Mugham Jazz

About a half dozen articles on jazz, delivered to each floor of the fourteen-story home of the official Soviet Azerbaijani press, all went directly to the waste basket – not read. In the early eighties, now viewed as the final years of the cold war and the beginning of the thawing of the socialist regime, censorship on two levels, official and self-asserted, continued to render jazz as an ambivalent and thus avoidable subject. During the same months that my other articles on music, theater, and the arts were published in various papers and journals, my attempts to offer or promote anything written on jazz met with friendly dismissal or cautious advice. Until one day the editor of the sports section of the major komsomol (Young Communist League) paper *Youth of Azerbaijan,* himself a jazz fan, proposed a scheme.

Substituting for the main editor during a two-day business trip, my fellow conspirator was in charge of daily issues. Upon his call, I left with the secretary, who knew me, a jazz article with, according to our plan, an attached note –"Solicited by the editor – urgent"– the ambiguity of the message simultaneously explaining and excusing the inclusion of the article in that day's issue. Running to the newsstand the following morning and finding a three-column article in the fresh-smelling newspaper, I, a twenty-five-year-old classically trained pianist and, as a hobby, a free-lance cultural observer, returned home to read simultaneously from several copies, indulging myself with Turkish coffee. Within a few minutes, the phone rang and an official voice stated that in an hour I was expected at the office of the Secretary of the Azerbaijan Young Communist League.

"At least they did not take us in a *voronok*,"[1] – sadly joked the head of the sports section, who received a twin call.

After an hour in the waiting room, we were greeted by the secretary himself. To our enormous surprise, he started by asking if Baku really was once the "Mecca of Soviet jazz," and if so could we prepare a list and gather the jazz musicians remaining in the city. Being asked to provide names brought to mind classic interrogation stories from the socialist past – recollections widely circulating specifically among older jazz musicians. Recognizing the heavy silence filling his spacious office, the Head of the League explained that he intended to revive "lost traditions" (quoting the title of my article) by staging a Baku International Jazz Festival, which we could help organize.

The jazz festival of 1983 bore the name of Vagif Mustafa-zadeh, a legendary jazz musician who had died in 1979, leaving a void in native culture, and breaking up the intimate trio with his wife, jazz singer Elza, and his then nine-year-old daughter Aziza, now a well-known European performer, his pupil and legacy.

Years later, William Minor, issuing *Unzipped Souls* – a book on Soviet jazz – began the first chapter with the question "Why Russia?" Explaining his choice, he first commented on major socio-political changes since the middle of the eighties that inspired his interest in the region. Then he explained that when listening to Soviet jazz recordings released "in 1986 on East Wind Records of Hartford, Connecticut," he found and "especially liked one album, . . . by pianist Vagif Mustafa-zadeh, a man of immense talent who died in his early forties" (in fact he died at thirty-nine). Sharing his findings with his friends, Minor recalled their questions.

[1] Voronok was a black track sent to collect suspicious persons in Soviet people's mind was associated with political arrests.

"Who is he?'

'A pianist from Azerbaijan'

'Where's that?'

We'd all bend over the map."(7-8)

This long-postponed essay on Azerbaijani *mugham* jazz – a unique musical blend of local and global, official and subversive, classical Azerbaijani and popular American art forms – focuses on the musical lineage of Vagif (1940-1979), acknowledged as a founder of *mugham* jazz. The identity of musician and *mugham* jazz itself were formed both within and against the complex polyphony of Soviet/Russian and Azerbaijani social and musical hierarchies. Studying *mugham* jazz, this essay weaves together scholarly inquiry and personal stories of people with whom I share both cultural background and life experiences. The application of Bourdieu's reflective theory enables me to objectify my role as an author, negotiating between my detached remoteness as a researcher, and my involvement as a cultural insider whose ideas, views, and aspirations have been shaped not only by field methodology but also by the very life circumstances and socio-cultural dynamics that generated Vagif's musical world.

Soviet Jazz

Segodnia ty igraesh' djazz
a zavtra Rodinu prodash'.

Today you play jazz
Tomorrow you'll sell your Motherland.

The story of jazz in Azerbaijan is inseparable from the history of Soviet jazz, perversely shaped by socialist propaganda that held jazz as decrepitly capitalistic, American, and thus anti-national. The ideological attacks challenging and denouncing the musical aspects of jazz, situating it against "positivistic" classical music, folklore, and Soviet Estrada (popular mass culture – the vessel of socialist ideology) led to an intricate interrelation between jazz, modern music, and local traditions.

Frederic Starr, author of the first and perhaps the most comprehensive monograph on Soviet jazz, described a five-year window between the Soviet exposure to jazz by Valentine Parnakh in 1922 and the infamous 1928 article by Maxim Gorky, the leader of "socialistic realism," an article which signaled the beginning of the socialist suppression of jazz and the persecution of its performers. Written by Gorky as he reposed in Corsica, the brief vehement essay entitled "On the Music of the Gross" introduced a vocabulary that would be employed through decades of official attacks on jazz.

The picture of "an orchestra of sexually driven madmen conducted by a man-stallion brandishing a huge genital member" was further elaborated by Lunacharsky, one of the highest-ranking Soviet leaders, Commissar of Public Enlightenment and self-proclaimed musicologist. Once a jazz supporter, he had a change of heart, labeling jazz a "syncopated music" grounded in "physiology" that perpetuated mechanical machine-like rhythms, serving the interests of the American and European bourgeoisie by permitting them to hypnotize and sedate their slaves, "whipping [them] with the fox-trot and lulling with the tango."[2]

[2] A. V. Lunacharsky, "Social'nye istoki myzykal-nogo iskusstva," [Social roots of the musical arts], V mire iskusstva [In the world of art]. Moscow: Soviet Composer, 1958, 369- 383, 377-8.

Repeated association of jazz with the bourgeoisie and thus the count-revolution in the late twenties led to arrests, the exile of musicians, and the public denunciation of jazz sympathizers, setting the pattern for most of the Soviet period, during which time banishment alternated with years of rising hopes, providing jazz and jazzmen with no safety at any time. At the peak of Stalin's purges in 1936-37, following the jazz debate between the two major socialist presses *Izvestiya* and *Pravda*, not only were jazz musicians including pioneers Parnack and Teplitsky arrested, jailed, and exiled to Siberia – but also "tens of thousands of more casual jazz fans were doubtless swept into the same net."[3]

At end of World War Two, the jazz scene erupted: jazz ensembles and orchestras played in parks, clubs, houses of culture, theaters, and universities.[4] Yet the beginning of the cold war in 1947 was marked by renewed repression briskly revived by Stalin's main cultural aide, Andrei Zdanov. His series of public statements against jazz as a vessel of "Western influences 'poisoning the consciousness of the masses'"[5] was followed up with with "Postanovlenie [Decree] of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party" (February 1948), surprisingly directed against the opera *Velikaya Druzhba* [Great Friendship] by the Soviet composer Vano Muradeli. The word jazz was not pronounced, but the language relied on familiar vocabulary – "composers, following formalist, anti-national direction," and the "music of American and European bourgeois, mirroring the decrepitude [marasmus] of bourgeois culture, its total rejection of musical art, and its approaching dead-end." An obedient servant of the socialist

[3] Starr, 170. See the whole chapter "The Purge That Failed: 1936-1941," 157-180.
[4] Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until it Was No More* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006), 166.
[5] Drake, Trey Donovan. *Tusovka: The Historical Political Development of Soviet Rock Music*, Santa Cruz: University of California, ??

agenda and a true Soviet composer, Tikhon Khrennikov echoed the same ideas in a speech at a meeting of Composers and Musicologists of Moscow, the word "jazz" surfacing only once, linked with the "apostle of the reactionary forces in bourgeois music, Igor Stravinsky, who with the same indifference creates a Catholic Mass in a semi-decadent style and circus-jazz pieces."[6]

While policies against jazz were somewhat public, official actions remained in the shadows, leading to widely spread narratives about threatened and disappearing jazz musicians and sympathizers, about the prohibition and destruction of instruments. In the absence of the socio-cultural environment that produced jazz in America and lacking the opportunities for the entrepreneurial jazz embraced in Europe, socialist policies from the very beginning and throughout the decades of the Soviet Union ironically succeeded in making this music inherently relevant to Soviet culture, fusing Soviet jazz with the energy and passion of the rebel, and fostering a community for which jazz became a voice of resistance, social and musical.

