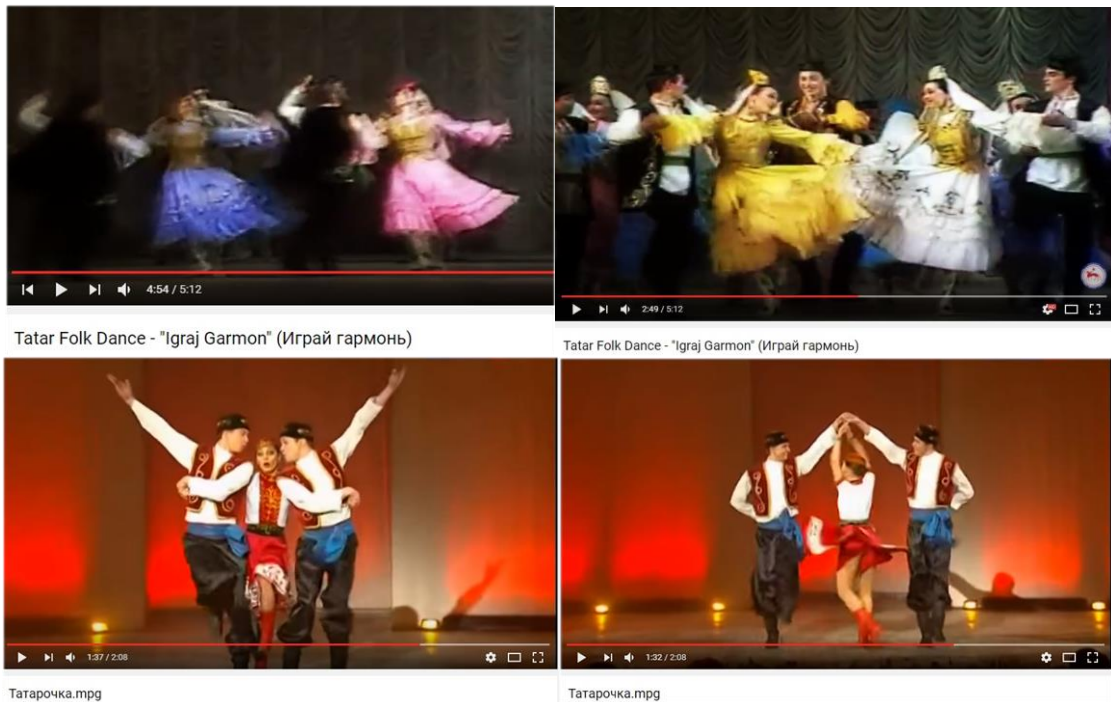
As I have mentioned above, the pioneer in developing Tatar choreography was Gai Tagirov. One of the books written by him was “Tatar dances”. The book was based upon his own expedition findings dated back to 1984. Wide range of Tatar elements and its names were developed and still very much practiced by the Tatar dance scholars and choreographers until today. However, it is still controversial to name these dances as a real folk. There are no other, earlier records aside from those gathered by Tagirov. Moreover, according to my subjective observations his collection of dances is only known among Tatar dance professionals. However, according to my field work experience no one among non-dancers have mentioned the classification of Tatar dances, its names and precise dance elements. I cannot deny the fact that promotion of folklore is one of the fundamental aims of the representatives of particular ethnic group and especially cultural managers. By what means one spreads and presents a message through the folklore on the stage and among people is a question of his or her literacy and awareness.

One of the subjects I look at in my research is investigation of the process and outcome of the argumentative notion of bringing folk Tatar manners to the stage. Different scholars gave their own term to this. For instance, Guirechescu named it “fakelore”, Nakhachevski has his “presentational” and “participatory” dance, which is separated from the “first existence of folk dance” and “second existence”, “invented tradition” by Hobsbawn, Moiseyev developed ballet character dance into a more folk way. For the latter Shay gave his point of view saying that

the steps and movements of character dance often have no connection with dance in the field and yet ballet character dance characterizes the bulk of choreographic output of such twentieth-century folk dance companies as those of Igor Moiseyev, the Reda Company of Egypt, and Mazowsze of Poland (Shay, 1999:30)

An object lesson to support my argument on different interpretation and perception of Tatar dance could be two videos of two professional ensembles. The first video is Moiseyev’s

“Tatarochka”<sup>1</sup>, the second Gaskarov’s “Igraj Garmon”<sup>2</sup>. Both choreographies represent Tatar dance. However, relying on empirical data and descriptive analysis of Tatar culture Moiseyev omitted the essence of Tatar manner, costume and movements, whereas Gaskarov’s moderate relationship between man and woman, costume details and traditional music were accurately chosen. Differences might be visible while watching and comparing both videos. Screenshots below are presented as a visual comparison.



*Pic.3 Screenshots from the videos “Irgaj Garmon” (top line), “Tatarochka” (Bottom line)*

Consequently, imprecision perception of Tatar folk-staged dance is created by different choreographers and different dance representations

The dissemination of staged-folk dance started a decade ago, it is already irreversible process. Villagers and diasporic people watch YouTube and concerts with professional ensembles and

<sup>1</sup> Korobkova (2016), Moiseyev’s ten great dances, ‘Tatarochka’, <http://iz.ru/news/602141>, (number 4), accessed 06/06/2017

<sup>2</sup> Spirit of the Steppe (2013), Tatar Folk Dance "Igraj Garmon" (*Играй гармонь*), [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7m31NmZWJg&list=PLV0oBnb-AE5bmf\\_P4aTez9Zuag7xVux8r&index=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7m31NmZWJg&list=PLV0oBnb-AE5bmf_P4aTez9Zuag7xVux8r&index=1), accessed 17/06/2016

acquire the dance elements they think they can repeat. Thus, rigid dance element maintains, but the folklore meaning dissolves.

Next chapter will demonstrate the importance of the dance research and archive documents. Voices I collected in the field will tell their perception about link between Islam and dance. In addition the description, analysis and discussion about the 'Recruit's dance' and 'Altyn Basu' step will be elaborated in a detailed structure.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Data analysis

#### Voices from the field

The topic of dance and Islam is sensitive in its core. I have no competence in religious questions; therefore through the electronic mail I had an opportunity to contact the Deputy Head of the Staff of the Council of Muftis of Russia Vaisovich Renat-hazrat Abyanov. Renat hazrat has received the list of questions related to Tatar folk dance and Islamic norms. I was glad when after getting the reply I found out that the perspective of the religious leader on dance in general is not as it used to be perceived by the public. Relatively positive outcome can be seen out of his answers. Renat hazrat accurately expressed his opinion and critically highlighted the crucial points which had to be taken into consideration by current and future choreographers, staged and folk dancers. Nowadays people are capable in going to extremes. Some express their entire rejection of dance; the rest can omit all the norms and enjoy all sides of their life and others can play a role of the obedient person without any knowledge of why he or she is not doing what she wants to do. There is no universal truth, indeed. However, partial understanding of the modern reality is never odd. An example of what the religious leader thinks about the dance the following question-answer can show where are the limitations in Tatar folk dance and what is the 'dance' from the Islamic point of view.

- **Diana:** "How do you relate to such phenomenon as "dance" (in general)?"

- **Renat hazrat:** *"I look at dances, more as a historian, i.e. I am convinced that the dance is based on ritual actions that previously had a well-defined structure that was lost with centuries, turning into an unconscious expression of feelings by the body language. In general, expressing my opinion on the dances, I consider them acceptable if they do not violate God's designated institutions".*

- **Diana:** “Is the word ‘dance’ (or synonymous words) mentioned in the Qur'an (if yes, please indicate the verse / surah)

- **Renat hazrat:** “*The very word ‘dance’ is not mentioned in the Qur'an. It belongs to the category of entertainment activities, such as singing and music. For which there are different opinions, from complete prohibition to permissibility (with reservations).*”

- **Diana:** “Is dancing recognized in Islam? (If not, why?)”

- **Renat hazrat:** “*Dance can be attributed to the category of music. That is, its relevance is dictated by the existing reason, for example, a wedding or as in the case of Sufism (ritual action). In this case, the dance is permissible, but under the conditions, namely:*”

- *Non-defiant clothes;*

- *Lack of contact with the opposite sex (except for the wife, mother, etc.).*

- *Restrained movements.*

It is tricky to find a golden middle. However, after finding it a dancer is able to satisfy his desire of dancing, ancestral traditions and ideological norms.

The perception, opinion and relatedness to Islam through the prism of dance varied from one informant to another based on the transcribed interviews. Generally speaking the notion of folk-staged dance associates with the entertainment and freedom of emotions and movements. Therefore, connectedness to religion in this sense is not always under the consideration. Nevertheless, majority of my informants were able to answer the questions connected to Islam either through the explanation of the meaning or the remembrance from the past experience.

