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## A Model of Culture Areas of West Asian Music : With Emphasis on the Structure of Afghan Folk Music

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## **A Model of Culture Areas of West Asian Music: With Emphasis on the Structure of Afghan Folk Music**

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During its long history the West Asian Region has formed its own peculiar style of music culture through interaction with the various surrounding cultures. On the one hand, the music of West Asia has characteristics different from that of Europe, Africa, and other parts of Asia, and on the other hand, the region's music can be divided into groups that reflect the cultural peculiarities which have emerged within West Asia based on physical geography, ethnic affiliation, language, religion, and the degree of interaction with other cultures.

As defined in this article, the West Asian Region includes Afghanistan, Iran, and Turkey. The article attempts to formulate a model of music culture circles, or domains of music cultural areas, which is then used in a case study to classify the music (and in particular the folk music) of Afghanistan.

In ethnically and socially complex West Asia, it is not unusual for an area regarded as one cultural unit or music culture area to show many internal variations. The province of Azerbaijan in northern Iran, for example, has a complex ethnic composition and although exhibiting some characteristics of Iranian music inherited from the Persian days, it also shows some basic influences of Turkish culture. The music culture area around the city of Herat in western Afghanistan has as its base the music of the Pashtun tribe, the major ethnic group in Afghanistan. But some musical characteristics of the Persian culture, with which the area had maintained a long relationship, can not be ignored. Although there are a number of tribes in the area such as the Pashtuns, Hazaras, Uzbeks, and Baluchis, the most dominant is the Tajik tribe, and although the folk music of the area reflects the features of every tribe in a complicated manner, it most obviously demonstrates the characteristics of Tajik music.

The acculturation of musical characteristics is the very essence of folk music. The theme of this article is the classification of folk music into various music culture areas based on the fundamental currents found in the process of acculturation. Its purpose is to advance the study of folk music by establishing a model of music culture areas in West Asia.

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

For the past decade the author has been making a study of the structure of music dynamics, as an aspect of East-West cultural intercourse. Music dynamics

is the transition of music through its contact with other cultures and through acculturation.

The change that occurs in a society, culture, or music is basically attributable to two sets of factors: One is that of an internal nature such as new inventions and discoveries which give rise to new technology and ways of thinking. The other is that of an external nature which is brought forth through the contact with and transmission of other cultural traits. The study of the latter is an attempt to discover certain regularities and establish a theory or a set of laws about the structural changes in music. By regarding music as a structure of various cultural factors, it is possible to approach the problem by way of structural-functional analysis. The process of change that occurs in one culture under the influence of another is called acculturation.

The purpose of the study of music dynamics, then, is to discover certain regularities through the analysis of factors that bring about changes in music, aspects of music that change, and processes and stages of the change. The pursuit of music dynamics presents a number of difficulties: Music sometimes disappears in the course of time, and the factors of acculturation are usually interwoven in a highly complex manner. It is necessary, therefore, to take all possible aspects of music into consideration in such a study. A long-term study of, for example, one single folk song in a given locality is important to this purpose since it is a characteristic of folk songs to change and sometimes to disappear. It is also necessary to observe whether the change is brought forth by individualistic factors or by collective and social factors arising from change in the social structure or consciousness.

An inquiry into which musical factors are prone to change and those which are not reveals the musical characteristics of a certain folk group and provides a step toward establishing a set of laws on the transition of music. It also opens a way to approach the history of a certain kind of music that had once lived in the heart of a people but which now faces extinction.

In the West Asian Region, although there has been a continuous and complex mixing of Arabian, Turkish, and Persian music, in addition to that of ancient Greece, there still remain traces of music from Sumerian days. This historical accumulation can be found in the musical scores engraved on Sumerian clay tablets, the musical theory of ancient Greece and those of the West Asian and Arabic Regions that flourished in the Middle Ages, as well as in paintings and drawings of musical performances, dancing, and instruments. In this part of the world, then, not only is an abundant continuous historical record on music maintained, but it also displays a past in which various nations came together and sometimes clashed. This is also the part of the world which gave birth to such religions as Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; has permitted the continued existence of the Greek Orthodox Church, Nestorianism, and Armenianism; and has transmitted to the present various kinds of ritual music. This area is, therefore, a treasury of valuable materials related to the study of musical dynamics. In particular, the Arabian, Turkish, and Iranian music cultures, which had developed to a high degree in the Middle Ages, have

intermingled and influenced one another and transmitted peculiar styles of artistic music, each of which has developed independently up to the present. And now, although maintaining deep relationships with this artistic music yet at the same time competing with it, folk music together with folklore has been transmitted in various districts and tribes. This indicates that a musical transition is possibly taking place.

In order to study the regional characteristics of folk music in West Asia, a field survey was conducted in 1973 and 1975. Based on the materials collected through the surveys, this paper attempts to model the culture areas of West Asian music.

### II. DIVISIONS OF FOLK MUSIC IN WEST ASIA

One of the characteristics of West Asian music is a dichotomy between the modern popular music which evolves around a core of urban artistic music, with its highly developed and detailed theory, and the traditional, rural folk music, with its own local and tribal characteristics, that has long been independently transmitted in the countryside. However, when a larger entity such as a region or a nation is considered, each folk music tends to have certain common characteristics. In West Asian societies such a structure or interrelationship of music is relatively clear (Figure 1).

In Turkey, for example, urban-oriented music is found in major cities such as Ankara, Izmir, and Istanbul. But in cities as such Adana, Bursa, and Konya, with a strongly local characters, folk music and its variations are predominant.

The situation in Iran is somewhat different. Although urban music predominates in such major cities as Tehran, Shiraz, and Esfahan, another major city, Tabriz, is dominated by music which bears little resemblance to urban music and instead is heavily oriented toward the folk music of the Azerbaijan Region. On the

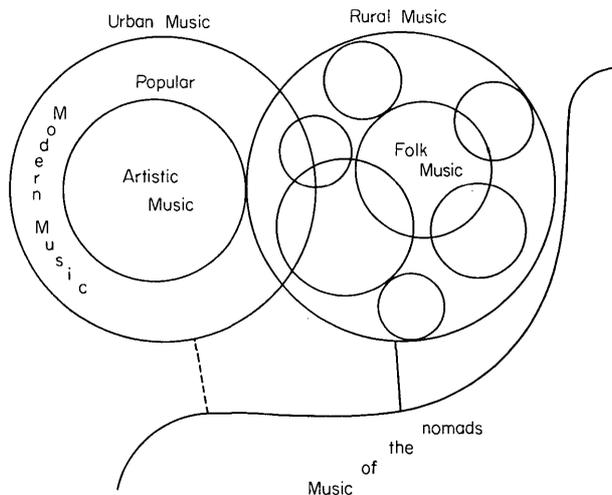


Figure 1. The Structure of West Asian Music (Type 1)

other hand, the music of Mashhad, a smaller city than Tabriz, and one that retains a strong religious flavor, preserves a type of music distinct from that of its rural hinterland.