Sliding into the underground, destroyed, damaged yet rebounding or flirting with socialist power, converging with Soviet Estrada, jazz never ceased to exist. There was institutionalized jazz such as that of the State Jazz Orchestra, which served as a showcase for Soviet claims of democracy and modernity.[7] Exiled from Moscow, musicians tended to establish groups and bands wherever they were, planting jazz on the geographical and cultural fringes of the USSR. The legendary Eddi Rosner, treated as a prince by officials in the early 1940s, in 1946 was sent to a Siberian concentration camp, where he

[6] Tikhon Khrennikov, "Za tvorchestvo, dostoinoe sovetskogo narod," [For the arts worthy of the Soviet people], *Soviet Music*, #1 (1948), 54

[7] See references to the State Jazz Orchestra of the USSR organized in 1938 and on State Orchestras in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, and Belorussia, Starr 198, 205. See also Alexei Kolosov, "Gitara Alexeya Kuznetsova," in *Soviet Jazz*, 268-271, 268.

immediately started a jazz band; Oleg Lundstrem with his banished orchestra played in the Tatar capital, Kazan.

From the beginning jazz was lumped together on one hand with vulgar entertainment and on the other with the vanguard and experimentalism in classical music. In *Postanovlenii* of 1948, allegations of formalistic *izvrashchenie* and anti-nationalism made against Muradeli for his opera were also extended to Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Khachaturian, Shebalin, Myaskovsky, Popov – all the best composers of the time. Scholars like Konen, who was permitted to write about jazz, as well as many jazz supporters until the present asserted the legitimacy of jazz by quoting renowned classical composers and authorities and by referring to classical musicians incorporating jazz and its elements in their works. For example, the opening of the monograph *Soviet Jazz* (1987) is a compilation of articles and statements about jazz by Sergei Prokofiev, Rodion Shchedrin, Alfred Shnittke, and Giia Kancheli, along with written accounts by and about legendary jazz figures.

By grouping jazz and the musical vanguard together, socialist policies secured a link between the two, notably stimulating the fascination of classically trained musicians with jazz. Perhaps unlike anywhere else, a large number of distinguished Soviet jazzmen were graduates of music colleges and conservatories – many Azerbaijani jazzmen were noted for their supreme technical freedom in musical execution.

Locating Azerbaijani Jazz

Jazz was known in Baku in the middle twenties. A billboard of 1926 announced "the last seasonal concert of the Eastern Jazz-Band conducted by A. Ionessyan."

Significantly the concert program includes, along with a jazz band, an ensemble of folk music and dance with legendary actor and singer Husseinuglu Sarabski (Figure 1).[8] Several photographs of the same period depict the jazz orchestra of Mikhail Rol'nikov in which musicians pose with musical instruments – three saxophones, clarinets, a trombone, a trumpet, a tuba, two violins, a banjo and a drum (Figure 2). The grandson of the bandleader believes that the group began in pre-revolutionary Baku (1920) and toured Iran when the socialist army entered Baku, some musicians deciding to stay in Iran and others returning to Soviet Azerbaijan, where they continued playing till as late as in 1950s in *Inturist* – the hotel for foreigners in the center of Baku facing the Caspian Sea boulevard. In one of the pictures of the band, a native Azerbaijani frame drum *daf* is positioned before the orchestra.

The official birth of Azerbaijan's own jazz is typically associated with the organization of the State Jazz Orchestra in 1939, founded by Niyazi Hajibeyov and Tofic Guliyev (1917-2000), classically trained musicians from prominent musical families. A nephew of Uzeyir Hajibeyov – the founder of the contemporary composing school in Azerbaijan, the father of the modern theory of native modes, and an outstanding composer – Niyazi graduated from the Azerbaijani Conservatory; Tofic Guliyev studied in Moscow, there meeting and playing with jazz leader Alexander Tsfasman.[9] The State Jazz Orchestra of Azerbaijan, consisting of three trumpets, three trombones, five saxophones, a piano, a guitar, and drums,[10] premiered several numbers from the traditional jazz repertoire, the rest of the program containing film music by native composers, including the group's founders. The saxophone player Parvis (Pirka)

[8] Inna Naroditskaya, 213

[9]

[10] Rauf Farkhadov, *Vagif Mustafa-zadeh* (Baku: Ishig: 1986), 9.

Rustambeyov improvised in the style of native modal music (the *mugham* Chahargah) – the two improvisatory traditions, American jazz and Azerbaijani *mugham,* seeming to converge easily (Figure 3). The story of Rustambekov, however, was tragic. A teenage virtuoso, Pirka accepted an invitation to join first Guliyev's group, and later Roser's orchestra in Moscow. Establishing his own bands back in Baku, in the year of Soviet *Postanovlenie* (1948), twenty-seven-year old Rustambeyov, who "spoke English and kept his Western musical magazines and jazz LPs at home,"[11] was denounced, arrested, and perished in jail. Socialist purges were no less dreadful in Azerbaijan under Bagirov, Stalin's reliable viceroy and the first secretary of Azerbaijani Communist Party.[12] The State Orchestra survived this period, the word jazz removed from the group's name (replaced at different times by "Estrada" or "variety"), and the leaders managed to navigate socialist realities by deemphasizing the jazz aspect of the orchestra and by focusing on native semi-classical fusion of "folk," popular, and classical.[13]

Along with state-sponsored jazz that continued its existence by compromising and negotiating between the permissible and the questionable, despite continuous violent persecution, some musicians, especially the generation born around the Second World War, fell under the spell of American jazz, among them Vagif Mustafa-zadeh. He was born in 1940 – the year between the foundation of Azerbaijan's State Jazz Orchestra and the first jazz festival in Baku in 1941, also the year preceding the war and following the Great Terror. The cold war eliminated any possibility of direct access to jazz, if anything

[11] http://www.azerijazz.com/press/index.html#top
[12] Mir Jafar Bagirov was the first secretary of Azerbaijani Communist Party for nearly twenty years (1934-1954)
[13]Later the leadership of the orchestra had passed to Rauf Hadjiyev, who like others studied in the Moscow and Baku conservatories. See Rain Sultanov, *Anthology*.

stirring the enthusiasm of young people, who confronted the restrictions with enormous wit and inventiveness. Tofig Guliyev would recall some forty years later:

> Those years musicians in Baku keenly followed all the major musical events in the world through our only window – officially banned foreign radios like the 'Voice of America.' Charlie Parker was one of our favorites.

Vagif Samadogly, a friend of Mustafa-zadeh and a son of Samad Vurgun, an outstanding Azerbaijani poet, likewise shares "many fond memories of times spent together there [in Mustafa-zadeh's one-room collective apartment], including the endless hours we used to listen secretly to the short wave radio programs of the BBC just to catch some of the jazz they broadcast. Neither of us knew English." Samadogly refers to jazz tracks in a few American movies that were shown in theaters and to Soviet films, in which the entrance of an American spy was often accompanied with jazz:

> Vagif and I used to watch these films at the cinema over and over again, sometimes 20-30 times. We would wait for the sections that had jazz, then rush back home to try to reproduce them while they were still fresh in our minds. I remember that 'Sad Baby,' a song in the film *The Fate of an American, Soldier* always used to make us cry.