Dancing together in the mixed couples usually means holding the hands. The gender mixed dances (tat: parly biuye) appeared in 1970s. Thereby, particular reasons are standing behind. One woman from Srednie Shuni village explained her opinion and commented that:

*When a boy held a hand of a girl that already was something ‘wow’! Even though for the first sight it was just “holding the hands”, but when it happened for the second and third times it already could mean love. Back in time there was no such an expression as free love*

*(Group interview, Gulfiia apa, Srednie Shuni village, 26/07/2016)*

However, on the question if there is a connection between Islam and Tatar dance she replied negatively. Certainly, the gender communication or social roles is an arguable topic and may belong to different kind of fields starting from religion finishing with psychology. Dance as a way of communication and expression is a consequence of the different factors. Gibatdinov in the interview shared his opinion on this and said:

*After 1960 during the Socialism vodka became part of some events. That made people to sing and dance together (note: mixed gender). Before women never let themselves to dance and sing in front of the men. Woman only could dance using handkerchief and closing her face (note: Altyn basu dance). It was connected to the religion. In general Islam prohibited, didn't allow the culture of singing and dancing, however the desire has been always there. Sometimes people danced in the closed space, women and men separately.*

*(Personal communication, Gibatdinov, Urmai village, 08/10/2016)*

Consequently, the period of Socialism has brought mass dancing, choir singing and most importantly couple dance into the Tatar culture. One of the couple dances, or rather a movement which is considered to represent the influence of socialism through the gender mixed dances is “Zalida<sup>3</sup>” (turning) movement. It is one of the popular dance movement which can be observed during Sabantuy celebration or wedding among Tatar communities around the world. Gibatdinov said that:

*It (Zalida) appeared in 1970. During aulak oi when girls were standing in a semi-circle, guys were dancing in the circle. Then one guy approached a girl with the stamps invited her for a dance. Then they span holding under the arms of each other. In that period it was a scandal. People exclaimed: “How they dare to dance arm-in-arm?” It was considered to be sex! After dance finished rumors connected to this way of dancing appeared. It sounded like: “How could she spin with the guy or who is the father of this son etc.?”*

*(Personal communication, Gibatdinov, Urmai village, 08/10/2016)*

Majority of answers were related to revolutionary period. That means that Gorshkov's (1999) finding that dances were restricted is solid. Even the current generation of people who are under

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<sup>3</sup> Zalida- turning in the couple. Body position is side by side (left shoulder of one person to right shoulder of another). Partners hold each other with one hand and bend their elbows. Thus one embrace (supports) partners back with the reverse side of the palm. Such position gives balance while turning. Depending on the region this movements has verity of other names. In my practice I heard other two variations of it: ailian-bailian and chupliam.

50 remembers it. One lady from the group interview in Srednie Shuni is an alumnus of the theatrical school. She said that:

*It was forbidden to dance at all before the revolution. Women could not sing neither could they perform in the theatre. Despite the prohibition, creative people could not restrain themselves in performing on the stage*

*(Group interview, Srednie Shuni, 07/25/2016).*

Interviewee also mentioned about “Berenche teatr” (tat: first theatre). It is a production of 1961 where the conflict between the art lovers and conservative Islam followers is taking place. The city gives the first theatrical performance. One Tatar family has both opponents and supporters of the theatre. All staging is in Tatar language and the plot is based on real stories of people of that time. This production was a manifest of bringing art into the surface.

For some people dance is still connected to something insane. Respondent Damira apa from Srednie Shuni village remembered:

*Once in Sosmak, a family had a celebration of some holiday. Then grandmother said to her grandson: "Show me your Shaytan dance!" It is only Satan probably just jumps like that” (note: she referred to modern dances like hip-hop)*

*(Personal communication, Damira apa, Srednie Shuni, 07/21/2016)*

As we may notice suspicious note about the dance in general is still part of people’s memory. Damira apa is a well-known woman in Sosmak and Srednie Shuni villages. She is the one who brought staged folk dances into the villages and the one who transmitted Tatar folk dances, games and songs to the younger generation of school teachers and club workers. She is now in her 80s. I was very lucky to converse with her and see how devoted she is even in her age. Damira apa gave the very open answers to my questions about the connection between Islam and religion.

*Islam condemns dances. Art in Islam is not condemned; you only need to know the measure! You must do decent dances. For instance, Rudolf Nureyev was a brilliant ballet dancer. Ballet is condemned. Nurlan Batula his father was an Islamist scholar, he was against his dance career. Concerning women, their movements should be modest. Basically modesty is a sense of proportion. Clothes should not be tight. Of course, movements do not go from the prayer.*

*(Personal communication, Damira apa, Srednie Shuni, 07/21/2016)*



The notion of proportion was also remarked by the religious leader Renat hazrat from Moscow as it was mentioned in the beginning of this section. Regarding pre-revolutionary dances Damira apa said that they were different.

*For instance before the revolution girls covered the face. Misharlar (note: Mishar Tatars) still dance the same. Those movements came from Islam. Even now you can find these movements. Probably it was 1920, because in 1930-1940 we were not taught these moves. So, you dance without showing your nose and mouth. You should not show your hair, you angels will flee. And whole dance you dance like this*

*(Personal Communication, Damira apa, Srednie Shuni, 07/21/2016)*

Thus, we observe that there has been such tendency in restricted movements and dance practice. New generation might not have these attitudes to dance, however I am not competent in this question for now. I assume that two ideological powers: soviet, post-soviet- modernity (XXI century) effected drastically the way people dance and look at the dance. Among my informants the majority were fond of dancing either when they were young or in the mature age. The majority recalled Islam-dance stories of their friends. Faniia apa from Sosmak village recalled her friend who started to do five times prayer (namaz) and stopped dancing. Further I asked Faniia apa: - "So, those who decided to step into namaz, cannot dance anymore? She said:

*No, it is not, according to the law. Even when the dress is shaking, it is considered as a sin*

*(Personal communication, Faniia apa, Sosmak village, 07/24/16).*

What I have noticed is that dress in Tatar dance attributes to Islamic features. Thus, Soniia apa from Sosmak village told that they sewed dresses by themselves. Most importantly, the dress should have been below the knee, you cannot wear it if it is higher than the knee. She highlighted that:

*It was not allowed for Tatars Muslims to go out in a dress which is higher than knee and without the scarf on top of the head*

*(Personal Communication, Soniia apa, Sosmak village, 07/20/2016)*

Soniia apa also mentioned that people now dance differently, have modern dress up and dance without pants. Further she said:

*To be honest, the real Tatars are closer to Russians now. Real Tatar norms and movements are not yet respected. We sometimes go to the club. Old generation dances*

*to the full extent with the heart. But then youth turn off traditional music and put on modern music*

*(Personal Communication, Soniia apa, Sosmak village, 07/20/2016)*

Overall, opinions regarding Islamic reflection in dance prevailed. Majority of respondent were aware of the modest behavior, particular gestures with hands and the position of them on the dress, for instance such as movements with the head veil when a girl covers her face in order to escape from the man's gaze. Certainly, such characteristic of movements might be applied to female's manner in general, however tracing the historical timeline and social role between man and woman in regard to ideological influence the link between religion and Tatar folk dance may have its grounded inference.

### **Back to 1993**

*Every fortuity has its own reason.*

Same village, same name, same people, same dances, but 24 years ago. I was fortunated upon finding the archival material in the Institute of Musicology under the Academy of Sciences in Budapest in autumn 2016. Well known fact is that Hungary kudos for their enormous dedication to the systematic supply to the folklore archives. Browsing through tones of the old DVD cassettes in anticipation of finding something about Tatars, I suddenly noticed familiar faces and heard familiar language. Following discovery was even more unexpected. Eventually I realized that the video I was watching was filmed by my supervisor- Professor László Felföldi at the same village (Urmai) in the Republic of Chuvashia in 1993<sup>4</sup>. Some people in the recording who gave the interviews were young, now they are about 70-80 years old. Rest of them passed away. I recognized Fahri apa, the old woman who showed me 'Altyñ Basu' dance. On that recording she was singing one of the Mishar Tatar songs with the two other women.

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<sup>4</sup> Felföldi L (1993), *1993 tatarsztan 4 1 "Field work in Urmai Village"*, archival video, uploaded by Takutdinova (2017), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhPybXz9vjw&feature=youtu.be>, accessed 08/06/2017

*Pic.4. Fahri Aksheva, Urmai Village, Republic of Chuvashia, Screenshot from the video taken by Laszlo Felfoldi, 1993*



*Pic.5. Fahri Aksheva, Urmai Village, Republic of Chuvashia, photo by Takutdinova D, 08/10/2016*



Despite of his young age Farit Gibatdinov already had been actively participating in the interviews and discussions about Tatar's cultural heritage.