In Afghanistan, the music of Kabul, the largest city in the country, cannot necessarily be regarded as urban although some Indian artistic music, European music, and popular modern music can be heard. This city is dominated by the music and culture of the Pashtun tribe, and folk music constitutes the core.

There is, then, a great variety within West Asian music. But there are certain generalities in the structure of the music, and the folk music clearly presents the local character of each region or tribe. With the development of mass media and the expansion of mass communication, however, city music is penetrating into rural communities, and under the influence of urban culture, music which should have local character is gradually becoming uniform throughout the country. The culture of minority tribes is being gradually absorbed into the dominant culture of the area.

There follows a list of culture areas or divisions in terms of folklore and folk music in West Asia. The structural transformation of music in these areas will be discussed elsewhere.

### **1. Culture Areas of Turkish Music**

- (1) Northwestern Thrace
- (2) Western Black Sea Coast
- (3) Eastern Black Sea Coast
- (4) Central Anatolia
- (5) Western Mediterranean Sea Coast
- (6) Eastern Mediterranean Sea Coast
- (7) Eastern Area (Lake Van District)
- (8) Southern Area (Near the Iranian Border)

(Note) In addition to these areas, are the urban music cultural areas of Ankara, Izmir, and Istanbul.

### **2. Culture Areas of Iranian Music**

- (1) Northeastern Area (Turkoman Region)
- (2) Caspian Sea Coast
- (3) Northwestern Area (Azerbaijan District)
- (4) Western Area (Kurdish Region)
- (5) Central Mountains Area (Nomadic Region)
- (6) Central Area (Yazd District)
- (7) Eastern Area
- (8) Southeastern Area (Baluchi Region)
- (9) Persian Gulf Coast

(Note) In addition to these areas, are the urban music cultural areas of Tehran, Shiraz, Esfahan, and Mashhad.

### 3. Culture Areas of Afghan Music

- (1) Northern Area (Uzbek Region)
- (2) Northeastern Area (Tajik Region)
- (3) Western Area (Herat District)
- (4) Central Area (Hazara Region)
- (5) Eastern and Southeastern Area (Pashtun Region)
- (6) Eastern Area (Nuristan Region)

To elaborate on the points in question, the following discussion focuses on the structure of Afghan folk music.

## III. AN OUTLINE OF AFGHAN FOLK MUSIC

### 1. Land and People

Afghanistan, often called the crossroads of civilizations, is the meeting point of East and West, and a country in which traces of cultural intercourse in past centuries abound. There, not only did the East, of the Chinese civilization, meet the West, or the ancient Persian and Hellenistic civilization, but also the North, the world of the nomads, met the South, or the Indian civilization. This is the place where civilizations from all points of the compass came together, sometimes clashing and sometimes fusing but leaving many layers of cultural deposits. Religion exemplifies this. Afghanistan nourished the civilization of fire Zoroastrianism, the first religion ever to be diffused over a wide area; in Bamian there is the record of the great eastward expansion of Buddhism; and present day Afghanistan is the eastern center of the orthodox Sunnite sect of Islam. The road running south from Balkh, the ancient Bactrian capital, located roughly at the mid-point of the Afghan portion of the Silk Road that runs from east to west in the northern part of the country, crosses the Hindu Kush Mountains, passes through the Gandhara Region, and finally reaches the world of the Indus River. Such historical figures as Fa-hsien (法顯), Hsüan-chuang Santsan (玄奘三藏), and Marco Polo passed through this region, and the great conquerors, Alexander the Great and Genghis Khan, trampled over this land. The vital strategic locality attracted both Western and Eastern conquerors. In the fourth century before Christ, Alexander the Great conquered the Persian Empire and built a colonial city, the base of the eastern dominion, Alexandria Arachosia, in what is now southeastern Afghanistan. This land is recorded as Arachosia (烏弋山離國) in *Hsi-yü-chuan* (西域傳—*The Description of the Western Region*) contained in the ancient Chinese literature *Han-shu* (漢書). But with the decline in the importance of the Silk Road after the Ottoman conquest and because of the development of sea routes for trade, Afghanistan became isolated from the current of the world affairs, and has remained so until today. Because Afghan society has been slow to modernize it has retained much of its past heritage, with a culture and social life that is closely related to nature. Influences from east, west, north and south are fairly well preserved in Afghan music, and the country is filled with valuable resources for the

ethnomusicologist. There are many indicators in Afghan music both of the history of the transformation of social structure and of the relationship between society and music in a heterogeneous, multinational society.

In addition to these historical factors, the physical geography of Afghanistan, its relationships with neighboring states, and the various tribal cultures have all contributed to the complex process of the transformation of modern Afghan folk music. Afghanistan consists of a variety of ethnic groups. Schurman (1962), for example, in his work *The Mongols of Afghanistan*, classifies the peoples of this country into twelve major groups together with a number of minor groups. Although there are many opinions concerning the details, there is general agreement on the broad ethnic categories. The major tribes in Afghanistan are the Pashtuns, Tajiks, Turkomans, Uzbeks and the Hazaras.

The dominant ethnic group in Afghanistan today is the Pashtuns, members of which constitute most of the upper social stratum and the royal families. These people are also known as Pathans or Afghans, the name from which the present political unit is derived. The Pashtuns, who inhabit southeastern Afghanistan and have relatively close ties with the Indian culture, can be divided into eighteen smaller tribes, all of which are Aryans and mostly speak Pashto or the Dari dialect of Persian. The Tajiks, an ethnic group living in the northern and western regions, are also Aryans and Persian-speakers.

Other major tribes are the Turkomans and the Uzbeks, members of the Turkic group and who mostly live in the northern regions that have close ties with the republics of the same name in the Soviet Union. They speak dialects of either Turkish or Persian. The Hazaras are a Mongoloid people who comprise a major ethnic group living in the central region and who speak a dialect of Persian.

Among the smaller ethnic groups are the Nuristani, who claim to be the descendants of Alexander the Great; the Kirghiz and the Kazaks, who belong to the Turkic family; the Pamiri and the Baluchi, belonging to the Persian family; and a group called the Aimaqs, which includes the Mongoloid Jamsidis, the Taimannis, and the Taimuris. Many other groups are of Arabic, Judaic, and Indian origin. The ethnic, linguistic and religious orientation, together with the geographic location of each group interact in a complex manner to produce the intricate distribution pattern of Afghan folk music. Yet, as a whole, the music of this area is characterized by the general features peculiar to the dry Islamic world rather than by those of the music of the humid lands east of India.

## 2. The Music of Afghanistan

Afghan music can be classified into the four main categories of religious music, artistic music, popular songs and modern music, and folk music.