Throughout the post-war decades and into the early eighties – the official repression of jazz reaching its peak in the last years of Stalin's regime and seemingly subsiding after his death – the official rebuking of jazz as well as stories of chastised musicians remained a well-known oral narrative, though there are few records of sanctions against jazz specifically in Azerbaijan. The incongruence between popular domain and documents raises the question of the extent to which the jazz scene in post-

Stalin Azerbaijan was defined by local politics, oral orders, or self-censorship. Despite actions against individual jazzmen, groups, and their supporters, a number of bands and ensembles played in restaurants, workers' clubs, houses of culture, theaters, concert halls, radio and television, and official events. Some jazz orchestras did not play jazz at all or simply included a couple of jazz classics in their repertoire, while others that did play jazz shied away from being called jazz groups; some ensembles could enjoy relative freedom and invisibility; the praise and recognition of others were frequently followed up with speedy oral reprimands. Azerbaijan, distant from Moscow, typically overlooked the existence and even the flourishing of unofficial jazz culture. Yet fear planted by the official agenda, during and long after Stalin's era, invested local officials with enormous authority to interpret and execute (or not) whatever official course that would aggrandize personal power or assure access to the networks essential to the culture of Azerbaijan.

Vagif Mustafa-zadeh's life

Vagif's mother was a piano teacher, a relatively new professional venture for an Azerbaijani woman, considering the historical gender dynamics – women were veiled until the end of the second decade of the twentieth century, and the first female singer appearing on the Baku operatic stage (1912) had to escape from the city and crowds of maddened male-fanatics. Studying at the conservatory, which was established in 1920 – Western musical institutions were a novelty – Vagif's mother also taught piano in a specialized music school. Vagif discovered piano by the age of three, beginning to playing by ear and later learning to read music. A first-grader of seven, he attended the music school where his mother taught and where he, like others, followed the prescribed

curriculum with weekly oral skills and theory classes, music history, later instrumental ensemble and accompaniment. The eight-year-long piano program in specialized music schools encompassed daily exercises, scales, and increasingly challenging etudes, as well as pieces by Bach, Beethoven, Russian classical composers, and Chopin. Vagif's performance of Mendelssohn's piano concerto was noted in *Youth of Azerbaijan*, the paper that twenty-five years later published my article on jazz.[14] Successfully passing his entrance exams, Vagif became a student of the Azerbaijan Music College in 1957 and in 1964 entered the State Conservatory – the highest institution of musical performance in the republic.[15]

Improvising from an early age, at nine (1949, one year after Rustambekov died in jail and Soviet musicians suffered another wave of attacks), Vagif for the first time played what was considered a jazz classic – Gershwin's "The Man I Love," a favorite composition that he would repeat many times, playing it thirty years later in the last days of his life. In 1956, he prepared what was intended to be his jazz début, organized at his *alma mater*, the music school where he studied and his mother taught. At the very last moment, however, because of the fear and suspicion associated with "jazz," the administration cancelled the event, initiating a pattern of obstacles that unfolded throughout Vagif's life. In the following years he entered music college and while studying classical piano repertoire with famous teachers, he played in the Orchestra of Folk Instruments and also received the post of piano soloist at the Radio and Television Orchestra. In 1965, leaving his job and family, he moved to Tbilisi, the Georgian capital, accepting the post of leader of a jazz orchestra (Figure 4).

[14] Rauf Arkhadov, *Molodyezh Azerbaijana* (1 June 1956), 15.
[15] The references to his admittance to the Conservatory diverge.

In Tbilisi, Vagif began simultaneously working with a big band, a small instrumental trio, and a female vocal ensemble, also performing as a jazz piano soloist, all musical forms and experimentation enriching his musical palette. According to Rauf Farkhadov, Vagif also drew on multiple musical vocabularies which at the time included "Georgian folk songs, Soviet Estrada, Russian romances, American pop. . ."[16] He began appearing and was instantly noticed on the all-Soviet and international jazz scene, including festivals in Tallinn (1966 and 1967), Baku (1969), Donezk (1979). A major expert on jazz in the late Soviet decades, Alexei Batashev writes that "located far away from jazz centers, Vagif suddenly surfaced, shining in some major festivals, receiving the highest prize at an international competition. [You] just begin interacting with him, that he would disappear in a fog, beyond the horizons, suddenly re-emerging with newly issued recordings."[17] Indeed, the issue of center and periphery, in terms of jazz, was complex, the jazz picture in Moscow and Leningrad in the sixties and even the seventies remaining grim. On the other hand, metropolitan sites in the geographical, cultural, and ethnic periphery developed underground pipelines that made recordings and cassettes available to local musicians and to some degree sheltered jazz and jazzmen. Baku was among a few cities "far from the centers" that developed its own jazz laboratory and supplied musicians to major Soviet *estrada* and jazz orchestras. Yet after growing up in the relatively relaxed atmosphere of Baku, the best jazz musicians, seeking a larger scene, more interaction, and opportunities in the Soviet capitals, chose to escape from the somewhat transparent network of Azerbaijani center. Among the jazzmen of Vagif's generations, Vagif Sadykhov (jazz piano) left for Moscow, playing with Lundstrem's

[16] Farkhadov, 24.
[17] Alexdei Batashev and Igor' Kosolobenkov, "Voistochnyi djazz Vagifa Mustafa-zadeh," *Soviet Jazz*, 290-295, 290.

orchestra;[18] Gabil Zeinalov (piano) became the star of the club *Gavana* (Havana), well known in Moscow jazz circles; Vladimir Sermakashev (saxophone), performed with the best Soviet jazz bands and musicians in Moscow and later in New York, where he became Vlad West, his immigrant's story serving as a model for Hollywood' *Moscow on the Hudson*.[19]

"The monumental event" – "nothing like it had ever occurred in the USSR" – the international jazz festival in Tallinn in 1967 – gathered twenty-eight Soviet bands, hosting jazzmen from abroad, including the Charles Lloyd quartet with Keith Jarrett (an idol of Azerbaijani musicians).[20] Among the most surprising performing ensembles were two Azerbaijani groups, Mustafa-zadeh's trio and the quartet of Rafik Babayev, both praised by fans and critics, including the *Voice of America's* William Conover (photograph of Conover and Mustafa-zadeh).

Listening to Mustafa-zadeh in Tbilisi, Rauf Hajiyev, one of the most highly regarded Azerbaijan musicians, convinced Vagif to return to Baku, where he soon arrived with new ideas and musical projects, along with his new wife — singer Elza – and soon his second daughter Aziza. In the years to come he toured extensively throughout the country, composing for his female vocal ensemble (first *Leili*, later *Sevil*), rehearsing and playing with his instrumental group (Alik Dadashyan-drum, David Koifman-bass), and giving solo piano performances. He played with the best Soviet jazz musicians. As a soloist he was awarded a high prize at the Donezk' festival (1977), and his various groups, including the instrumental ensemble Mugham, performed in festivals in Tbilisi

[18] Rain Sultanov, Anthology (Vagif Sadykhov)
[19] Terence Ripmaster, "Emigré's Memories: Leo Feigin on Soviet jazz, freedom and Willis Conover,: 1999. www.**jazz**house.org/nlib/index.php3?read=ripmaster1.
[20] See Greg Gaut, "Soviet Jazz: Transforming American Music," *Jazz in Mind*. Ed. Reginald T. Buckner and Steven Weiland (Detroit: Waine State University Press, 1991), 60-82, 64.