Particular names of dance movements have been mentioned both in 1993 and 2016 fieldworks. Such movement as *Zalida* is well-known among Tatar Mishar community in Urmai village. The description was already mentioned above in this chapter. The name of this movement inspired Gibatdinov to develop and create international folklore festival "Urmai Zalida" that happens annually in Urmai Village and gathers dance group from Turkic countries. The description of that festival was found at the web page of World Congress of Tatars it claims: "URMAI - ZALIDA" is an international festival dedicated to traditional dances of Turkic nationalities, held on the territory of Chuvashia" (World congress of the Tatars, 2017).

In the video Felföldi's interviewee went back in time and said that they were gathering in the evening and danced Tugaryak biuy (circle dance) "Aizar-Baizar" during Aulak Oi (tat: Village house). Interviewee also mentioned a dance with the handkerchief, which from my interview is known as '*Altyn Basu*' dance. Crucial part of her interview is very relevant to the topic I have been looking during my fieldwork. Interviewee said that girls were not spending leisure time with boys. Boys and girls were sitting separately from each other. Such kind of behavior was an indication of favorable up-bringing and nice manners.

Later Professor Felföldi put a very interesting and significant question. Professor asked: "when did girls and boys start to dance together?" Suddenly, random woman who was sitting in the corner exclaimed: "1971!" Accordingly, before 1971 Tatar dances were danced gender-separately. Even the everyday life of Muslim Tatars bore the same practices. Gender segregated space, 'separate festivities for men and women' among Muslim Tatars were common before Bolshevik Revolution (Karimova, 2013). Accordingly, dance elements and dance formations go along with nation ideology. Such questions as who and how people decided to start dancing together were raised up from Felföldi's dialogue. Many answers were thrown such as: "Communism", "the end of the old-fashioned way and the beginning of new".

One of the women among Professor Felföldi's interviewees who were 70 years old in the 1993 said that while being 18 years old girl she used to dance with the handkerchiefs. Gibatdinov added that while girls were dancing aside with the handkerchiefs, guys were usually dancing in the center showing courage, talent and agility. Significant remark made by another interviewee was that girls and boys never danced together, means hands in hands. The owner of the house where the interview

was conducted was in his 80s. Old man expressed his opinion about the topic of Tatar dance saying that:

*Normally, you should not dance if you follow Islam faith, you should not show people  
(Video achieve, 1993)*

Again, Gibatdinov already was showing his leadership abilities and sometimes was interrupting other people by adding his opinion or giving suggestion what to say or to do next. Therefore, topic of Islam has been omitted during the speech of an old man.

By 2014 four thousand people have been living in Urmai village. All of them are Mishars (Tatar-Mishars). Still the village is populated with Tatar Mishars and strongly keeps their folk traditions. Further in the chapter I will elaborate the meaning and structure of two Tatar Mishar dances ‘*Altyn Basu*’ and ‘*Recruit’s dance*’.

### **Two existences of ‘Altyn Basu’ dance**

German scholar Felix Hoerburger (1968) suggested that the concept of ‘folk dance’ could be interpreted and understood from different perspectives. The term ‘folk dance’ is a very arguable in its essence. My assumption is that the definition depends on the geographical background of the person and what folk means to him or her. Hoerburger found out that folk dance can have two existences. Thus the author defined first existence as

[...] an integral part of the life of a community. It has an important function in the community. And to take it away from it is essentially to damage the life of the community. It is also not fixed, is not unchangeable in choreography or music. Each new performance is only a kind of improvisation within a specified framework, not a definite form (1968: 31).

With time it becomes rarity to be able to see dance in its first existence. In my study of Mishar Tatar dance ‘*Altyn Basu*’, I found a possible example of its first existence through the video on YouTube<sup>5</sup>. Video shows how women are dancing outside. They do not have particular structure, order and the beginning or the end. Their dance is accompanied with harmonica. ‘*Altyn Basu*’ dance is an intangible cultural heritage of people in Urmai village. From professor Laszlo’s archive of 1993, in the interview by the local women it was explicitly said that their elders and they were dancing with the handkerchiefs when utmost were young. In 10 years after the mentioned interview, a new video was uploaded by the World Congress of Tatars and it shows how people still dance it.

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<sup>5</sup> World Congress Of Tatars, 2013, *Халкым Минем, Урмай [Halkym Minem, Urmai]*  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Txyyueyo\\_Io](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Txyyueyo_Io) from 2:34- 3:33, accessed 13/05/2017

According to Hoerburger second existence is more about fixed forms in movements. It is not a property of the community, because the whole existence of it was transported into another space. Its integrity belongs only to those who perform it as a part of their leisure time, hobby, or showcase (Hoerburger, 1968). Choreography of Gibatdinov on the 'Recruit's dance' can be seen as a revival action, and as a heritage promotion. Gibatdinov was able to bring into the stage 'Altyn Basu' steps in a slightly reshaped form and included it into his 'Recruit's dance'. There is male part in it and female. Both parts are the accurate representation of Tatar Mishar heritage.

### **Recruit's Dance and 'Altyn Basu' step**

The idea of 'Rekrut's dance' came from the real life. The plot is how men are about to leave their houses to serve in the army or to go to the real battles. There are 10-12 people in a line, they hold each other on the shoulder and walk down the street where they live. Folk songs are the inevitable part of the procession which gradually developed into a party in the evening. Explanation below about 'Recruit's dance' is extracted from the interview with Farit Gibatdinov. He told me:

*These dance existed before and post-revolutionary time, as men's destiny was always to defend their country therefore, they were preparing for the army. All dance forms in this dance were taken from our people. I remember how my father in law danced the same way, using some elements from this dance. Of course, there are elements which were brought from abroad by those people who went to army to serve or fight in a different country. So, each period has its own corrections and additions. One can even say that "he is not dancing", but in reality he does special gestures and movements. This is not considered to be a social dance*

*(Personal Communication, Gibatdinov, Urmai village, 08/10/2016)*

From the interview the meaning of the handkerchief reviled. In fact approximately 30-40 handkerchiefs are given to guys by ladies with their private embroidery. The leader of the group holds the bunch of handkerchiefs and altogether sing and dance. Girls and boys dance separately. This form maintained in the choreography as well. Even though boy's part is longer than girls and concentration is directed to them, Gibatdinov dedicated central piece of the dance to girls. In that part they come to the center with 'Altyn Basu' step and show their embroidered handkerchiefs. Gibatdinov commented 'Altyn Basu' dance as:

*It is an authentic dance which I gathered from people. It can be a solo, couple and triple dance. This dance is lost in most of the places except Urmai village. Especially the women dance with the handkerchiefs is the most authentic one; you can find nowhere the similar/identical. That means all women from that generation have the same memory about this dance. When this old generation is gone, there is a possibility that it will disappear from*

*here as well. Fortunately, we have a folk group who already know these steps. So, it is transmitted. These people understood that it is very valuable and important thing. This dance is mostly danced in the occasion where women take part. If only women see men around the postures change in order to attract men's gaze. The reason of woman part in this dance is caused by the showing off their handkerchief embroidery and presenting it to their lovely man*

*(Personal Communication, Gibatdinov, Urmai village, 08/10/2016)*

Remarkable detail for me was that it was not allowed to rise up the dress, because it was considered to be as pornography. Moreover, under the dress they had more layers of clothes, as stockings, pants, socks etc. These significant details show concealed movements and how strict was attention to the way woman dressed and used her dress in the dance.

Based on my findings I use dance analysis as a supplementary technique in order to provide a reader and future scholars with the precise formula of 'Recruit's dance'. Using Labanotation and photo material I extract 'Altyn Basu' step out of the 'Recruit's dance' to show it in a detailed slash. Mentioned step appears in the female part. According to Kaeppler's organized table of different approaches to dance analysis and its forms, the dance, if refer to IFMC, is a realization of movements in practice (Kaeppler, 2007:53). It can represent traditions, customs, daily life, spiritual events, historical moments and gender relationship in correlation and integration with music, songs, poetry or implements. In my case the real story lies behind the chosen dance, which can tell a lot about the society, faith and norms. Therefore, some elements from the Eastern European approach developed by Anca Giurchescu and Eva Kroschlova were chosen as a method for analyzing Tatar-Mishar's dance. Data and tables will be elaborated further in the chapter.

## **Dance analysis**

I chose Sunni Muslim Tatars as a focus group, my attention automatically concentrated on the everyday habits and especially movements connected to Islam. Nigmedzianov raised an interesting point concerning Tatar-Mishars and their attachment to Islam. He wrote:

The kind of religiousness (fading, anyway) we have observed with the older generation Tatar-Mishars has a rather (external) character and proves no deeper influence of the Islam on the folkways even as to the past. Islam has, probably, never taken those forms of a moral and juristic law as case with the Kazan Tatars (Nigmedzianov, 1967)

As an argument to that I found words said by Gibatdinov in his interview. He said that Urmai village which is considered to be Tatar-Mishar village was not touched by the Soviet ideology in the time of USSR and managed to preserve traditions, customs, language and faith. Moreover, Tatar-

Mishars in general are the strongest believers amongst other sub-ethnic Tatar groups. During my fieldwork in Urmai village he pointed out on the movements and gestures which are danced particular way because of the religious norms. Though, Nigmedzianov also mentioned the strict side of Tatar religiosity.