### (1) RELIGIOUS MUSIC

Afghanistan is devoutly Islamic. The Mongoloid Hazaras belong to the Shiite division of Islam and the majority of the other tribes belong to the Sunnite division

which regards the Shiite as heterodoxy. Apart from these two main divisions of Islam the only other religions recognized as exceptions are Sikhism among the Indian merchants, and Judaism, which has an insignificant number of followers.

Islam has virtually no ceremonial music. Although some divisions such as the Mevlevi and Dervi recognize music in their religious ceremonies, very few permit music in religion. Since one of Muhammad's wives is said to have been a songstress, Islam could not have prohibited music entirely. But according to *Hadith*, the collection of Muhammad's teachings compiled after his death, any kind of music is to be prohibited. Thus, the prohibition on music in religious ceremonies is included in the Islamic commandments. Nevertheless, there are many features in the religion that can be considered as religious music. It should be noted, however, that it is only the non-Islam who considers it to be music or musical, whereas the practitioners of Islam simply regard it as an expression of their religion.

One such kind of religious music is the chanting of *azān*. It is the practice of the Sunnites to pray five times each day in the direction of Mecca. In the year of Hegira, *azān* was established to promote the practice of offering prayers. *Azān*, chanted from the top of the minaret attached to each mosque (*masjid*), echoes throughout the city and countryside as if to represent the entire Islamic world. Whether chanted by a Sunnite or by a Shiite, *azān* always begins with the phrase "*Alla-akbar* (Allah the Highest)", and with a little variation depending on sects. It has melismatic melodies. Probably because of the prohibition on any other type of music in the religion, *azān* is filled with musical attractiveness which appears to be the condensation of the world of prayer. In large mosques, several trained clergymen (*mullāh* or *mūazin*) are given their posts for this purpose. The chanting of *azān* varies from a very simple form in the rural areas to a highly sophisticated version requiring much training and advanced skills.

Another kind of religious music is the chanting of the sacred texts from the Koran. The chant consists of prose resembling much of Arabian poetry with a pleasant flow of rhymes. As in Arabian poetry, the chanting of the Koran has a type of modulation. According to old records, melodies from some folk songs were employed for chanting at one time. But, in the fifteenth century, Ibn al-Jazari prohibited such a practice, and the chanting of the Koran now often takes place without modulation. Although some of the larger mosques have their own modulation, there is no established form of melody or modulation for the chanting.

## (2) TRADITIONAL ARTISTIC MUSIC

What is called the traditional artistic music of Afghanistan can be divided into three major types, Persian, Indian and Afghan.

A type of Persian music can be heard around the ancient capital of Herat in western Afghanistan, and around the cities of Maimana and Mazar-i-Sharif in the northern part of the country. Although some Persian musical terms of Arabic origin, such as *maqām* and *maqōm*, are used, they have no strict definition as in Arabic and are just indications of Persian influence in the past. The drawings of

musicians found on miniatures preserved in Herat also show such Persian influence. Although some ten years ago musicians who had studied in Tehran or Mashhad exerted a strong influence, this is no longer the case. But musical instruments of Iranian origin, of which the *setāl* is the most representative, have become the traditional instruments of the area. Although the technique of playing them has never been systematically taught, people learned through imitation and experience. This type of music is more accurately described as Afghan folk music with strong Persian influence rather than as a derivative of Persian music proper.

Indian, especially Hindustani music, is another type of artistic music found in Afghanistan and one which is the dominant form in the capital city, Kabul, and in the major cities of the southeastern region. In contrast with the Persian music in Herat, Hindustani music is now extremely popular and is gradually expanding its sphere of influence. Many musicians go to India to study, and in a city like Kabul it is not difficult to find a musician with the title of *Ostād*, which is given to great masters and leaders of Indian music. Many run their own music schools teaching Indian music theory and techniques such as *rāga* and *tāla*. The only radio station in Afghanistan, Radio Afghanistan broadcasts music programs for about 80 percent of the time and about 40 percent of which is devoted to Indian music. The mainstream of traditional artistic music is this Hindustani music. (This data is that of 1975.)

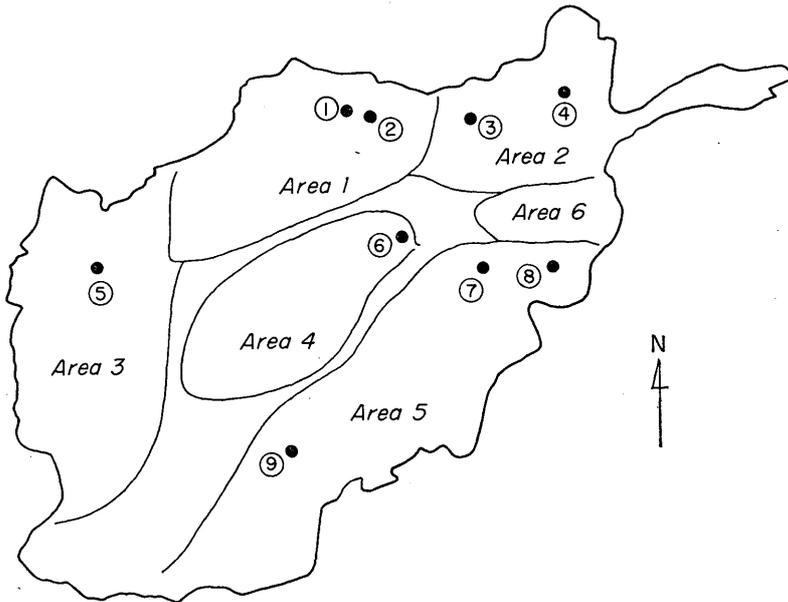
The other type of artistic music is that of the Afghans themselves, which has been created in Afghanistan and is based on Indian and Iranian artistic music. It differs little from Indian music, from which much of it derives. But the adaptation of Afghan folk songs to *rāga* and the adoption of musical instruments that are popular in Afghanistan but seldom used in India are clear indications of the Afghani- zation of Indian music. Since it is gradually becoming part of the musical tradition, it can be regarded as the traditional artistic music of Afghanistan.

### (3) POPULAR SONGS AND MODERN MUSIC

Unlike the music in Western cultures, Afghan music cannot be divided into clear Western categories such as traditional artistic music, modern music and popular songs, and folk music or folk songs, because they are mostly of one and the same kind. They all share common vocal techniques, musical instruments, and audiences. Sometimes new arrangements and verses are added to the traditional music and occasionally modern arrangement and instrumentation are given to rural folk songs. But the most popular and the largest in number are newly composed songs and newly written verses played on the musical instruments peculiar to Afghanistan. Although themes from Indian movies sometimes become popular, there is virtually no Western type of popular music such as jazz, folk music, and rock. Noteworthy in the area of modern popular music is the appearance of a new type of singer (See below).