(1978), Moscow (1979). His composition *Waiting for Aziza* brought Vagif victory in the anonymously judged International Jazz Soloist and Composer Competition in Monaco (1979). In Tiblisi, next to Vagif on the stage sang eight-year old Aziza, the two sharing the prize (Figure 5).

Vagif lived music. A jazz pianist, in many ways he embodied the romantic image of the artist inflamed by his art, like Chopin and Scriabin – ideals emanating perhaps from his musical childhood – and not unlike Majnun, the lover and mystic from the Azerbaijani and Eastern narrative.[21] Though he led groups and played with many musicians, Vagif personified romantic individualism – restless and self-destructive — weighed down by an unbearable schedule, drugs, his desire to challenge all limits.

Such non-conformism in his behavior, his appearance, and his jazz repertoire a few years earlier would have led to serious repercussions. Photographs depicted Mustafa-zadeh with Americans William Conover and John Coltrain; he jammed with an orchestra from Texas, met with BB King, and performed with these musicians and many others.[22] Openly, boldly, and well he played American music. His appearance – long hair, leather jacket, and tight jeans, an image coined then and remembered now with the term "beatnik" – defied the rules and codes of the official musical organizations – everyone in dark suits, white shirts, and short hair. His talent and personality could not keep him in safe invisibility, but instead made him conspicuous, out of place, yearning for attention, and vulnerable – admired and envied, worshiped and chastised.

Among his fellow Soviet jazz musicians, he was the first featured on an LP disc as a solo jazz pianist (1976), the first awarded the title of Republic Distinguished Artist

[21] Majnun is a character from the legend of Leili and Majnun, widely known throughout the East.
[22] According to Farkhadov, Vagif met BB King and Gunter Schuller in Tbilisi (1978), 48-49.

(1979).[23] In the last years of his life he was given a large new apartment in the center of Baku, in one of the liveliest streets of the city, lighted at night, with nearly all Bakuvians strolling before his windows on the second floor. Beyond these loud recognitions, however, Vagif faced a daily struggle with the confusing, both promising and dismissive official view of jazz as well as local policies and hierarchies. Besides, the seventies prepared a new challenge to jazz musicians — the advent of American and European rock and the fascination of Soviet and Azerbaijani youth with the *Beatles*, Jimmi Hendricks, and *Blood, Sweat and Tears*. As jazz began to attain official status under socialism, the politics of denunciation were redirected to rock, stripping jazz of its status as rebel; the underground passageways from the West, after years of transporting jazz recordings, became flooded with rock cassettes. One of the young jazz fans attending Vagif's concert in the hot summer of 1978 remembers that the philharmonic hall, decorated with plastered muses, angels, and drapery, was nearly empty, with Vagif storming the piano, outplaying his own ensemble, afterwards appearing drugged, with numbed fingers, hardly walking and unable to talk. By contrast, Arkadii Dadash'yan, who played with Mustafa-zadeh for twelve years, tells about overflowing halls with crowds gathering at the entrance and outside and high officials arriving with a horse military escort.[24] Vagif died during a concert in Tashkent in 1979.

His loss at the age of thirty-nine (paralleling the death of another Soviet rebel, poet, actor, and bard Vladimir Vysotkii (1938-1980)), completed the tragic image of the romantic artist, the devotee of his muse, searching, suffering, and unreserved – a musician who after his death accumulated significant official recognition became

[23] See Batashev, 292, 294; Farkhadov, 72.
[24] Interview with Arkadii Dadash'yan, who now lives in Boston, February 23, 2006.

venerated as the sole creator of the musical phenomenon of *mugham* jazz, and praised in numberless festivals and gatherings.

Jazz Fusion or Confusion?

In a 1957 photograph three men in Azerbaijani costumes dance before an orchestra comprised of instruments and musicians that exemplified the native jazz scene (Mikhail Makarov—accordion, drums, brass, and bass). Another photograph dated 1973 depicts a jazz quartet (Rachik Grigorian playing drums, Yuri Tushinsky bass, Vova Kocharov piano, Rafik Abramian sax), a vocalist (Ziia Hasanoglu), and a performer on the *tar* – an Azerbaijani instrument, a lute with the long neck and body shaped like the number eight (played by Gulam ?). The first photograph probably portrays one of the officially sanctioned performances in a Philarmony (major symphony hall), concert hall, or house of culture. The second is taken in the restaurant *Baku* in the middle of Moscow. Both groups appear to play for mixed audiences with complex performing goals, revealing an apparent integration of jazz and folk musical elements.

The incorporation of local and non-traditional jazz instruments is not unusual in the adaptation and appropriation of jazz in different musical cultures. Hence the combination of folk dancers, native instrumentalists, and singers with jazz musicians raises the question, what essentially was Azerbaijani jazz? How did both local musical culture and socialist denunciation shape the Azerbaijani jazz scene? Likewise, how did jazz interact with other native musical traditions and fit within the overall culture from its early days and during lifetime of Vagif Mustafa-zadeh?

The jazz scene, primarily associated with the Azerbaijani capital, Baku, for most of the last hundred years a vibrant multinational multilingual metropolitan area, fell into three categories: 1) the imitation of American jazz and the style of specific musicians, 2) jazz musicians playing in officially non-jazz orchestras and groups, such as Estrada, pop, folk, and 3) the fusion of native art music and jazz. Indeed, depending upon the period, the individual musicians, and the performing venues, the three categories overlapped. Nearly all Azerbaijani jazzmen learned traditional jazz by listening to, transcribing, memorizing and playing from copied and recopied cassettes, by gathering around the radio and absorbing every jazz number, name, and reference emanating from the tantalizing and unreachable *Voice of America*.

In the sixties, some Baku performers aimed to match American jazz musicians by learning repertoire, developing technique, and knowledge of different stylesAmong those was Vladimir Sermakashev (mentioned earlier), an extraordinary tenor saxophonist, who according to musicians working with him, could play all instruments and had a profound grasp of traditional jazz. Some forty years later, Lev Kuropatkin, himself saxophonist, refers to Sermakashev as the "first and best playing in an American style" and "one who could compete with the world's best jazzmen. He was a master of vibrato and his driving powerful rhythm could sway jazz lovers from their feet at any time" – Starr's reflections mirror this image: "Audiences were swept off their feet by the way Sermakashev concentrated on the rhythm. . . . At times Sermakashev's tone was hard and abrasive, other times full-throated and warm, recalling Lester Young. . . . In his combination of

grittiness and lyricism, blues feeling and sheer drive, he has few equals, in Europe and even in America."[25]

At the center of the Baku jazz circle in the late fifties and early sixties, in 1983 Sermakashev left Baku for Moscow. Though in *Molodezhnoe*, one the first jazz cafés opened during Khrushchev's thaw, he continued playing with Bakuvian jazz musicians,[26] their performances were attuned to the taste of Moscow jazz fans, at the time fascinated with bebop and bossa nova – indeed not Azerbaijani music. Sermakashev himself tells that in his touring throughout the country and playing at the *Molodezhnoe*, he always carefully listened to his audience – "Serious jazz can be seen as an elite culture; I, on the other hand, always wished to play jazz that was appealing and entertaining to everyone who came." Forty-three years after his departure from Baku, and thirty-three from Moscow to the land of jazz, Sermakashev is still faithful to American jazz: "This music, the rhythms, melodic vocabulary, harmony belong to American cultural soil. Other musics even mixed with jazz elements are something else, not jazz."