It is worth discussing here this "exception". In the ethnographic literature of the 19th and of the beginning of the 20th century there are many testimonies of the fact that prerevolutionary Tatar wedding was extremely cheerless, without any place for merriness, music, and dance and where the ceremonial of the Sharia (the Law of Islam) prevailed. This holds completely true of the relation to wedding in the most "orthodox" families, especially in the towns. (Nigmedzianov, 1967)

Mishar ensemble has in its repertoire the song "*Bride's cry*" which came from the past. It has been utilizing before a day of getting married. Moreover, back in time and still nowadays one can find a practice of arranged marriage or a bride kidnapping. Another example is a women dance '*Altyn Basu*', which is danced barefoot, for being silent. Many other examples which I found in the repertoire of Urmai village ensemble "Mishar" justify the strong faith and religious obedience of Tatar Mishar people before and now.

The dances performed by groups for audiences, such as the recruiting dance of "Mishar" ensemble in the video clip I used for my analysis, represent most likely the Soviet way of dealing with the local dances throughout the union. The idea was to take the movement content; ideas and material, to some degree even the style and organize it into the stage conventions. All men dance the same at the same time and all the women do the same on their part. The formations are created. That wave of folk-stage creation started from Moiseyev Dance Company in 1943. Travelling around the Soviet Union and gathering the most visible characteristic of the folk dances Moiseyev successfully managed to overlap his material with the ballet techniques and had a huge success all over the world (Moiseyev, 2002)

'*Recruit's dance*' contains both female and male parts. It has a story lay behind it. Gibatdinov in his interview interpreted it as:

*"When guys were preparing to go to army, they sang not azan (calling for prayer), but takdir. They did Zikr (dhikr) remembrance to Allah. It means they leave house with the blessing from Allah and parents.*

*When a guy went to the war, his mother turned him with his back toward the door. In this position she sent him off. Then he joined a circle of other boys and all of them*



*pronounced zikr (this Takdir, is also part of Ramazan, Ramadan celebration). And they say (Allah Akbar<sup>6</sup> ...)*

*After receiving the blessing from the God and parents, guys give their last dance! (The recruit's dance) "Who knows will we survive or not?" In the eyes of women and parents we have to be a defender that is why we dance this male dance. Girls enter this dance but only intermediately. Man's and woman's soul still seek toward each other. And even in this tiny part women can express their feelings. They present them their hand-made handkerchiefs and say the last words".*

*(Personal communication, Gibatdinov, Urmai village, 08/10/2016)*

Though, the choreography was created based on ballet technique fusing it with traditional flavors, the idea and interpretation of the historical background was efficiently transmitted. The purpose of safeguarding the dance which has its meaning and generational transmission I decided to present it in a form of analysis.

According to Anca Giurchescu and Eva Kroschlova the 'vertical segmentation of a choreographic form' adheres to a certain hierarchical order. This order goes from main Totus and decomposes into Parts or Strophes, Sections, Phrases, Motifs, Motif-cells and further to Motif-elements. The order can vary and go from Motif- element up to the Totus (Giurchescu, Kroschlova, 2007: 25). In my database I have the same dance, but performed only by two people, who were the director of the cultural house Farit Gibatdinov and the choreographer and his assistant Maria Dolgova. Both of them performed male and female parts. Those women who also were on the stage partially were involved in the dance. Sometimes there were confusions in motifs or in sequences. Therefore, for the clear picture and context of the whole Totus I chose the video from *YouTube* web page, which was performed by Gibatdinov's ensemble "Mishar"<sup>7</sup>. It became my secondary source.

In my instance the dance takes a form of going from the whole dance sequence narrowing down to Motif element. The Totus is divided into four parts:

**Part I-** Male solo. The time line lasts from 00 min 03 sec. until 01 min 06 sec. While men dance their part, women dance on the both side on spot and/or make a small circles dancing '*Altyn Basu*' step.

**Part II-** Female part. Time continues from 01 min 06 sec. to 01 min 34 sec. Men at the same time do march on the sides.

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<sup>6</sup> "Аллаһү әкбәр, Аллаһү әкбәр. Ләә иләһә илләллаһү вәллааһү әкбәр. Аллаһү әкбәр вә лилләһил-хәмд"  
"Allahү әкбәр, Allahү әкбәр. Lәә иләһә илләллаһү вәллааһү әкбәр. Аллаһү әкбәр вә лилләһил-хәмд"

<sup>7</sup> Original By Dina Gibatdinova, 12.05.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kpqr5alg60&T=550s>

Extraction Of Recruit's Dance By Diana Takutdinova 03.12.2016,

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PlOh6r\\_Gjm&T=11s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PlOh6r_Gjm&T=11s)

**Part III-** Male part. It begins from 01 min 34 sec. and finishes at 02 min 01 sec on the video time scale. Women at the same time dance on spot with ‘*Altyn Basu*’ step.

**Part IV-** After 2/8 of clapping on spot together with the audience repetition of the Part III starts. Time starts from 02 min 01 sec until 02 min 23 sec.

All parts distinguish with its own dance form and use of space and level. Each part consists of Sections, Phrases, Motifs and Motif elements. For my instance I chose Part II. Part II is divided into six sections (S). Each section has its motif (M), Motif variation a1, 2, which belongs to the variation in space. Section 1 starts when two rows come forward using ‘*Altyn Basu*’ step, which is Motif element (Me). Section 2,3,4,6 has a variation of the (Me) a1. The Motif a2 in the Section 5 presents a variation in a posture. The corpus of a dancer binds to the left or right side (depending on the row the dancer stands). Analyzing Table 1 below, we can see that the only main variation of the female part is happening in space. Whereas, male parts contain variety of elements, use of space, level and speed.

**Table 1 Structural analysis of ‘Recruit’s Dance’**

|           |                        |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------|------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| <b>T</b>  | <b>Recruit’s dance</b> |    |    |    |    |    |
| <b>P</b>  | <b>I Female Solo</b>   |    |    |    |    |    |
| <b>S</b>  | 1                      | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| <b>M</b>  | a                      | a1 | a1 | a1 | a2 | a1 |
| <b>Me</b> | <b>a, b</b>            |    |    |    |    |    |

We may notice girls have only a small solo in the middle of the dance. Moreover, there is no part for couple dancing. Male is dancing separately from female. For the video we may see that female part serves mostly as a background or a shadow for male dance. Nevertheless, looking deeper into the female’s role from the perspective of daily life it is significant to mention their importance. From the religious class I took at the American University in Central Asia in 2012 I made presentation about women and Islam. I found out that during the Soviet time in Tajikistan, for instance, it were women who managed to keep religious identity, Islamic books and transmitted faith to the next generation. Usually men were working and women were taking care of the household. Therefore, for the latter it was easier to hide from the authorities. Same happened in other communities where all kind of religion practices were abandoned. Thus, we may find a

reflection of the daily life in dance. Thereby, through kinesthetic movements in dance one may find a religious background in it. Particularly, in the example of *'Recruit's dance'*, specific gestures as tiny steps, covering half of the face, and also the modest way of dressing can be seen in Part II. According to Gibatdinov's answers and general explanation of Tatar woman's movements taken from other interviewees the notion of religiosity is the case.

### **Musical characteristic**

Musical rhythm of *'Recruit's dance'* is 2/4. This meter maintains throughout the whole duration of the dance realization. Tempo of the music is fast and energetic. Therefore, dancers follow the beat of music that makes conjunction between music and dance more evident. Even though the music in the video is recorded, on the background we may see a drum player, who accompanies the dance. The transition from one part to another justifies with dance sections. The beat matches the movements and accents in the dance.

For the dance analysis I used Part II and the video of *'Recruit's dance'*. However, to create a Labanotation for it I used the video from my field where one can see Fahri Aksheva, a 73 years old lady who carries the right way of making the step<sup>8</sup>. Gibatdinov in his interview said that youth generation cannot grasp the ideal way of dancing, therefore in the Recruit's dance girls imitate this step. To demonstrate more concrete analysis of movements I used my photo material. Photo demonstration became a supplementary method for Labanotation. Labanotation was created with the tremendous help of Janos Fügedi and Laszlo Felföldi.

### **Labanotation**

The music meter is 2/4.

