

From Samarkand to the Valley of the Sun: The History and Culture of the Bukharan Jews



May 1 | 4-7:30 p.m.

Beth El Congregation

1118 W. Glendale Avenue, Phoenix

jewishstudies.asu.edu/bukharan

(602) 944-3359

A fascinating aspect of Phoenix-area Jewry is its substantial population of Bukharan Jews, the largest in North America after that of New York City's Queens. Hailing from Central Asia (today's Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan), where they resided for over 1500 years, the Bukharan Jews form a distinctive, tight-knit community with rich linguistic, musical, and culinary traditions.

Despite their presence here in the Valley, there has thus far been little opportunity to learn about their history and culture, including the story of when and why so many of them have come here. This event aims to address this situation, promoting awareness and analysis of the Bukharan Jewish experience among both the Jewish community and general public.

Through academic lectures, the performance of traditional music and dance, and the opportunity to sample Bukharan food, this program will cast welcome light on a neglected aspect of the local Jewish scene.

Meet and learn about the Bukharan Jews!



event program

4 p.m.

Welcome

Daniel Stein Kokin, Ph.D. | Organizer

Nitzan Stein Kokin | Rabbi

on behalf of Beth El Congregation

Stanley Mirvis, Ph.D.

Harold and Jean Grossman Chair in Jewish Studies

on behalf of ASU Jewish Studies

4:10 p.m.

Lecture

Alanna Cooper, Ph.D. | Case Western Reserve University

Cultural anthropologist Alanna E. Cooper serves as the Abba Hillel Silver Chair in Jewish Studies at Case Western Reserve University, and studies the impact of dispersion and social upheaval on religious expression. Her book *Bukharan Jews and the Dynamics of Global Judaism* and many related articles are based on research conducted in Central Asia, and among immigrants from there in New York and Tel Aviv. Cooper is currently working on *Disposing of the Sacred: American Jewish Congregations*, to be published by Penn State University Press.

4:50 p.m.

Roundtable

Tzipporah Sukhodolsky and **Yochanan Suleimanov**

Members of the Phoenix Bukharan Community

5:30 p.m.

Intermission

5:40 p.m.

Lecture

Evan Rapport, Ph.D. | The New School

Associate Professor of Ethnomusicology at The New School, Evan Rapport is the author of *Greeted with Smiles: Bukharian Jewish Music and Musicians in New York*, about the musical life of Jewish immigrants from Central Asia, and *Damaged: Musicality and Race in Early American Punk*. Rapport has also published on settings of Persian poetry, arrangements of George Gershwin's concert works, and the idea of "ethnic music" in New York. He currently directs the Eugene Lang College Civic Liberal Arts civic engagement program.

6 p.m.

Performance

Ensemble Shashmaqam | New York City

David Davidov, Tar | **Iskhak Gulkarov**, Singer

Ochil Ibragimov, Singer | **Malika Kolontarova**, Dancer

Shumiel Kuyenov, Doyra

7:15 p.m.

Concluding Discussion

Organized by



Beth El Congregation



**Harold and Jean Grossman Chair
in Jewish Studies**
Arizona State University

ASU Jewish Studies

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