Like Sermakashev, other jazz musicians from Azerbaijan including pianists Vasif Sadykhov and Ganil Zeinalov, both residing in Moscow and playing with prominent world musicians, reveal little connection with the distinct Azerbaijani sound. For decades the Azerbaijani capital maintained its role as supplier of superior jazzmen who populated the best jazz orchestras in the country. Though some of the musicians playing

[25] Starr, 281-282.
[26] In Moscow, Sermakashev played with Rafik Babayev (piano), Levon Alanakyan (saxophone), Alik Hojabagirov. His quartet in Molodezhnoe consisted of Valia Bagiryan (drums), Vladmir Kocharov (piano), and Yurii Tushinsky (bass) and Sermakashev himself. According to him, ever since the group became permanent in Molodezhnoe, they were invited to foreign embassies, and official Soviet functions. Touring foreign jazz musicians were always welcome at *Molodezhnoe*, the jam sessions with European and American jazzmen asserting the status of the group.

in Baku considered themselves devotees of American jazz, most had no option but to play in variety orchestras.

Mediating, Combining, Negotiating

Among the most versatile performers and composers traversing the boundaries of classical and popular, native and American music(s) was pianist and composer Rafik Babayev. He belonged to the same generation as Mustafa-zadeh; both completed piano education at specialized music schools, graduated from music college, and studied at the conservatory. Mustafa-zadeh began his jazz career in Tbilisi, while Babayev along with a group of Baku musicians joined the orchestra of John Devalian in Moscow. Both made highly notable appearance in Tallinn 1967. One of the three compositions played by Babayev's quartet was Bayaty Kurd, based on an Azerbaijani *mugham*. By the end of the sixties Babayev and Mustafa-zadeh were back in Baku, Babayev accepting the position of musical director of the Song Theater of Behbutov, and Mustafa-zadeh working in the philharmonic orchestra. Mustafa-zadeh created his female vocal ensemble, and Babayev founded the male vocal quartet *Gaya*, which for years was a trademark of Azerbaijani musical culture.[27] Babayev modeled his compositions and arrangements for Gaya on *The Four Freshmen*, one of the most popular American jazz vocal quartets and simultaneously on native music, the two converging.

During his years of professionally stable and financially successful collaboration with Behbutov, jazz, though central to Babayev's life, was moved on the backburner in many his compositions for Song Theater. In the eighties, funneling new energy into the Baku jazz scene, Babayev became a musical director of the Orchestra of Radio and

[27] The quartet consisted of Rauf Babayev, Teimur Mirzoyev, Lev Elisavetksy, Javan Zeinally.

Television. Within the orchestra he gathered his fellow jazz musicians, creating a traditional jazz ensemble[28] with the addition of ancient Eastern ud[29] and on occasion native instruments (Figure 6).

The juxtaposition of instruments and idioms of jazz and local music has a long history in Azerbaijan and the Soviet Union. The first Soviet musical film, *Veselye Rebiata* [*Happy Guys*, 1934] – with the original title *Jazz Comedy* – demonstrated the comfort level of Russian jazz musicians playing Dixieland and circus music, shifting from light classics to folk tunes, all fused with jazz elements. Likewise in Baku from the time of the jazz orchestra established by Niazi and Kuyliev and Pirka Rustambekov, jazz musicians played in various genres and styles, mixing, juxtaposing, and experimenting. In the 1950s, a typical concert program of the Azerbaijan State Estrada (Jazz) Orchestra, as recreated by a son of Mikhail Makarov, a jazz accordionist, would range from an arrangement of Azerbaijani folk music to Soviet mass song and French chansons, with the addition of a few jazz solo pieces – Makarov himself played a couple of solos on accordion and often when the orchestra accompanied the singers, he also played piano.

The orchestra of Rashid Behbudov combined the full jazz group with performers of native instruments *tar* and *nahara* (See Figure 1).[30] With a concert program comprising songs of the world's peoples – Georgian, Arabic, Jewish, Italian – Behbudov's ensemble also routinely included in their concert programs "two or three jazz

[28] Babayev's ensemble organized in 1984 consisted of Gennady Stepanishev (flute and saxophone), Rauf Sultanov (bass guitar), Alexei Abbasov (guitar), Siavush Kerimi (our, keyboard), Jamil Amirov (keyboard), Tofig Jabbarov (drums), Firuz Ismailov (synthesizer), Emil Hasanov (bass guitar), Vagif Alyev (drums), and emil K. Hasanov (bass guitar). See Rain Sultanov, *Anthology*.

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[30] Behbudov's group included Rafik Babayev (piano), Arkadii Dadash'yan (drums), Yurii Sardarov (guitar) Alik Hojabagirov (???). From a conversation with Alexander Makarov, February 19, 2006.

compositions."[31] Arkadii Dadash'yan, working with Behbutov's group and later with Mustafa-zadeh relates that the instrumental arrangements of songs performed by Behbudov himself incorporated jazz harmonies and rhythms which made the folk and composed song more interesting and appealing to young audiences. "Though the concert program of our tours, presented and approved by the Azerbaijan State Concert organization (AzConcert), consisted of pop and folk repertoire, in the course of the concerts, depending on the atmosphere in the auditorium we included jazz compositions. In addition, jazz fans in every city attending our concerts always knew to invite our group to play in after-concert-hours in local jazz clubs."[32]

David Koifman, who from the early sixties played bass with nearly all Baku jazzmen and for twelve years like Dadash'yan was a sideman in Mustafa-zadeh quartet, comments about the balance of jazz and non-jazz compositions in different groups and at different periods. Currently still a member of Radio and Television Orchestra he recalls, for example, how forty years ago, at the time of thawing, the komsomol (youth party) activists rented the spacious and festive Palace of Marriage on weekdays, to open there the café *Saadat*, where Koifman with his fellow jazzmen played traditional jazz, blues, and music for dances. In addition, jazz ensembles played in Azerbaijani State Industrial Institute. Those performances and groups felt under the category of "'student recreational evenings' organized by Komsomol committees in colleges and universities as part of their cultural work with the young. Because of the 'amateur' status of student bands they were not registered in state philarmonic societies . . . their repertoire was less

[31] Interview with Makarov, February 20, 2006
[32] Interview with Arkadii Dadash'yan, February 20, 2006

subjected to state control."[33] Jazz tantalized the young Azerbaijanis – the word itself both alluring and scandalous.[34] Although the social barometer of jazz swayed from ambivalent (at its best) to forbidden, somewhat inexplicable remains the fact that nearly all ensembles of popular music – the State Estrada Orchestra, the ensembles and orchestras of Radio and Television, Philharmonic groups, and theaters such as Song Theater of Behbutov – consisted of a large number of jazz musicians, who knew the repertoire, could improvise, and were in certain way expected to use and simultaneously underplay their use of jazz.

Musical syncretism not limited to jazz has been emblematic of the last hundred years in Azerbaijani musical culture. The reformation and systematization of the native art music of *mugham* and the birth of Azerbaijani composed music, which took place a hundred years ago, emerged as inherently related processes – ensembles of folk instruments as well as *tar*, *kamancha*, and *canun* soloists from the early twentieth century began performing arrangements of Western classical music, while the first national opera was designed for the combined forces of orchestra and native instruments, operatic chorus, and *mugham* soloists. The integration of folk tunes and local elements in European repertoire had been known for centuries, significantly expanding in the connection with nationalism. In Azerbaijan the interlacing of the two – Western and native music – presented challenges at various levels. For example, Azerbaijani acquaintance with European classical music did not precede the creation of a national musical school, unlike what happened elsewhere at the same time. The challenges of

[33] Alexei Yurchak, Everything Was Forevoer, Until it Was No More (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006), 167.
[34] The flier announcing the performance of Green Jazz (posted by contrabassist Ilias Guseinov), even though the ensemble posted fliers announcing the performance of Green Jazz – the words bringing a huge crowd – despite the fact that at the time we did not really know

combining Western and native musical idioms also derived from the fact that Azerbaijani classical music, namely *mugham* is not only oral, but an improvised, monophonic tradition with a complex modal and formal structure.