#### *Preparation*

Feet position- place middle

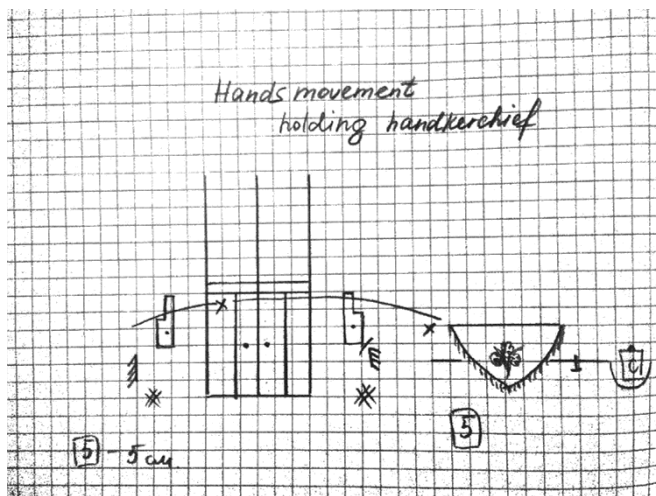
Arms- forward arm gesture in 4 or 5 degrees (bending in elbow), holding a handkerchief.

First three steps should be done with a small suspension forward. A dancer starts with lifting the left heel and his right leg steps forward. Knees slightly flexed. The same repeats with the right heel, and the third time with the left heel. After those steps a dancer makes small sliding steps on the whole foot one by one. Steps start with the left leg placing whole foot forward. Hence, the dancer places right leg forward. Her weight remains on the right leg. It becomes a bouncing movement, even

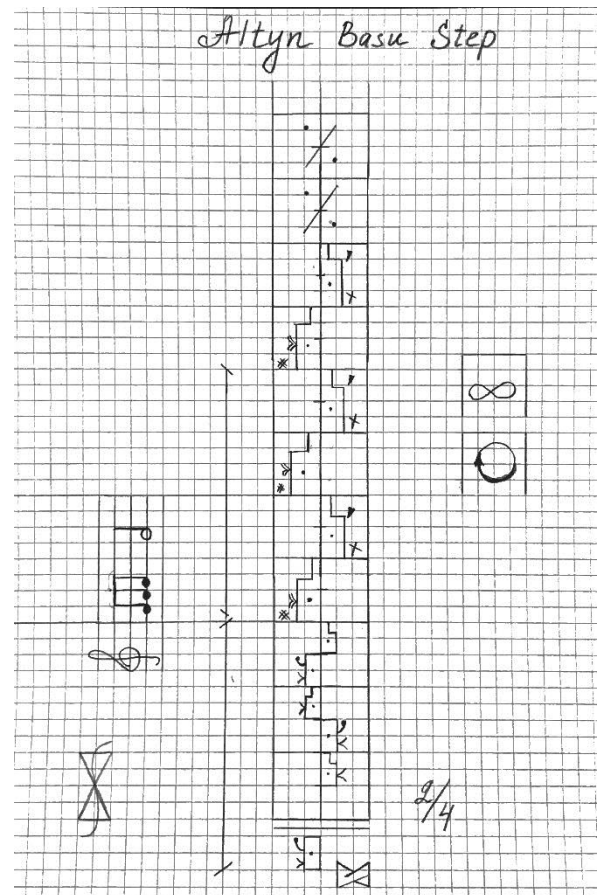
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<sup>8</sup> Takutdinova D (2016), DD3 'Altyn Basu' step Fahri apa Aksheva, <https://youtu.be/OzzLqFCmJWg>, accessed 10/06/2017

though the accentuation drops to the right leg. The dancer has a free space to move in any direction she wants. Usually it is small circular path or eights. Pictures 5 and 6 below demonstrate the Labanotation of the feet and arm movements.



*Pic.6 Arms movement*



*Pic.7. Feet movement*

There are three levels and one variation to hold a handkerchief. All pictures are the screenshots from the field work video material. The first handkerchief position is on the same level as dancer's eyes, only eyebrows are visible. That position characterizes woman's high level of modesty. See pic.8



*Pic.8 Gibatdinov, Aksheva, Uрмаi village, Chuvashia, 08/10/2016*

The second is on the level of the nose, so eyes are visible. Given position defines as an ‘average’ level of modesty. See pic.9



*Pic.9 Gibatdinov, Aksheva, Uрмаi village, Chuvashia, 08/10/2016*

Finally, the third position is on the level of the chin. That means the brave character of woman. See.

p.10



*Pic.10 Gibatdinov, Aksheva, Uрмаi village, Chuvashia, 08/10/2016*

The variation can be done holding one ending of the handkerchief with the left arm on the level of the eyes and the second ending with the right arm on the level of the shoulder. See.p.11



*Pic.11 Gibatdinov, Aksheva, Uрмаi village, Chuvashia, 08/10/2016*

The destination between the face and a handkerchief is approximately 5- 10 sm. Spine and all the body need to be lifted up. Head should be in the middle level as if a dancer carries a cup of water. Only eyes can play and ogle with the boy she likes who is in the audience. Most often the pattern on the handkerchief is embroidered by the dancer herself. It was made for giving it to her lover after the dance or on the special occasion, for instance before sending a man to an army or a war. Particularly *'Recruit's dance'* bears this tradition.

Overall, analyzing different aspects of Tatar folk dance and they form in which it is executed brings the idea of diversity in tradition safeguarding and accurate approach to Tatar heritage. I observed that Mishar ensemble managed to put on stage folk movements without the loss of the features of the traditional dance. Same does Umerov with his ensemble *'Miras'*. There is a necessity in such dance groups that can demonstrate to the global audience the vernacular Tatar dance by maintaining stage conventions.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Conclusion

The investigation upon the topic I was curious at and concerned about brought significant results and contributed into the field of Tatar dance. I was not able to find exhaustive answer to my research question: *are there restrictions in Tatar folk dance based on religious conception which are still preserved?* Nevertheless, I managed to elaborate on the religious concepts and narratives that stand behind Tatar folk dance.

First of all I realized the lineage of dance is affected by ideologies. Tatar folk dance was influenced by Islam, Tsarist Russia, Soviet system, Post-Soviet and lifestyle of XXI century. For understanding why dance has particular formation, music and spirit the indicator should be addressed to historical path of the ethnic group. Ideological principle might be also helpful to understand why some dance features have been lost during the time. Due to political circumstances such as revolution of 1917, religious oppression of Tsarist Russia and Soviet Union, economic instability and crisis of XXI century Tatar folk dance had a tendency to reshape and inborn new features. Second of all the study made me think of the heritage importance. Islamic influence on Tatar dance movements, costume and manner exists as a veiled topic. Few academic articles and books could be found on it. Majority are written on religious dances, covering parts of Indonesia and Middle East. Particularly, Sufi dance is well investigated so far. However, the phenomenon of dance that belongs to communities that follow Islam except those mentioned above demand thorough investigations. Therefore, people like Gibatdinov and Umerov have a power of word, power of movement and expression. Such people who transmit their dance knowledge not only through the movement but through the explicit explanation of the narrative and meaning of the dance or costume elements could be found in any country, generation and decade. What is required is popularization and dissemination of theoretical background and factual knowledge of Tatar folk dances among Diasporas around the world and dance collectives in the villages and cities. Finally, based on dance anthropology literature the idea of a dance title opens a platform for a better perception and understanding the dance you watch or perform. By completion of my study I reexamined how crucial it became when dance had its well defined label as 'folk', 'staged', 'character' etc. It immediately arranged evolved queries in your mind.

Qualitative approach was a helpful method in data collection and construction. The work pointed out that culture forms society the same way as religion shapes socio-cultural behavior and gender roles. Through my fieldwork I found the role of female and male in the dance was separated and different from each other in regards to the historical timeline. According to my interpretation and

based on the interviews I would say the dominance of Islam as a fundamental religion, most likely, created these boundaries in gender identities, limitation in female movements and specific design of costumes. That is why non-mixed dances were so important in dance. I am not excluding the fact that phenomenon of gender varies and is not applicable to all societies.

My findings showed that Tatar folk dance is partially shaped by Islam. I found out that movements and dances that had a reflection of Islam are still practiced and preserved by the community of people in Chuvashia, Urmai village. Ensemble 'Mishar' led by Gibatdinov demonstrated their fascinating repertoire that included '*Recruit's dance*' and '*Altyn Basu*' dance. These two dances revealed for me its Islamic echo. Tiny steps, handkerchief positions in covering woman's face in '*Altyn Basu*' dance represented modesty and obedience in front of man and God. '*Recruit's dance*' started with *zikh* represented faithfulness. Proximity between man and woman was wide enough. That position indicated that man and woman dance separately. Nevertheless, woman manners and her gaze might show interest and sympathy to a guy she liked. Another bright example from the fieldwork was the acquaintance with 'Miras' ensemble. Umerov skillfully combined his repertoire in regards to professional stage and folklore safeguarding. Contribution from the interviewees of Sosmak and Srednie Shuni villages had a great impact in providing information about Tatar dance transmission, dance technique etc. by revelation of their personal life stories.

Certainly, more academic researches can be elaborated further about the topic of dance and religion. I hope that dancers and their audience will be more mindful in the way they do it and what stands behind.