### (4) FOLK MUSIC

The most abundant and interesting type of music in Afghanistan is the lively and zestful folk music, rendered either by songs or by ensembles of folk musical

**Place**

- |             |                   |             |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 1. Balkh    | 2. Mazar-i-Sharif | 3. Kunduz   |
| 4. Faizabad | 5. Herat          | 6. Bamyan   |
| 7. Kabul    | 8. Jalalabad      | 9. Kandahar |

**Map 1**

instruments. It varies from a relatively simple type to one requiring extremely advanced techniques. In the cities, there are many semi-professional musicians. Among the Tajiks, for example, many barbers are also musicians. The social composition of professional and semi-professional musicians should offer interesting materials for the study of folk music. In rural districts, almost every oasis village has its own musicians, selected from the male population strictly on the basis of ability. Although the quality of voice is definitely one of the qualifications, the number of beautiful poems that one can recite becomes an important consideration for becoming a good musician. In the northern region there is a group of travelling musicians of low social standing. Despite a long history that dates back to ancient times, their existence is now threatened by the difficulty of crossing political boundaries and the popularization of radios. Nevertheless, they are an extremely interesting group who retain the image of troubadours on the Silk Road.

Based on geographical, ethnic, linguistic factors and musical characteristics, I have classified Afghan folk music into 6 basic groups and 26 subgroups. Only the 6 basic groups are discussed briefly here (Map 1).

**Music Culture Area 1**

This group occurs north of the Hindu Kush Mountains that cover part of the

Turkistan Region, an area bordered by the republics of Turkmen, Tajik (Tadzhik) and Uzbek, located in the Soviet Union. The Amu Darya River divides the two countries. The people of this region have close ethnic and cultural ties with the Central Asian Turkistan peoples and with whom that share many common musical traits. Although in the Soviet Union, their folk music since the Bolshevik Revolution has been changed to a new type of ensemble, the Turkomans and Uzbeks who fled into Afghanistan at the time of the revolution still maintain the original form of their music.

The inhabitants of this area include the Uzbeks and the Turkomans of the Turkic family, the Tajiks of the Persian family, and many other minor ethnic groups. The music of this category is most often heard in cities such as Maimana, Mazar-i-Sharif, and Tashkurgan. Although there are a number of Pashtun and Tajik musicians in this area, the most typical music representing the culture of the area is that of the Uzbeks.

Musical instruments of this area are the *dāyrah*, which belongs to the family of the tambourine-like *doyrah*; the *zer-baghālī*, a goatskin drum made from an earthenware pot, belonging to the family of Persian instruments; and the *dohl*, which is a drum with skin on both sides. In addition to these percussion instruments, there are stringed instruments; the *tambūr*, which is plucked, and the *ghichak*, which is a bow instrument and known as the *ghijāk* in the Uzbek Republic. Although an Indian instrument called *tablā-baya*, a set composed of a large and a small drum, has gradually entered the scene in recent years, the music of this area still maintains the strong influence of Persian and Central Asian music as seen in the usage of the term *maqōm*, which is equivalent to the Persian and Arabic term *maqām*.

Although there are a few religious epics, most folk songs in this area consist of lyrics about love. Around the city of Maimana, which is famous for its tapestry, there remain a few songs of tapestry workers. Most of the songs are in the form of *chahārbaitī* ("four lines"), which has rhymed four lines of eleven or so syllables each.

### *Music Culture Area 2*

The second group of music occurs in the Wakhan Strip, which is bordered by China on the east. This area has two principal cities; Kunduz and such neighboring centers as Khanabad and Taliq-an (which comprises one of the rare agricultural regions of Afghanistan); and Faizabad, the center of the eastern portion of the Badakhshan Region. Although there are some Uzbeks, Kirghiz, and Pamiris living in this area, Tajiks form the majority. Precisely when the Tajiks settled in the Badakhshan Region is unknown. This region is mentioned in *The Books of Sir Marco Polo* where it is described as the land of many clear springs and clean air, excellent for the health. It is suggestive that Polo rested for a year in this area. However, it is not known if there is any relationship between the people described in Polo's books and the present Tajik inhabitants.

The folk music of the Tajiks dominates the area. Although many Tajiks live

in the western part of the country, around the city of Herat, their music shows strong Persian influence and is quite different from that of the Badakhshan Region. The Tajik music more closely related to that of Central Asian Tajik Republic comes from the Badakhshan Region. There are a considerable number of Tajik musicians throughout Afghanistan and many of them are both barbers and musicians.

The most typical combination of musical instruments in this area is that of two-stringed *ghichak*, a bow instrument, and the *zer-baghalī*, a percussion instrument. In addition to these two basic instruments, they also use the *tambūr*, the *dambura*, and the *rabāb*, all stringed instruments to be plucked; the *dohl*, the *taburā*, and the *tār*, all percussion instruments; and sometimes the harmonium and the *sārangi*.

As in other areas, most songs in Badakhshan are fourline love songs, often called Badakhshan *chahārbaitī*. There are also working songs (which are quite rare in Afghanistan) called *falak*, the song of the herders of horses.

There remain many unknown aspects about the songs of the Pamiri who inhabit the deep valleys of Wakhan which are difficult of access. But from the recordings made during my previous field survey in Qala Panja and those made by the University of Hiroshima Mountaineers Team in Baba-tangi, very little difference can be discerned between Pamiri and Badakhshan music. A few songs which sound like horse-herders' songs represent very well the musical traits of the region extending from the Pamirs to Tibet. They have a peculiarly distinctive way of vocalization and unique tone scales.

### *Music Culture Area 3*

This group occurs in the western part of the country, around the ancient capital of Herat. Although the major ethnic group of this area is the Tajiks, they have a different type of music from the Tajiks in the northeastern part of Afghanistan. There are also some Turkomans and Baluchis living in this area. The Baluchis inhabit Baluchistan Region of southern Afghanistan, southwestern Pakistan, and southern Iran. Although the Baluchi music which is common to all three countries is prevalent in southern Afghanistan, it is not particularly influential around Herat.

The Tajik music in the Herat Region is strongly influenced by Persian music owing to its geographical proximity to the Iranian culture. As mentioned above, the leading instrument in this area is the Persian *dotār*. In Persian "do" means "two", and it is supposed to be a two-stringed instrument, but most Afghan *dotār* are three-stringed. Other instruments used in this area are the *tambūr*, the *zer-baghalī*, and occasionally the *taburaka* and the harmonium, with which instrumental ensembles are sometimes organized. According to the local elders, *ūd* and *santūr* were sometimes used in the old days, but no one plays such instruments now.

The overwhelming majority of songs in this area are love lyrics. Historically Herat is known as the city of literature and rhymes, and this tradition has created many beautiful songs unique to this city.