As in the domain of Azerbaijani jazz, national composed music experimented with the convergence of native and Western music in several ways by, for example, transplanting a typical *mugham* composition into the frame of European genres,[35] by including native instruments within orchestral pieces with solo episodes reminiscent of improvisation, by inserting into the body of symphonies and instrumental pieces melodic segments identified with and referring to specific *mugham*s. On the other hand, *mugham* performers, both instrumentalists (*tar* and *kamancha* players) and singers, without betraying the realm of the oral tradition, nevertheless studied in Baku musical institutions the arrangements of Western repertoire. While hybrid musical forms and language surfaced from the very beginning, elsewhere I have argued that fusion in the realm of national composed music as a gradual process reached its height in the works of composers such as Amirov in the sixties – the time that Vagif Mustafa-zadeh arrived at a profound amalgamation of jazz and *mugham*. "[He] Immediately realized this was something that did not happen before. In one pulse-rhythm the jazz and *mugham* fused into one." Often recognized as the founder of *mugham* jazz, Mustafa-zadeh himself identified the moment: "Jazz [festival] 1969 in Baku. [I] played *76*.[36] Unexpectedly for myself [I] shifted to *mugham* Bayati Shiraz. Reached the last chord. Then it hit me – this is it. Mine. The very thing."[37]

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[35]

[36] Koifman, the bass player refers to this composition as a chain of seventy-six chords with no repetition on which ground Vagif improvised.

[37] Farkhadov, 30.

Fusion: Jazz Mugham

Azerbaijani jazz musicians of different generations believe that improvisation as a common ground for jazz and *mugham*, is responsible the affinity of the local population for jazz and the musicians's inclination to combine the two. Perhaps, early attempts at integrating the two were preceded by years of Azerbaijani experimentation with Western and native classical music. As stated above, some Azerbaijani composers (Kuliyev, Niazi) extended this pioneering mission to jazz; Soviet Azerbaijanis cultivated an image of the musician as an artist capable of embracing multiple musical styles and traditions – a concept embodied by Mustafa-zadeh.

Along with unbounded talent, Mustafa-zadeh possessed fluency in at least three musical languages. Trained as a classical pianist, he attained flawless technique, which allowed him to spill out the most intricate filigreed passages, to wrest from the piano a violent percussive sound, and to express the lyricism of Chopin. Vagif is quoted as saying:

> You can't become a professional jazz performer without knowing symphonic music well/ It's impossible/ You can't come to jazz without being able to play Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov, Mozart, and Chopin.[38]

[38] Betty Plair, Program Notes. *Vagif Mustafa zade*. Azerbaijan International. 2004, 1-41,23. Continuing his steps, his daughter records compositions such as *Bach-Zade*, *Portrait of Chopin*. Currently a leading jazz musician Jamil Amirov, a son of one of the most cherished Azerbaijani composers, and a grandson of beloved tar player of the early twentieth century, underwent rigorous ten-year training in specialized school and four-year study in composition department at the Azerbaijani Conservatory, composing several symphonic compositions issued on LP. Like his father, whose recommendation he followed, Jamil believes that jazz requires classical instrumental training and academic experience in composition.[38] Grant A/ recalls that when Rafik Bbayev first listened to him, he advise young pianist to attend piano studio in musical college.

The notion that only by attaining superb Western musical training can one access and succeed in jazz was not idiosyncratic to Mustafa-zadeh, but prevailed throughout the history of Azerbaijani jazz.

While trained in classical piano, Mustafa-zadeh's soundscape was filled with *mugham*. His mother, a pianist, taught her private students at home to play *mugham* compositions on the piano. Mustafa-zadeh absorbed melodic vocabulary, the logistics of musical development, and the structures of *mugham* at home, in his Baku surroundings, among his friends, and in his first professional appointment as a pianist in the Orchestra of Folk Instruments.

His affinity with jazz, equated with daring, risqué, non-conformity more than any other musical area matched his strong soloist individuality, curious and explosive, yearning for and demanding recognition, and endlessly experimenting. His phenomenal memory, commented upon from his early childhood, permitted him faster and more easily than anyone else to adapt and play jazz and jazz-like compositions he with his friends heard in movies, the *Voice of America*, the *BBC*, or occasional recordings passed among fellow musicians in Baku.[39] Musicians of his generations, most remarkably Babayev, continued interlacing native music and jazz. Mustafa-zadeh's fluency in three different musical languages guided him to fusion, a concept adopted, also in America, by Bill Evans, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, and Duke Ellington, who converged bebop, swing, free jazz, and rock.[40]

[39] Read on shortwave radio Yurchak, 175-181.
[40] The titles of Mustafa-zadeh's compositions like ones of his American models contain the references to specific places ("Caucasian Scenes," "Meeting in Tbilisi," "Borjomi Park," "In Moscow," "Hot Sun in Baku," "Riga in June"), fleeting impressions (Witnessed, At Sunrise, Morning, Suddenly), native imagery and folk songs (Aman Ovchu, Ai Peri), his daughter (Waiting for Aziza, and Aziza)and musical forms including Azerbaijani *mugham* (Piano Concerto #2, Improvisation, Composition #1, Composition #2, several pieces entitled Mugham and several Bayati Shiraz).

The musical fabric and structural elements characteristic of Mustafa-zadeh's style fit simultaneously both *mugham* and jazz. When I play his recordings – in my lecture in Ann Arbor, in the classroom at Northwestern University, or in private meetings with jazz and non-jazz musicians – the first reaction of listeners is that his music is an excellent execution of American jazz. In fact, Mustafa-zadeh's musical ideas are not different from American jazzmen. "Artists like Miles Davis," writes Berliner, "often praised as "sound innovators . . . redefine the possibilities of their instrument and even put to rest the notion that an instrument itself has a limited capacity.[41] Mustafa-zadeh overcame the "limitations" of piano by playing impossibly fast runs, scales, and rapid tightly-ranging melodic elaborations that produce a microtonal effect. His technical realization reminds his listeners of Bill Evans,[42] who "practiced scales in 'as many different ways as he could' exploring their varied versions in every key."[43]

Like Mustafa-zadeh, Davis demonstrates the blending of jazz and classical music. Although from its very beginning, jazz has signified ethnic and cultural conflation, Davis's generation of American jazz musicians initiated a new wave of ethnic exploration, searching for new colors and expanding melodic, chord, and rhythmic facilities. In his *Sketches of Spain* Davis created "brooding, dramatic Spanish sounds . . . as if [he] had been born of Andalusian gypsies, but instead of picking up the guitar, had decided to make a trumpet the expression of his cante hondo ("deep song").[44] Following his American colleagues, Mustafa-zadeh bases a piece dedicated to his daughter "Aziza,"

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[41] Paul Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz* (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 261-262.
[42] Commentaries of Robert Gjerdingen, theory and cognition professor of Northwestern University, John Buccheri, the Northwestern professor – emeritus, theorist and amateur jazz pianist.
[43] Berliner, 164.
[44] Nat Hentoff, Co-Editor, The Jazz Review, *Sketches of Spain*, 1996 ?

a straightforward three-part structure, on the *bossa nova*. Writing about early free jazz, Berliner points out that "to diversify their colors, some incorporated into their arrangements traditional instruments from around the word – Indian and African percussion and melodic instruments."[45] Dizzy Gillespie began the bebop age with "A Night in Tunisia," (1942) drawing on -African Cuban elements; John Coltrane created Africa/Brass (1961); Duke Ellington came out with *The Far Eastern Suite* (recorded in 1966). And there was Yusef Lateef, who used "some other sounds" – *rebob*, *argol*, and Turkish cymbals. But while American jazz innovators looked towards the East, Mustafa-zadeh and his fellow Azerbaijani musicians were already "there": the combination of jazz and Eastern music (not exotic and distant but their own world), followed a deeply-grasped, decades-long musical path.