In conclusion of this dissertation I realized the more economically and spiritually society is stable the more potency it has in safeguarding the vernacular meaning and dance elements. Thus, the tendency to adopt extrinsic features into the folk dance decreases. Dance is not only shaped by habitual movements it is rather encompassed by the norms, faith and mindset. In that scope people find their reflection in dance. Without taking into consideration those factors they will disappear and another dance shape will be obtained.



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## Maps

Map 1, Volga-Ural region, Source:

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Map 2, Astrakhan, Source: <http://www.thebesttimetovisit.com/weather/russia-idpaysglobaleng-74.html>>, accessed 15/12/16

Map 3, The depiction of Uрмаi village, Chuvashia and Kazan, Tatarsta, Source: google maps: Sosmak, Kirov oblast

## Pictures

Cover photo and collage on the first page were photographed and created by Takutdinova, except the bottom right photo on cover page and bottom left on the first page were done by Bekeeva.

Picture 1 Tatar urban family. Photography of the end of XIX - beginning of XX century.

Source : <http://yanshyk.ru/news/cultura/gorodskoj-kostyum-vtoroj-poloviny-hih-v-chast-pervaya.html>, Accessed 04/06/2017

Picture 2 Ensemble “Mishar” in Uрмаi village, Chuvashia, August 2017, Photo by Khisamov Ilnar

Picture 3 Screenshots from the videos “Irgaj Garmon” and “Tatarochka”

Picture 4 Fahri Aksheva, Uрмаi Village, Republic of Chuvashia, photo by Takutdinova, 2017

Picture 5 Fahri Aksheva, Uрмаi Village, Republic of Chuvashia,

Screenshot from the video taken by Laszlo Felfoldi, 1993

Picture 6 Labanotation, Arms movement

Picture 7 Labanotation, Feet movement

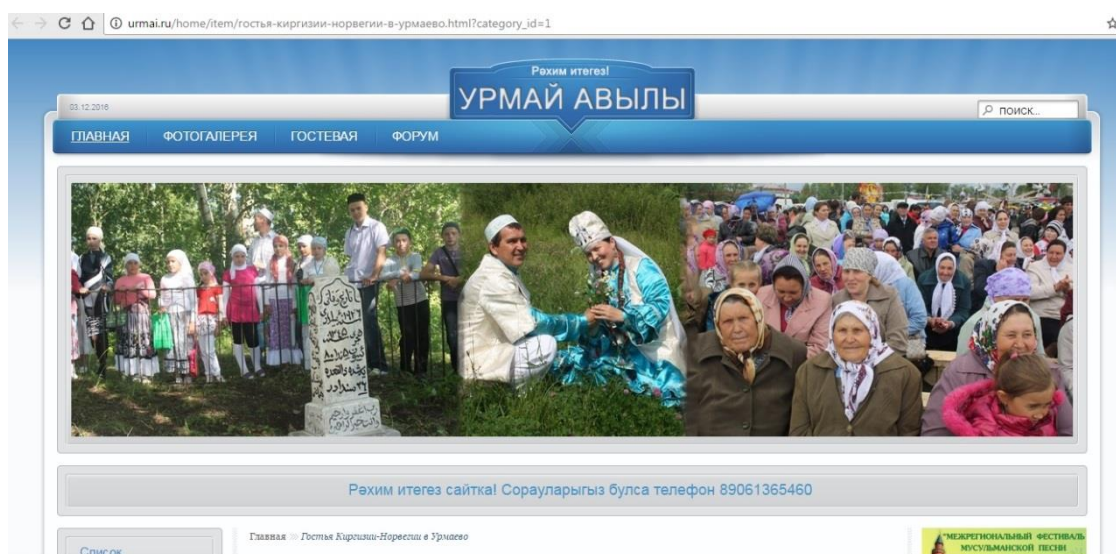
Pictures 8-11 Gibatdinov, Aksheva, Uрмаi village, Chuvashia, photo by Takutdinova, 2017

Table 1 Structural analysis of ‘Recruit’s Dance’

## APPENDIX

Screenshots below illustrate the personal web page of Urmai village (tat: Urmai avyly). During the field work in Chuvashia by the time I have arrived back to Kazan Farit Gibatdinov shared the public the news about my visit. It surprised me, and at the same time gave aspiration to move on.

Article introduces me as a researcher, my background and Choreomundus Program. It tells about the purpose of the visit and describes what data I have collected. Gibatdinov explicitly underlines that it is an ethnographic project and folklore ensemble 'Mishar' shares its dance experience and demonstrates it in the local cultural house. Gibatdinov also writes the explanation of the ethnographic and authentic folklore within the topic of my research.





## Видео

Татарские фильмы

Урмай моны 2012

ТНВ

Разное

## Профиль

Логин

Пароль

Запомнить меня

Войти

- Забыли пароль?
- Забыли логин?
- Регистрация



Народный фольклорно-эстрадный ансамбль "Мишар"



Маршрутный рейс «Казань-Урмаево» Диану за короткое время доставил в Урмаево. Еще по дороге водитель рассказал много интересного, в первую очередь о необычности этого коллектива..... В это время в Урмаевском сельском Доме культуры гостя из Киргизии, Норвегии ждали старшие участники, руководители ансамбля.

По сути дела фольклорный ансамбль «Мишар» можно назвать не только аутентичным, а также и этнографическим

**Аутентичный фольклор** - явление вторичное, так как преемственность традиционной народной культуры осуществляется в этом случае искусственным способом: сначала песенный или танцевальный фольклор записывается от информантов во время экспедиций, а затем этот материал осваивается молодежью путём подражания магнитофонным или видеозаписям.

**Этнографический фольклор** - явление первичное. Его носители являются информантами для собирателей, исследователей. Носители первичного, этнографического фольклора - коренные деревенские жители, как правило, преклонного возраста - осваивали его путём естественной преемственности традиций от поколения к поколению, а не специально, как это делают вторичные коллективы

Самое главное, что еще 30 лет тому назад фольклорный ансамбль создан в целях сохранения, развития и популяризации самобытного фольклора музыкально-песенной, танцевальной, вокальной, инструментальной, празднично-обрядовой, семейно-бытовой культуры именно татар-мишар татарских сел Чувашии, представляющую исключительную ценность с исторической, художественной и эстетической точек зрения. Магистра Диану интересует вопрос отношения духовных служителей деревни Урмаево, Чувашии в целом к развитию аутентички, этнографического фольклора, народной музыки, хореографии?

Фарит Гибатдинов ответил: « Чувашия - такой необычайный остров понимания всех конфессий, разных национальностей. Особенно великолепный тандем общественных организаций духовного управления и национально-культурной автономии татар Чувашской Республики. Вот уже четыре года в Чувашии д. Урмаево провели Международный фестиваль традиционной культуры «Урмай залида», до этого проводился 25 лет Международный фестиваль татарской песни «Урмай моны», 8 лет Межрегиональный фестиваль мусульманского песнопения «Арт-мадхия»Зикер, фикер,шэкер», ежегодный праздник «Мавлюд», «Курбан байрам» национальные праздники «Сабантуй», межрегиональные научно-практические конференции «Национальное наследие», все это в течении более 30 лет проводится с участием и благословения Муфтия г.Москва, центральной части России, Чувашской Республики Альбир хазрата Крганова, всех прихожан мусульманских приходов ДУМ Чувашской Республики. Любить делать Зикер Всевышнему средствами народного творчества никем не запрещается. Наши традиции связаны с религией, и мы живем в цивилизованной стране наравне со всеми ...Всевышний создал нас очень разными, в частности мы представляем субэтнос татарского народа. Мы-мишаре, наша миссия - жить в любви к Всевышнему, чтить нашего пророка Мухаммеда г.с., малую родину а в целом- Россию. Ислам- религия толерантная, нас ни в чем не ограничивает. Поэтому мы с огромным удовольствием стараемся продолжить наши традиции, в том числе песенные, танцевальную культуры, передающиеся из поколения в поколение. В век глобализации, когда исчезают многие национальности, народности, наш Всевышний не даст исчезнуть татарам-мишарям, ибо мы любим этот субэтнос. В Чувашской Республике преемственность, передача всех ценностей нации продолжается. Несомненно, тут заслуга в основном самих татар-мишар Чувашии, и конечно ДУМ и НКАТ Чувашской Республики».

Диана для себя открыла новый этнический мир, огромное красивое здоровое татарское село Урмаево, удивительный неповторимый фольклорный коллектив «Мишар», неповторимых людей. Первый день - и сколько положительных приятных впечатлений, а впереди - усердная совместная работа. Благо есть интернет ресурсы, а там столько трудов о жителях татар-мишар, творческом коллективе «Мишар». Все это будет изучено и непременно выйдет в научных трудах Дианы на английском языке на весь мир.

Фарит Абдулла.



*Photo from Farit Gibatdinov's personal archive*

Picture above illustrates social event where young generation perform 'Altyn Basu' dance during the wedding celebration in Chuvashia. Photo was taken from the social network with personal permission of the owner.