#### *Music Culture Area 4*

The fourth group of music belongs to the Mongoloid Hazaras, who live in the villages of the Hindu Kush Mountains and the Hazarajat Region, around Hari-Rud. The Hazaras are said to be the descendants of Genghis Khan or the Mongolian colonial troops, and according to one theory, their tribal name, Hazara, is a derivative of a Persian word "*hazār*" meaning "thousand", which most likely was the unit of colonial troops. Apart from the two-stringed *dambura* there are virtually no other instruments. Drums are very rare. Songs are usually accompanied by the *dāyrah*, a type of tambourine; the *tār*, a type of bell; and by the clapping of hands and whistling. Sometimes there are *dambura* solos, the tone of which is quite similar to that of the Japanese *futozao-shamisen*. In a district like Hazarajat, which has a heavy concentration of the Hazaras, a six-holed endblown flute, *nai*, is used and the vocalization includes falsettos and many other advanced techniques. Having many similarities with the vocal techniques of the Tibetan and Mongolian music, the music of this region may provide valuable materials for the study of the Mongolian music that disappeared in the Middle Ages. The songs are mostly duple timed and sung on a pentatonic scale. These musical characteristics are quite different from those of the other regions. Their lyrics are generally known as *hazaragī*, which is also a type of four-lined *chahārbaitī*.

#### *Music Culture Area 5*

This is found in the area to the south of the central mountain ranges, the Hindu Kush and the Koh-i-Baba Mountains. This area includes the capital city Kabul Jalalabad in the east, and Kandahar in the south. The music of the Pashtuns, the country's major tribe, dominates, and because of easy access to India via the Khyber Pass and Pakistan, it has especially strong ties with the Hindustani music of northern India. Since the Pashtuns have long lived in the area of the Sulayman Mountains, which separate Afghanistan and Pakistan, the political boundary across the Pashtuns' land does not necessarily form a cultural boundary. Because of this geopolitical situation there is a strong unification movement among the Pashtun people, which is problematical for both governments. This kind of ethnic distribution has a great impact on music. Since Pakistan is under the strong influence of Indian music, the Pashtun music both in Pakistan and in Afghanistan resembles much of the Indian music.

Ensembles comprised of the *rabāb*, the *tambūr*, the *kemāncheh*, the *sārangi*, and the *dilruba* (all stringed instruments) and the *tablā-baya* and the *dohl* (both percussion instruments) and the harmonium are common. Wind instruments such as the *nai*, the *tulah*, and the *surna*, a kind of oboe, are also frequently used. Large *dohls* are usually added when the music for the *atan* folk dance is played.

*Bait*, in the form of folk song, is usually accompanied by an ensemble of these instruments. In addition to the songs sung in Dari Persian, which is common to all tribes, the Pashtuns have their own poetic form called *landai*, the first line of which

has nine syllables and the second line thirteen. They are mostly lyrical love songs, but there are some long, voluminous epics.

### *Music Culture Area 6*

This group, which belongs to the Nuristan people in the northeastern mountains, is full of character and is unique in Afghanistan. The inhabitants of this area were once called *kafīr* (heathens) and the land Kafiristan, perhaps because of their worship of wooden idols in a primitive form of religion. The area was renamed Nuristan "the land where the light of Islam reaches" during the period of religious assimilation policy. Another view suggests that the name *kafīr* is a derivative of Kafār, the name of an Islamic sect started by Kayani, a Shiite. The origin of the Nuristani people is also not definitely known. According to one view, they are the descendants of Alexander the Great, and thus belong to the Greek family. It is extremely difficult to conduct thorough ethnological research in this area. The people have unique musical traits. A bow-shaped harp with four strings and a resonance body called *waji*, which is known to us only from the drawings of Gandhara, is actually used in this area today. Other unique instruments are the *waigari*, a stringed instrument to be plucked, the *shapa*, a five-holed bamboo flute, the *dombak*, a drum with skin on one side, and the *dod*, a drum with skin on both sides. A duet of *dod* and *shapa* commonly accompanies folk dances. Only a few songs of love and local legends have so far been recorded by the survey team. Their tone scales resemble those of the Hunza and Chitral Regions and are entirely different from those of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Although there are some indications that music of this region developed from the Greek dorian mode, no definite conclusions can be reached until further investigation has been made.

These, in general outlines, are the six Afghan musical groups. They can be sub-divided to discover the similarities in musical traits and instruments and the peculiarities each region. Such details will follow in a later article.

## 3. Children, Education, and Musicians

### (1) CHILDREN AND MUSIC

Children's music and nursery rhymes are virtually nonexistent in Afghanistan. During each visit to the country attempts have been made to investigate the music culture among children. But none of the known ethnic groups, the Pashtuns, the Tajiks, the Hazaras, the Uzbeks, the Turkomans and many other minority groups, seems to have such a culture. It can be found neither in cities nor in oasis villages. At first, the research team, believing that the nursery rhymes of each tribe should best represent the musical characteristics of the group, devoted much of its time to looking for children's songs. Inquiries were made among Afghan friends, and schools were visited. But during the past ten years only twenty children's songs have been collected, all of which are sung by the children playing some kind of game.

The scarcity of children's songs together with the poverty of those for women offers a key to understanding the social structure of Afghanistan.

This gives rise to the hypothesis that children's songs, such as nursery rhymes, do not constitute the core of music culture, but that they come into being only at a given stage in the development of civilization, as a byproduct of culture. It can also be assumed that children, severely constrained by the natural environment, have little time to play or sing songs as they constitute an important part of the nation's labor force. This might hamper the development of nursery rhymes.

But there is a fundamental problem in the lack of songs as a means of expressing children's emotions: The children of Afghanistan sing adults' songs, the songs of love, as if they were their own. When a children's subculture lacks its own songs it borrows them from another subculture, in this case that of the adults. But in order to sing such songs the children's vocal technique would have to reach higher than their own ability, thus limiting the number of children who could perform such songs. One tendency that can be clearly observed throughout Afghanistan is a division between those who sing and those who listen. Perhaps this may be attributable to the realization by people that they cannot sing during childhood simply because there are no songs suitable for them during that stage.

The same can be said of women's songs. The only authentic women's songs are some lullabies and the songs of Turkoman tapestry workers. Women also borrow most of their songs from the men's world, a clear reflection of the dominance of males in Afghan society.

## (2) EDUCATION AND MUSIC

There is no music course in the curricula of primary and secondary education in Afghanistan. Although the state provides free public education to all children, the percentage of those attending school is relatively low. And there is very little movement toward incorporating music into the formal education. Even if it did become part of the formal education, there are virtually no facilities and personnel to teach music. Although this is not wholly unrelated to the lack of children's music, from another point of view, the people in Afghanistan seem to appreciate music in a very natural, undistorted form.

