



# **Beyond the Roof of the World: Music, Prayer, and Healing in the Pamir Mountains**

*Benjamin D. Koen*

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While Western medicine has conventionally separated music, science, and religion into distinct entities, traditional cultures throughout the world have always viewed music as a bridge that connects the physical with the spiritual. Now, as people in even the most technologically advanced nations across the globe struggle with obtaining affordable and reliable healthcare coverage, more and more people are turning to these ancient cultural practices of ICAM healing (integrative, complementary, and alternative medicine).

With *Beyond the Roof of the World*, Dr. Benjamin D. Koen unearths the Western separation of healing from spiritual and musical practices as a culturally determined phenomenon, and proves the relevance of medical ethnomusicology in light of the globally spreading ICAM healing practices. Using the culture found within the towering Pamir Mountains of Badakhshan Tajikistan, in a place poetically known as the Roof of the World, as the paradigm of ICAM healing, Koen shows spirituality and musicality to be intimately intertwined with one's physical life, health and healing. For the first time, Koen bridges the widespread gap between ethnomusicology and music therapy. Koen's extensive research and emersion into the Badakhstan culture provides the reader with an "insider" perspective while maintaining an "observer's" view, as he infuses the text with relevant scholarship.

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