Seeking continuous innovation, Americans ventured into the world of modal jazz. Berliner suggests that "John Coltrane began working with modal pieces because he had become so fluent within the rapid movements of standard chord changes that they no longer 'gave him enough room to express all the ideas which came to him with each chord.'" In "So What," Davis and Evans minimize harmonic movement by alternating between tonalities suggestive of the D Dorian mode . . .."[46] The modal vocabulary of Mustafa-zadeh and the aural perception of his audience was not tied to the duality of a major-minor system. The Azerbaijani soundscape shimmers with the rich colors of many modes.

Mustafa-zadeh's composition entitled "Mugham" begins with a fairly direct reference to the opening of "So What"" – a short bass motif transferred to the low piano

[45] Berliner, 292.
[46] Ibid, 90.

register. Evans' two chords, responding to the bass and becoming emblematic of the piece, are identical to Mustafa zadeh's chords (Musical example). The Evans/Davis composition ~~is r~~evolves around these claps of fourth. In Mustafa-zadeh's the initial motif in the low register and the response of the two chords serve as the marker of a structure that becomes increasingly complicated because of the flowing and continuously expanding melodic elaboration, for which these two chords serve as a frame and as a source. Listening to this piece, John Buccery suggests with puzzlement – "there is no real melody, everything is drawn in ornaments." [47] The ornamentation is essential component of *mugham*. The Western concept of melodic elaboration as an auxiliary element of melody does not apply to Eastern classical traditions including *mugham*. Motifs as identity bearers of scalar and melodic content of different *mugham* are not end on themselves. Like in the Azerbaijani rags, not lines and pictorial elements, but winding ever-ending densly-knotted ornament defines the colorful space of a carpet, as does an intricately span melodic arabesque of *mugham*.

The flow of Mustafa-zadeh's melody is directed from the theme to its variation or often in reverse -- rapid running passages gradually crystallizing into a theme. Several *mugham*-like elements define the melodic patterns of Mustafa-zadeh in this and other compositions. One is scalar runs that introduce and later remind one of the overall modal row and the scale range explored in each section (see Musical example 2b). Along with these fleeting runs Mustafa-zadeh uses decorative multiple trills to encircle each tone in the scale segment used in given episode (Musical Example 2c). The elaboration of every scalar tone is also typical of many cadences, short and long, repeated, lavishly decorated – functioning as melodic expansion and also as a structural device. The fourth element is

[47] Conversation of March 10, 2006.

a recurring repetition of a single tone, which can often be a point of temporal gravitation, the center of a mode, or a scale of recycled tones, each repetition associated with an intricate rhythmical design (Musical example 2e, d). While not contradicting to the jazz processes, all four elements fall under the prime characteristics of *mugham*. In this solo composition for piano with bass, Mustafa-zadeh superimposed jazz harmonic movement and the voicing drawing on *mugham*.

In other pieces, he experiments with different elements and combinations. For example, several compositions entitled "Bayati Shiraz," in reference to Mustafa-zadeh's favorite *mugham*, are designed as a piano solo or as pieces for small and large jazz groups. The scale of Bayati Shiraz corresponds to G minor. However, it is not a pitch collection by itself, but rather the melodic content, including scales, motifs, modulations, and cadences that constitutes the property of a *mugham*. One of the Bayati Shiraz pieces is performed by a hybrid group, including jazz ensemble, organ, tenor vocalist, and female vocal quartet. "The pieces begins with a sixteen--bar blues in which the organ leads a clear melodic line," piano adding jazz harmonies and elaborating cadences, bass and drum creating a slow waltz feeling. The theme and its variation end with fast run through the scale of Bayati Shiraz on the piano, which frames the beginning and the end of the vocal solo accompanied by a jazz trio. Following the tenor recitation, Mustafa-zadeh plays a piano solo, which concludes the first group of three sections with a distinct ending and rest.

Organ/Piano	0:34 Singer	1:45 Organ

16 bar introduction		drone

2:49 Piano Solo	3:29 Organ Singer drone	4:44 Swing Heavy back beat/hi-hat	5:45 Singer drone

6:30 Piano Solo Medium Blues, blurred phrases Ends with chord chain!	7:40 Piano, Drum, Bass later Piano against Organ Bayati Shiraz in Organ, Chorus	8:50 Piano/Ensemble call and response blues riff	9:18 Piano Solo

The strong down beat in the drum starts a new section with the organ maintaining a low drone while weaving a slow-motioned melodic pattern -in the upper range. Here the melody encircles the Bayati Shiraz scale and emphasizes descending pentatonic motifs that gradually focus on the split into half steps b-c and e-f giving a blue note riff to his cadences."[48] Another strong hi-hat signals the bursting out piano solo. The following several minutes of the composition are marked by a switch from slower pensive organ

[48] Benjamin Stumpf, a saxophone player and a student at Northwestern University, winter 2006.

sections with vocal recitation to explosive piano solos. About six and a half minutes into the piece, the piano subsides, beginning the new dynamic rise with "medium blues," leading to the gradual consolidation of all performing forces including the female vocal quartet. From the rapid chord changes of the piano and the low drum beat, followed by octaves in the bass and piano, the melody of Bayati Shiraz emerges – leading to a virtuosic half-time finale with an slowing tempo organ melody concluding the piece. (Figure 7)

The composition raises several intriguing points. The use of organ, for example, mirrors American fascination with B-3 in the early sixties.[49] The inclusion of the organ poses not only the question of how Mustafa-zadeh and others accessed musical sources but also how they acquired the instrument itself – according to Rain Sultanov, Mustafa-zadeh's ensemble used a Hammond B-3. The sixties were also the period of Azerbaijan's "rediscovery" of the pipe organ, which was first introduced in Azerbaijan at the beginning of the twentieth century, when the oil boom brought to Baku a multinational crowd whose increasing opulence inspired them to erect theaters and churches with organs. With the advent of the Soviet revolution the churches were closed and organs were demolished. An organ revival began in the early 1960s -- "the concert organ "Oule" (37 registers) was installed at the Grand Hall of the Conservatory. . . . One of the first works written for the organ was Kazim Aliverdibeyov's fantasy "Mugam Bayaty-Shiraz"[50].

[49] This stream in American jazz is associated with names such as Jimmy 'Hammond' Smith and Milt Buckner, both switching from piano to electronic organ Hammond B-3 in the 1950s. Alyn Shipton, "Organ," *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (23 March 2006), <http://www.grovemusic.com.turing.library.northwestern.edu>

[50] Tahira Yakubova, "Pulling Out All The Stops," *Azerbaijan International*, Winter 1997 (5.4)

Furthermore, in the motherland of jazz, the electronic organ was frequently paired with Texas Tenor saxophone. Mustafa-zadeh in his Bayati Shiraz combined organ sonority and tenor vocals improvise in a *mugham* style. The structure of Bayati Shiraz can thus be viewed in the context of *mugham* performance – it is sectional; the first three episodes can be paralleled to the introductory parts of the *mugham* Bayati Shiraz; each section of the composition explores specific scalar ranges, whose sequence likewise reminiscent of the process of expansion (or staircase progression) characteristic of *mugham*; like a *mugham* composition it alternates rhythmically flexible (organ and vocal) parts with metrically defined energetic jazz sections (piano/jazz trio).