A national music school in Kabul, under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Education, is the only specialized music school in Afghanistan. There, students study to become professional musicians after having completed the first six years of general education. But there are many other ways to become a professional musician in Afghanistan. Two areas of study are offered in the national music school: Western music and traditional music based on Indian theory. In addition to this school, there is a music academy, which is not a school in a formal sense, operated by the Ministry of Cultural Information. Although the teaching of traditional music is their purpose, some courses in Western music are also offered. Scattered about the city are many private music schools run by those *Ostāds* who have studied music in India.

Music is now being gradually commercialized, and to be a musician is recognized as a good profession in a society with low economic output and low wages. Although many people seek to become musicians, it is apparent that they are motivated by more than just economic factors.

### (3) THE MUSICIANS OF AFGHANISTAN

In none of the tribes in Afghanistan is there a situation where all the people gathered at one place sing songs or play music together. Rather, there is a clear division between the performers and the audience. But this does not mean that the ordinary people never sing. Within a family or under special circumstances, they sometimes sing as they please. This, however, is not considered to be the act of making music, but rather, the act of enjoying music. Thus, regardless of locality, there are always some musicians who can be distinguished from ordinary people. In the villages there are usually two or three designated musicians, *muzikī* or *dalak*, who are indispensable to village festivals and weddings. But being a musician is their side business, and in some villages there are always semi-professional musicians who are also barbers. In the northern part of Afghanistan these barber-musicians are often Tajiks. In larger villages and towns, the musicians (*sazendāh*) are semi-professionals who use relatively advanced performing techniques. In large cities musicians are known as *honarmand*, a term denoting musicians of artistic value. They are divided into *khonendāh*, singers, and *muzikinawaz*, instrumentalists. Poor, travelling musicians are sometimes called *dalak* or *sazendāh*, terms which signify the status of musicians in Dari Persian. However, the usage is now confused.

The capital city, Kabul, plays a leading role in music. There are about ten well-known singers. Of those belonging to the radio station, vocalists are the best-known. Lahin Bakhshā and Sara Khang, who studied in India for a long time and have the title of *Ostād*, are the best-known in the field of traditional music. Some of the famous female vocalists in popular music are Parwin, Jīrah, Mahawash; and among the male vocalists Nashnās, Khwaidah, Mohammad Zahīr, and Walī are popular.

The musical world of Kabul is now entering a new phase as the commercialization of music progresses through the increased opportunity to perform in radio programs, via the sale of records, the running of private music schools, and the performing at weddings and festivals.

## IV. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF AFGHAN FOLK MUSIC

In the preceding sections attempts have been made to classify systematically the cultural areas of Afghan folk music. These are the cultural circles of folk music that have been determined by giving consideration to regional difference, ethnic origin, and cultural background and by extracting certain common features found in the musical instruments used, characteristics of song texts, and role of music in society. Religious music and artistic music were omitted from consideration because they proved to have very few regional differences and to have many international char-

acteristics. It seems better to regard such religious and artistic music as being almost uniform throughout Islamic society. Thus, only folk music can be regarded as representing various regional characteristics and only folk music should be considered in an attempt to establish the model of cultural circles for music.

On the other hand, it is rather dangerous and misleading to think of folk music within the limited boundary of a single political unit such as Afghanistan. The cultural domain of one ethnic group might stretch over two countries, and the same climatic and geographical conditions might be shared by two neighboring states. Political boundaries superimposed with little consideration for ethnic factors might pose some fundamental problems in the study of folk music. The eastern border of Afghanistan, for example, follows certain ridgelines of the Sulaiman Range. But the Pashtuns, a good example of one cultural unit divided by a political boundary, live on the both sides of the border, in eastern Afghanistan and northern and western Pakistan. The Pashtuns share the same language, religion, life-style, and other cultural traits. Their music also has the same instruments, song texts, patterns of ensemble, rhythm, and melodies. What appears as a difference is nothing but regional variation.

Afghanistan borders the Soviet Union in the north and a large part of the boundary is drawn along the Amu Darya River. Here, too, the peoples living in various republics of the Soviet Union share cultural traits with those living in Afghanistan. It is virtually impossible to distinguish the peoples living in northern Afghanistan, namely the Uzbeks, the Turkomans, the Kirghiz, and the Tajiks from those peoples living in the Soviet republics of the same name.

The western city of Herat was once a colonial city established by Alexander the Great and which bore the name of Alexandria Ariana. From that time on it was regarded as a Persian city. Thus, the cultural characteristics in and around Herat have much in common with those of Iran.

The Baluchistan Region in the south, inhabited by the Baluchis, extends beyond Afghanistan into Iran and Pakistan. As in other cases, the political boundaries of this region have no significance when it comes to the study of one type of culture as a unit.

As illustrated by the above examples, it is somewhat difficult to separate the peoples and culture of Afghanistan from those of the surrounding areas on any basis except the present political boundaries. When it comes to music, a comparison between the entire Pashtun population, including those living in northern Pakistan and the entire Uzbek population, who regard Uzbek S.S.R. as their homeland, seems to give a better picture than a comparison between the Pashtun population and the Uzbek population living only within Afghanistan. Therefore, it appears to be of little significance to look into the variation which occurs among tribes living only in Afghanistan.

However, extreme caution must be exercised in making such a statement, for there are certain aspects which do conform to this generalization. As with other cultural variables, one of the important aspects of music is its potential for change.

Some of the elements constituting a particular kind of music are prone to change under the influence of particular environmental factors. Thus it is difficult to understand the true state of music unless it is regarded as something dynamic.

It is true that an attempt to distinguish the Pashtuns in Afghanistan from those in Pakistan is meaningless when viewed from an ethnological perspective. But when sociological aspects are considered, it is not fair to ignore the recent changes that have occurred under the political influence of the modern nation-state system. For example, when the Uzbeks of the Soviet Union are compared with those of Afghanistan, it is easy to see that a number of changes have occurred to the Soviet Uzbeks since the Russian Revolution. In Uzbek S.S.R., with the development of educational system and with the treatment of music as part of education, the modernization of music has taken place. Their folk music is preserved as an aspect of traditional ethnic culture and is protected and promoted by the state through the creation of performing groups. Thus, since the revolution, the traditional music has experienced a drastic transformation along with the modernization of society. As the result, the traditional music that had been transmitted orally in the society or group gradually ceased to exist as a living tradition. Since the Uzbeks in northern Afghanistan are either those who have been living there since the days before the Russian Revolution or those who fled from the Soviet Union at the time of the revolution, they still retain the traditional form of folk music that has long been lost in their homeland, Uzbek S.S.R. In Afghanistan, on the other hand, the Pashtuns form the dominant ethnic group and they comprise the ruling class, they are also called the Afghans, and the official languages of the country are Pashto and Dari Persian. Thus, a rapid process of Afghanization is taking place among the minority tribes. The Uzbeks certainly cannot remain aloof from this process of social transformation. By coming into contact with the Pashtuns and other ethnic groups, Uzbek music in Afghanistan has also undergone certain transformations. Considering all these influential factors, the treatment of Uzbek music in Afghanistan as a unique unit possessing its own characteristics becomes increasingly meaningful. Such was the process by which the types of folk music were categorized and domains of the music cultural circle determined in the preceding sections.