# DD3 'Altyn Basu' dance

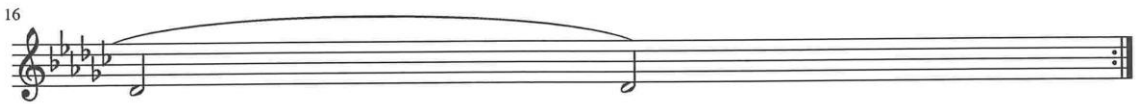
Transcription: Juan Felipe Miranda Medina

Compilation: Diana Takutdinova

Dancer: Fahri Aksheva

Accordion player: Khisamov Inar

$\text{♩} = 200$



## Database

| Dance Database (DD) |                   |                         |  |                    |                    |                           |                   |                 |                |                     |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Registration Number | Content           | Name of the Dance       | Name of the agents                       | Musical accompanim | Costumes of the d  | Settlement of recording   | Date of recording | Recorders' name | Equipment      | Duration of the rec |
| DD1                 | Demonstration     | Altyn Basu              | Aksheva F, Sirazitdin                    | Harmonica          | Traditional dress  | Concert Hall in the cultu | 10/8/16           | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:02:01             |
| DD2                 | Demonstration     | Rekrut's dance          | Gibatdinov F, Mariia,                    | MP3 file           | Traditional dress  | Concert Hall in the cultu | 10/8/16           | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:04:03             |
| DD3                 | Demonstration     | Altyn Basu              | Aksheva F, Khisamo                       | Harmonica          | Traditional dress  | Concert Hall in the cultu | 10/8/16           | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:01:09             |
| DD4                 | Demonstration     | Bride's cry, circle dan | Aksheva F, Sirazitdin                    | Harmonica          | Traditional dress  | Concert Hall in the cultu | 10/8/16           | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:07:00             |
| DD5                 | Dance transmiss   | Recruit's dance         | Takutdinova, Dolgov                      | MP3 file           | Casual             | Concert Hall in the cultu | 10/08/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:12:05             |
| DD6                 | Demonstration     | Recruit's dance         | Dolgova M                                | MP3 file           | Casual             | Concert Hall in the cultu | 10/8/16           | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:01:10             |
| DD7                 | Sabantui          | Typical dance 'off sta  | 2 women                                  | Singers 'on stage' | Casual             | Astrakhan, open air spa   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:00:47             |
| DD8                 | Sabantui          | Typical dance 'off sta  | 2 women                                  | MP3 file           | Casual             | Astrakhan, open air spa   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:00:14             |
| DD9                 | Sabantui          | Tatar Dance 'on stag    | 2 girls on stage, 4 'of                  | MP3 file           | Traditional costu  | Astrakhan, open air spa   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:03:11             |
| DD10                | Sabantui          | Solo Tatar dance on     | 1 guy                                    | MP3 file           | Traditional costu  | Astrakhan, open air spa   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:01:43             |
| DD11                | Sabantui          | Tatar Dance and Son     | Vocal -Dance ensem                       | MP3 file           | Traditional costu  | Astrakhan, open air spa   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:02:02             |
| DD12                | Sabantui          | Tatar Dance, small p    | Vocal -Dance ensem                       | Mp3 file           | Traditional costu  | Astrakhan, open air spa   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:00:21             |
| DD13                | Sabantui          | Tatar Dance, small p    | Vocal -Dance ensem                       | Mp3 file           | Traditional costu  | Astrakhan, open air spa   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:01:10             |
| DD14                | Sabantui          | Bashkir? Male dance     | Vocal -Dance ensem                       | Mp3 file           | Traditional costu  | Astrakhan, open air spa   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:03:30             |
| DD15                | Sabantui          | Kazan Tatar dance       | Vocal -Dance ensem                       | MP3 file           | Traditional costu  | Astrakhan, open air spa   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:02:37             |
| DD16                | Sabantui          | Astrakhan-Tatar Dan     | Vocal -Dance ensem                       | MP3 file           | Traditional Astra  | Astrakhan, open air spa   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:01:27             |
| DD17                | Sabantui          | Astrakhan-Tatar Dan     | Vocal -Dance ensem                       | MP3 file           | Traditional Astra  | Astrakhan, open air spa   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:00:20             |
| DD18                | Sabantui          | Dance Transmission      | Woman and Girl                           | Music in a backgro | Casual             | Astrakhan, open air spa   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:00:22             |
| DD19                | Concert (20th an  | Folk dance of molkee    | Dance Ensemble "Mi                       | MP3 file           | Traditional Tatar- | Astrakhan, Youth theatr   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:04:39             |
| DD20                | Concert (20th an  | Folk dance of molkee    | Dance Ensemble "Mi                       | MP3 file           | Traditional Tatar- | Astrakhan, Youth theatr   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:03:52             |
| DD21                | Concert (20th an  | Pitriach Chabatasy      | Dance Ensemble "Mi                       | MP3 file + wooden  | Traditional costu  | Astrakhan, Youth theatr   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:05:11             |
| DD22                | Concert (20th an  | Tatar Fast couple da    | Dance Ensemble "Mi                       | MP3 file           | Traditional Kaza   | Astrakhan, Youth theatr   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:00:39             |
| DD23                | Concert (20th an  | Children Tatar dance    | Dance Ensemble "Mi                       | MP3 file           | Traditional costu  | Astrakhan, Youth theatr   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:02:59             |
| DD24                | Concert (20th an  | Folk dance of molkee    | Dance Ensemble "Mi                       | MP3 file           | Traditional Tatar- | Astrakhan, Youth theatr   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:00:23             |
| DD25                | Concert (20th an  | Astrakhan-Tatar dan     | Dance Ensemble "Mi                       | MP3 file + lyrics  | Traditional Tatar- | Astrakhan, Youth theatr   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:03:09             |
| DD26                | Concert (20th an  | Solo Tatar dance o      | The daughter of Ume                      | MP3 file           | Traditional Kaza   | Astrakhan, Youth theatr   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Canon IXUS 105 | 0:01:03             |
| DD27                | Concert (20th an  | Folk dance on ethno-    | Dance Ensemble "Mi                       | MP3 file           | Traditional Kaza   | Astrakhan, Youth theatr   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:03:51             |
| DD28                | Concert (20th an  | Peasant dance (Kaz      | Dance Ensemble "Mi                       | MP3 file           | Traditional costu  | Astrakhan, Youth theatr   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:03:30             |
| DD29                | Concert (20th an  | Dance Suite + Sama      | Dance Ensemble "Mi                       | MP3 file           | Traditional costu  | Astrakhan, Youth theatr   | 30/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:08:13             |
| DD30                | Birthday party in | Solo Tatar Dance        | Rizilia apa, manager                     | Accordion          | Traditional Tatar  | Kirov Oblast, Sosmak vi   | 20/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:01:50             |
| DD31                | Birthday party in | Common improvised       | Local Choir women                        | Accordion          | Casual             | Kirov Oblast, Sosmak vi   | 20/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:01:48             |
| DD32                | Home interview    | Improvised Tatar dan    | interviewee Faniia ap                    | Randomly chosen    | Dress, Veil, Apro  | Kirov Oblast, Sosmak vi   | 24/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:00:29             |
| DD33                | Home interview    | Improvised Tatar dan    | interviewee Faniia ap                    | Randomly chosen    | Dress, Veil, Apro  | Kirov Oblast, Sosmak vi   | 24/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:00:48             |
| DD34                | Home interview    | Improvised Tatar dan    | interviewee Faniia apa and fieldwork ass |                    | Dress, Veil, Apro  | Kirov Oblast, Sosmak vi   | 24/07/16          | Diana Takutdino | Photo Camera N | 0:02:03             |