By fusing different elements, in this and other pieces, Mustafa-zadeh experimented with different styles of jazz, embracing urgent, heated, virtuosic aspects of bebop, traditional swing, free jazz, rock, and pop. Dan Farris, a jazz musician and a faculty member at Northwestern, listening to a recording of Mustafa-zadeh, remarked that at some point the composition reminds him of the pop music used in old James Bond films, bringing back the picture of the teenage Azerbaijani boys of the fifties who learned to imitate American songs from Soviet and rare American films. Like many others Farris reiterates on richness and uniqueness of Mustafa-zadeh's style. Predating globalization, Mustafa-zadeh's music was capable of reaching out even when incarcerated by the social system.

Ambiguity, Paradoxes

How did Mustafa-zadeh's musical choices – the amalgamation of Azerbaijani and American elements sit with the socialist system? Greg Gaut, a musicologist writing

about Soviet jazz of this era, names Mustafa-zadeh as one of three "Soviet mainstream players," and as a "world-class pianist . . who died in 1979 just as he was reaching international fame." But even after Mustafa-zadeh was posthumously awarded the highest title – People Artist of Azerbaijan –articles on jazz and Mustafa-zadeh were repeatedly declined in the Azerbaijani press. Did the association of jazz with the West make it, even in pre-perestroika, years, a questionable category?

For long years, Western critics of Socialist art and artists drew a line between those who followed the "official" political course and those who fell into the "unofficial" group – the latter receiving elevated status. Recent scholarship has challenged the concept of "binary socialism," acknowledging a wide spectrum of artistic decisions that were simultaneously accepting, compromising, and subversive to the socialist agendas.[51] Taking this position, Alexei Urchak, writing about "an internal paradox within Soviet ideology," especially towards the West, identifies the ambiguity and contradiction between Soviet denunciation of Western (and primarily American) *cosmopolitanism*, as emblematic of capitalism, and endorsement of *internationalism* as a manifestation of the harmonious cohabitation of different cultures. Pointing out that there was no "objective canon" to identify concrete foreign influences in music as cosmopolitan or international, Urchak uses the discourse on American jazz as an example:

> between the 1940s and 1970s jazz was continuously praised for its roots in the creative genius of the slaves and the working people and condemned as bourgeois pseudo-art that lost any connection to the realism of people's culture.[52]

[51] Yurchak, 4-10
[52] Ibid, 165.

Suggesting that "this is why jazz was criticized but also tolerated,"[53] Urchak furthermore he proposes that

> foreign cultural forms in jazz, radio broadcasts, fashion, film, language, rock music and so forth were simultaneously critiqued and promoted, attached and allowed to develop by the Soviet state. Because of this ambiguous dynamic, in the 1970 and 1980s, the Imaginary West had become an indivisible and constitutive element of late Soviet culture. . .[54]

The vastly spread socialist notion of "know your enemy" coexisted with socialist targeting of anyone suspected of "knowing too much" beyond the Soviet-constructed West – indeed a distance measured arbitrarily. Again and again Urchak emphasizes that while on one hand there was a strong and unbending authoritative social code, on the other there were ambiguous local criteria – though unambiguously and unquestionably defined for self-protection and self-promotion. So confusing and yet fearsome was this long-existing practice that it sometimes issued both castigations and favors (for example, an administrator's demand that Mustafa'zadeh shave his mustache at the same time Mustafa could hand pick the musicians he wished to engage and they were unquestioningly transferred by the administration to his ensemble[55]), official awards, and press self-censorship!

There was also another social aspect to the musical hybridization which, as I have described elsewhere, related the adaptation of socialist policies and paradoxes to local national culture. In ambiguous way Soviet policies established a contrast between

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[53] Ibid, 167.
[54] Ibid, 165.
[55] Interview with Dadash'yan and Koifman, March 2006.

internationalism and *cosmopolitism*, official ideology united as inherently related the concepts of *internationalism* and *nationalism*. The uniformity and gradual amalgamation of the Soviet peoples and at the same time the formation and development of nations and national cultures were seen as complementary processes whose accomplishment would lead to overall progress – literally the word *progress* was proclaimed as the main aim of socialist policies and actions throughout the Soviet era.

In Azerbaijani music, the interplay of national and international stimulated the development of a native composing tradition which drew simultaneously on native culture and on Russian/Soviet classical music (as well as European classics adapted in Soviet Azerbaijani musical institutions as progressive). In the domain of Azerbaijani musical culture, the ascending hierarchy from the oral classical art of *mugham* to the composed native tradition and Soviet/Russian music fits the dichotomy of national and Soviet international. Thus the national composed music fostered Azerbaijani identity within the Soviet political and cultural model.

Azerbaijani jazz implied a different possibility – linking native culture and the West. Throughout its history, the path of Azerbaijani jazz in many respects paralleled Soviet jazz, which in the years of severe oppression hid behind the permitted and encouraged Soviet estrada. At the same time, jazz in Azerbaijan undertook a road consistent with native composed music by combining instruments and musical elements of native repertoire and jazz. It is unclear when exactly it started, but in the 1960s and 1970s there was a widely spread notion among the Azerbaijani intelligentsia of an inherent similarity between the centuries-old Azerbaijani *mugham* and jazz, both rooted in improvisation.. This view simply discarded the facts that harmony, essential to

American jazz, was foreign to predominantly monophonic Azerbaijani music and that unlike jazz, governed by rhythm, Azerbaijani *mugham* improvisation is rhythmically flowing. Providing Azerbaijani jazzmen with a feeling of superiority over Soviet jazz, the idea of an underlying link between native and American jazz implied an Azerbaijani musical identity beyond the Soviet margins.

In Mustafa-zadeh's *mugham* jazz, the amalgamation of Azerbaijani and American idioms reaches ~~the~~ an apogee. Listened to outside ~~of~~ his land, his compositions can be placed~~s~~ in the context of experimental American jazz. His native listeners would recognize the language of *mugham*. The wide vocabulary of musical elements he selected and employed in his compositions often have a dual citizenship in mugham and jazz. By identifying Azerbaijani jazz with American, Mustafa-zadeh opened the possibility of situating and defining Azerbaijani identity outside ~~of~~ the Soviet context, thus embracing globalization, foreshadowing the de-Sovietisation and reinterpreting the socialist notion of the nation's~~'~~ progress.

Postlude

The jazz scene in Azerbaijan after Mustafa-zadeh underwent several critical challenges. The fall of the Soviet Union, coinciding with Azerbaijani-Armenian ethnic war, resulted in the massive immigration of non-Azerbaijani, among them a number of jazz musicians. The interviews conducted for this research involved in fact the Azerbaijani jazz community in and outside Azerbaijan, the two jazz circles only partly overlapping. For jazz musicians in the independent Azerbaijani state, the different forms of combination, integration, and fusion of jazz and *mugham* became programmatic. *Mugham* jazz, though signifying a native Azerbaijani identity, lost its political exigency,

becoming a cultural vignette. Though annual jazz festivals organized often under the name of Mustafa-zadeh, gather native as well as American and European jazzmen, communication with real West remains to a large extent "imaginary."

The post-Soviet record industry is incapable of reaching outside Azerbaijan. A recently issued six-record collection of Mustafa-zadeh compositions produced by Azerbaijan International in the United States has no major distribution; it is limited to a circle of the initiated, primarily people from or in Azerbaijan. Mustafa-zadeh's daughter and pupil Aziza, a well-known pianist and composer, along with her own music performs Vagi's solo compositions. Living in Germany, she has established a space *vne* or outside the Azerbaijani context – the musical passage from Vagif to Aziza is another story.