There follows an attempt to analyze the music of Afghanistan within a given framework of analysis.

### **1. The World of Music**

Let us suppose now that we are travelers making a tour of the world of Afghan music. Beginning the tour, we have the impression of being in a highly cosmopolitan musical world. On entering a village or a small town we often encounter a wedding, funeral, festival, or market day, and soon come to realize that all these activities are deeply related to the kind of music still living among the people. The first step in the study of ethnomusicology is to perceive the kind of music that has lived in the daily life of peoples and to compare the differences.

Now let us start from the western city of Herat and follow a route leading through

Maimana, Balkh, Mazar-i-Sharif, Tashkurgan and Kunduz to Kabul, the capital. This is the northern route connecting the western city of Herat with the capital city Kabul, located in the southeastern part of the country. This was the route which was once traveled by Alexander the Great and Marco Polo and which became the main Oriental trade route, later named the "Silk Road."

Herat is the city which still retains much of the Iranian culture. Persian music is deeply rooted in this city and the techniques of Persian classic music are still handed down. Herat is also known as the city of poetry and has a number of traditional lyrics that are sung with music. Leaving Herat these beautiful lyrics begin to fade and the world of long story-telling songs based on epic poetry begins to emerge around Maimana. Maimana reminds us of the music of such Central Asian peoples as the Turkomans and the Uzbeks. In this area are found singers with a rather husky and tense voice. Well-intoned verses, articulate rhythm, and group dancing to music are the musical characteristics of this area. They have a plenty of musical instruments from which to form ensembles. Although their instruments resemble those found throughout much of the Islamic world, like those of Iran, those of this region have features peculiar to Central Asia. Arrangements in the form of suite are sometimes found. Sometimes musicians from Mazar-i-Sharif are found who are familiar with Arabic and Persian musical terminology such as *maqām*. In the area of Herat and Kunduz are found itinerant artists performing juggling, acrobatics, and pantomimes along with a musical accompaniment. These people move back and forth along this northern route of Afghanistan. Along this route, too, are found weeping women, who are seldom seen in other areas.

Turning south at Kunduz and crossing the Salang Pass, a significant change in music is noticed. The voice is no longer husky and tense, but the singers here sing in a smooth, low voice. The *tabla* is one of their instruments and the rhythm is more complex. These are indications of Indian music. Hindustani music, which is widespread in northern India, has a great influence on the music of this area.

Now, let us take the southern route from Herat to Kabul. The area from Herat through Farah to Kandahar is dominated by Persian music. It is the world of Islamic music. In Kandahar we begin to see semi-professional musicians who are excellently trained in Indian music. The area from Ghazni to Kabul is the world of Pashtun music, where the violent dances in which people turn and jump accompanied by the rhythm of a cask-shaped large drum, called *dohl*, are encountered. As we approach Kabul we notice that the young people are singing or humming themes from Indian motion pictures and Indian music can be heard on the transistor radios which they carry proudly. The road extending eastwards from Kabul through Jalalabad to the Khyber Pass leads us to the world of Hindustani music.

In pursuing the folk music of Afghanistan it is particularly interesting to pay attention to the following phenomena: The methods and systems by which folk music is handed down in rural areas, the influence of Persian music, the changing functions of music in a society experiencing the process of modernization, the commercialization

of music in such a society, the way this new change is perceived by the people, and the way it finds a place in their life.

The music of Afghanistan as a whole is based on Persian music and it has a strong tone of Islamic music. In major southeastern cities, including Kabul, the strong influence of foreign music, particularly Indian music, can be observed. But the popular music of the West including rock and folk music is also penetrating into this area.

## 2. The Tone System of Afghan Folk Music

The artistic music of Afghanistan has been much influenced by the artistic music of Iran and Hindustani music of India. Both in Iran and India, as far as music as an art form is concerned, highly developed musical theories have existed since early days and these theories are still being handed down and developed. In India, for example, there is a highly elaborated set of theories found in *Nāṭya-sāstra* by Bhārata-muni, which has been in existence since ancient times. These theories include *rāga*, a type of mode; *tāla*, which signifies the cycle of rhythm; and many other complicated techniques. In Iran there is also a highly advanced form of music theory which goes back to the most prosperous medieval times. Having its origin in the music theory of ancient Greece, the Iranian theory is a complex mixture of Persian, Arabic, and Turkish music. Thus, the world of Afghan music is located between the two highly sophisticated forms. In the west, Persian music has been a strong source of influence throughout history. In the east, around Kabul and its vicinity, the artistic music of India is gradually taking root. Thus, the artistic music of Afghanistan is being formed absorbing elements from both Iranian and Indian music. Nevertheless, Afghanistan has no music theory of its own. After making inquiries throughout the country the research team was unable to find a single musician who knew of any such thing as Afghan music theory. Instead, it became clear that many Afghan musicians were interested in Hindustani and they often studied in northern India to learn its theory and techniques. Musicians who have mastered Hindustani music often run a music school on returning to Afghanistan, and they usually contribute greatly to accelerating the dissemination of Indian music in Afghanistan.

Although there is no such thing as an Afghan theory of music, Afghan music is full of vitality and can easily be related to the life of the common people. Thus it is possible to discover certain regularities in Afghan music which are either peculiar to Afghanistan or common to all mankind. In this section the discussion will focus on the tone system of Afghan folk music, especially on temperament and scales. An attempt is made to understand how each tone is tied to others and to find the regularities and relationships that govern the tones. An examination of temperament is an attempt to list all the tones that can possibly exist in Afghan music and to find the relationships which may exist among them. And from all the tones in Afghan music, certain tones are chosen for singing or playing. This set of tones arranged according to a certain rule can be called a scale. These definitions of temperament and scale

might not be acceptable to those concerned with only the theoretical aspect of music.

An attempt to discover all the possible tones existing in Afghan music and the relationships among them should not only be made first to understand the physical aspect of the tones, but also to understand their value as a product of creative art expressing the lives and emotions of the people among whom the tones exist. According to Robert Lachman, in his *Musik des Orients*, the tone system of one kind of music has a close relationship to the musical instruments on which the music is played. It is true that musical instruments put a limit on the tones that can be played, but it is not always necessary for a singer or a listener to know all the rules and limitations in order to enjoy music. They can sing and create music as they please without paying much attention to so-called "theory" of music. And this is what brings the music closer to the people. This can be regarded as the very reason for studying folk songs, songs which live at the grass-roots level of people, and children's songs, which often express the most natural sound possessed by a group of people.