## Database

|      |                    |                       |                       |                     |                   |                          |          |                   |                |         |
|------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------|---------|
| DD35 | Home interview     | Chabata biuy          | interviewee Guzaliia  | no                  | Casual            | Kirov Oblast, Sosmak vi  | 23/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:00:56 |
| DD36 | Home interview     | Kaz Kanaty + explan   | interviewee Guzaliia  | lyrics              | Casual            | Kirov Oblast, Sosmak vi  | 23/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:01:42 |
| DD37 | Home interview     | Basic elements        | interviewee Soniia ap | no                  | Dress, veil, apro | Kirov Oblast, Sosmal vil | 20/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:00:21 |
| DD38 | Home interview     | Dance Transmission    | interviewee Damira A  | lyrics              | Dress, covered h  | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 21/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:07:03 |
| DD39 | Home interview     | Motif "Bau ishuy"     | interviewee Damira A  | no                  | Dress, covered h  | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 21/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:00:15 |
| DD40 | Home interview     | Motif +explanation    | interviewee Damira A  | no                  | Dress, covered h  | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 21/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:00:35 |
| DD41 | Home interview     | Motif with headkerch  | interviewee Damira A  | no                  | Dress, covered h  | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 21/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:00:06 |
| DD42 | Home interview     | Transmitted motif wit | Diana Takutdinova     | no                  | Casual            | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 21/07/16 | Damira Amir Khan  | Photo Camera N | 0:00:31 |
| DD43 | Interview in the v | Feet motif            | Gulfiia Shagieva      | no                  | Casual            | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 25/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:00:21 |
| DD44 | Interview in the v | Feet motif (the same  | Gulfiia Shagieva      | no                  | Casual            | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 25/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:00:19 |
| DD45 | Interview in the v | Feet motif + explanat | Gulfiia Shagieva      | no                  | Casual            | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 25/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:00:19 |
| DD46 | Sabantui           | Parade in the costum  | Tatar youth of Sredni | MP3 file            | Traditional tatar | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 23/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:01:40 |
| DD47 | Sabantui           | Dance suite           | Tatar youth of Sredni | MP3 file            | Traditional tatar | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 23/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:03:27 |
| DD48 | Sabantui           | Tatar Couple dance    | Aged woman and ma     | MP3 file            | Traditional tatar | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 23/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:02:17 |
| DD49 | Sabantui           | Dance suite 2, accom  | Tatar youth of Sredni | Mp3 file            | Traditional tatar | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 23/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:01:34 |
| DD50 | Sabantui           | Shupliam, Common      | Locals                | Mp3 file            | Casual            | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 23/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:04:12 |
| DD51 | Sabantui           | Shupliam, Common      | Locals                | Mp3 file            | Casual            | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 23/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:01:12 |
| DD52 | Sabantui           | Shupliam, Common      | Locals                | MP3 file            | Casual            | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 23/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:00:35 |
| DD53 | Sabantui           | Shupliam, Common      | Locals                | MP3 file            | Casual            | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 23/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:01:17 |
| DD54 | Sabantui           | Shupliam, Common      | Locals and me         | MP3 file            | Casual            | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 23/07/16 | Fieldwork assista | Photo Camera N | 0:01:05 |
| DD55 | Sabantui           | Russian pop song+T    | Locals                | Mp3 file            | Casual            | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 23/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:01:00 |
| DD56 | Sabantui           | Russian pop song+T    | Locals                | live music (band, s | Casual            | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 23/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:00:11 |
| DD57 | Sabantui           | Russian pop song+T    | Locals                | live music (band, s | Casual            | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 23/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:00:53 |
| DD58 | Sabantui           | Shupliam, Common      | Locals                | MP3 file            | Casual            | Kirov Oblast, Srednie S  | 23/07/16 | Diana Takutdino   | Photo Camera N | 0:00:59 |

## Database

| Interview Database |  |                          |                                |                             |                                |                                |                          |                  |                            |
|--------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Registratio</i> | <i>Content</i>                                       | <i>Name of the in</i>    | <i>Name of the interviewee</i> | <i>Name of th</i>           | <i>Method of the interview</i> | <i>Settlement of recording</i> | <i>Date of recording</i> | <i>Equipment</i> | <i>Duration of the rec</i> |
| ID1                | about "Miras" ensemble, biograph                     | Diana Takutdin           | Umerov D.I                     | -                           | one-on-one, semi-structure     | Rehearsal at school, Kazan     | 18/07/16                 | IPhone           | 0:26:56                    |
| ID2                | about "Miras" ensemble, biograph                     | Diana Takutdin           | Umerov D.I                     | -                           | one-on-one, semi-structure     | Rehearsal at school, Kazan     | 18/07/16                 | IPhone           | 0:07:45                    |
| ID3                | complains  | Diana Takutdin           | Shagieva G.Kh and two c        | -                           | one-on-one, group intervie     | Cultural house (club), Kirov O | 25/07/16                 | IPhone           | 1:31:52                    |
| ID4                | religion, dance transmission, biog                   | Diana Takutdin           | Amirkhanova Damira             | -                           | one-on-one, semi-structure     | Private House                  | 21/07/16                 | IPhone           | 1:14:24                    |
| ID5                | religion, dance transmission, biog                   | Diana Takutdin           | Amirkhanova Damira             | -                           | one-on-one, semi-structure     | Private House                  | 21/07/16                 | IPhone           | 0:46:19                    |
| ID6                | general information                                  | Diana Takutdin           | Khaziev Rafil and choir w      | -                           | group interview, unstructur    | Cultural house (club), Kirov O | 20/07/16                 | IPhone           | 0:03:51                    |
| ID7                | unsuccesful interview                                | Diana Takutdin           | Mullah Fuat Aby and his        | -                           | group interview, unstructur    | In front of the mosque in Sos  | 22/07/16                 | IPhone           | 0:06:14                    |
| ID8                | life story, general about Tatar dan                  | Diana Takutdin           | Khazieva Soniia apa            | -                           | one-on-one, semi-structure     | Private House                  | 20/07/16                 | IPhone           | 0:57:27                    |
| ID9                | dance stories, biography                             | Diana Takutdin           | Faniia apa                     | Asel                        | group interview, unstructur    | Private House                  | 24/07/16                 | IPhone           | 0:51:43                    |
| ID10               | dance stories, biography                             | Diana Takutdin           | Faniia apa                     | Asel                        | group interview, unstructur    | Private House                  | 24/07/16                 | IPhone           | 0:42:27                    |
| ID11               | dance stories, biography                             | Diana Takutdin           | Faniia apa                     | Asel                        | group interview, unstructur    | Private House                  | 24/07/16                 | IPhone           | 0:07:30                    |
| ID12               | general information, life history, dance histories o | Shaikhutdinova Guzaliia, | Asel                           | group interview, semi-struc | Private House                  | 23/07/16                       | IPhone                   | 1:08:08          |                            |
| ID13               | Hazrat's opinion about the folk da                   | Diana Takutdin           | Abiiyanov Renat Vaisovich      |                             | questionnaire form             | Internet                       | 18/07/16                 | e-mail           |                            |

## Database

| <b>Photo Databse (PD)</b>  |                     |                     |   |                 |                  |                          |                         |                          |
|----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---|-----------------|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Registration Number</i> | <i>Content</i>      | <i>Photographer</i> | <i>Settlement</i>   | <i>Quantity</i> | <i>Equipment</i> | <i>Technical paramet</i> | <i>Date of shooting</i> | <i>Name of assistant</i> |
| PD1                        | Sabantui celebr     | Diana Takutdino     | Astrakhan, Open space                                       | 102             | Photo Camera N   | size: 4496 x 300         | 30.07.2016              | Bekeeva Asel             |
| PD2                        | ensemble "Miras     | Diana Takutdino     | Astrakhan, Youth theatre                                    | 78              | Photo Camera N   | size: 4496 x 300         | 30.07.2016              |                          |
| PD3                        | ensemble "Mish      | Diana Takutdino     | Chuvashia, Cultural house                                   | 75              | Photo Camera N   | size: 4496 x 300         | 10.08.2016              |                          |
| PD4                        | Birthday party of   | Diana Takutdino     | Kirov oblast, Sosmak village, Club/ cultural house          | 14              | Photo Camera N   | size: 4496 x 300         | 20.07.2016              |                          |
| PD5                        | Movement with t     | Diana Takutdino     | Kirov oblast, Sosmak village, Private house of Faniia apa   | 23              | Photo Camera N   | size: 4496 x 300         | 24.07.2016              | Bekeeva Asel             |
| PD6                        | "Zalida" moveme     | Diana Takutdino     | Kirov oblast, Sosmak village, Private house of Guzaliia apa | 32              | Photo Camera N   | size: 4496 x 300         | 23.07.2016              | Bekeeva Asel             |
| PD7                        | Feet movements      | Diana Takutdino     | Kirov oblast, Sosmak village, Private house of Soniya apa   | 3               | Photo Camera N   | size: 4496 x 300         | 20.07.2016              |                          |
| PD8                        | Movement with t     | Diana Takutdino     | Kirov oblast, Srednie Shuni village, Private house of Damir | 25              | Photo Camera N   | size: 4496 x 300         | 21.07.2016              |                          |
| PD9                        | Costums, Photos     | Diana Takutdino     | Kirov oblast, Srednie Shuni village, Club/ cultural house   | 66              | Photo Camera N   | size: 4496 x 300         | 25.07.2016              |                          |
| PD10                       | Sabantui celebra    | Diana Takutdino     | Kirov oblast, Srednie Shuni village, Open space             | 139             | Photo Camera N   | size: 4496 x 300         | 23.07.2016              | Bekeeva Asel             |
| PD11                       | everyday life, alle | Diana Takutdino     | Kirov oblast, Srednie Shuni village, Sosmak                 | 93              | IPhone           | size: 3264 x 244         | 20.07-25.07.201         | Bekeeva Asel             |



PD7, Interviewee demonstrates one of the variations of the hands position  
in Tatar folk dance, 07/20/2016



DD34, improvization, dance with assistant Asel Bekeeva, 24/07/16