It is often said that the higher the level of civilization the more developed and complex is the relationship between songs and musical instruments. However, this is not always true of folk music. The Veddas of Sri Lanka, for example, have virtually no musical instruments, their songs have certain regularities and a tone system of their own. It is more reasonable to assume, therefore, that each ethnic group already has a tone system at a pre-musical stage, and as this tone system is put into a certain restrictive framework imposed by musical instruments it assumes a systematic and objective existence.

Because of its geographical proximity to Iran, Afghanistan as a whole is under the strong influence of Iranian culture, and its music is influenced mostly by Iranian music with the exception of the Indian influence in the southeast. Along with Arabic music, this Iranian music can be included in a larger category of Islamic music. The tone system of Islamic music in the Middle East is extremely complex with internal variations. As with the music theories of India and China, those of the Middle East also developed to a highly advanced stage in ancient and medieval times. Thus, the music of the Middle East is founded on a variety of historical experience.

Islamic music can be classified into three major categories: Persian music of Iran, Arabic music of Egypt and other Arab countries, and Turkish music. Malm adds to this list the Andalusian music of Maghrib, the countries in northwest Africa. Although Andalusian music once possessed many of the characteristics of Arabic music, because of the Spanish influence, it has become less Arabic in recent years. Thus, it is rather difficult to include this in the category of contemporary Middle Eastern music.

Although the music of the Islamic world shows a number of variations depending on locality and ethnic group, it is possible to indicate certain common features found in the music of the Middle East as a whole. The most evident are a number of excellent music theories on which the contemporary music of the Arab world is based. These include the 9th-century theory of Al-Kindi, which was developed comprehensively from the theories of ancient Greece, Persia, and Arabia; and *Kitāb-al-musiqī*

*al-kabīr*, written in the 10th century by Al-Fārābī. Later, there was a great controversy over the meaning of octave, which in turn produced a number of variations and different lines of transformation. This is the situation concerning the temperament in the music of the Middle East.

Although there is some traditional artistic music in Afghanistan, most of it is related to folk music and it is difficult to distinguish purely artistic music from folk music. There is no trace of advanced music theories such as that of Al-Fārābī. As already stated, the music of Afghanistan has been influenced mostly by Iranian (Persian) music. But the traditional artistic music as it exists today in Iran and Afghanistan differs greatly in its developmental stage, musical instruments used, kinds of ensemble, and many other aspects. On the other hand, the folk music of the two countries has many features in common. Except for Nuristan music, which has unique features (the investigation of which has not been completed), five of the six categories of Afghan folk music classified above fall into the group which has a seventeen-tone system, including microtones. This concept of seventeen-tone system still remains a controversial issue when it comes to defining its precise meaning in the theoretical field of music, and it requires further investigation and discussion.

In Afghanistan, most Uzbek, Tajik, and Pashtun folk music can be regarded as having a seventeen-tone system with microtones. But the songs of the Hazaras in Hazarajat have a temperament which can be related to that of China, Japan and Mongolia. Some Hazara songs never use microtones (or microscapes), which usually appear in Islamic music. These songs have a twelve-tone system. But this type of music is rather exceptional in the folk music of the Hazaras, most whose music contains microtones common to Islamic music.

In an earlier stage of research it was hypothesized that the music of various ethnic groups which have Islam as their principal religion was not really governed by any advanced music theories, but rather was governed by the sense of music contained in the chanting of *azān*, the only form of religious music recognized in the Islamic world. And were *azān* to influence folk music, it would be in the singing. The Hazaras have a different tone system from other ethnic groups. And a small portion of the Uzbeks and Turkomans are Shiites, whereas the majority of the other ethnic groups are Sunnites. Thus, the uniqueness of Hazara music could possibly be attributed to their being Shiites. And if there was any difference between the Sunnite and the Shiite *azān* this sectarian difference in Islam could be regarded as one of the determinants of Afghan folk music. To test this hypothesis comparisons were made between the *azān* of the Sunnites and that of the Shiites. After examining several dozen pieces of *azān* chanted by both Sunnite and Shiite *mullahs* it was concluded that the both are basically the same, except for a few insignificant variations in forms and melodies. Thus it was determined that religious music was not a particularly influential factor in the folk music of the Islamic world.

The twelve-tone system found in some Hazara songs seems to be a trace of their unique ethnic characteristics, which have been inherited from their ancestors and

which lie deep in their national mind. Geographic, religious, or social factors do not seem to have much relevance to this peculiar type of music. It is too easy to connect the Hazaras, who have the physical characteristics of Mongoloid peoples, to the Mongolians by tracing the history of this ethnic group. This universality of Mongolian musical characteristics, on the one hand, suggests that even where there has been a complex history of national suppression and a religious environment the sense of music peculiar to a particular ethnic group cannot be changed easily. On the other hand, it suggests the possibility that the temperament of music need not necessarily be uniform throughout a society, and that a special form of change may occur in a small segment of the society. In studying the characteristics of Nuristani music, which is unique, this assumption may also prove useful.

In addition to temperament another important subject to be considered in understanding the characteristics of music is the question of scales. It has already been stated that in playing a piece of music certain tones are chosen from all the existing tones according to a given principle. This set of tones arranged in the order of pitch is called a scale. Although there are many opinions about the definition of a scale, they do not occupy an important place in the study of folk music, since they are purely theoretical arguments. In the past a number of theories have been advanced concerning scales: The Pythagorean theory of ancient Greece, the imperial court music of China based on a pentatonic scale, and many Arabian theories. But these theoretical scales are not always identical with the ones actually used. For example, according to the Chinese theory of *sān-wén-sūn-yì*, it is possible to create eighty-four different keys by combining the septatonic scale with the twelve-tone system. Although some pieces of artistic music have been created artificially according to this theory, the pentatonic scale is that used in most of the Chinese folk music. Thus there exists a wide gap between the music in theory and music in practice.

Folk music in Asia can be classified into six categories based on the type of scale used: These are the domains of East Asian music including China, Korea, and Japan; Southeast Asian music; Indian music; Tibeto-Mongolian music, including Sikkim and Bhutan; Central Asian music; and West Asian Islamic music, the domain of which extends as eastward to Afghanistan. Generally speaking, East Asian, Southeast Asian, and Tibeto-Mongolian music has pentatonic scales and Indian, Central Asian, and West Asian music has septatonic scales. But this is an extremely generalized picture. Chinese music has septatonic scales in theory; some Indian music, such as that of Bengal, and some West Asian music has pentatonic scales; and other music has hexatonic scales. There are also many variations in pentatonic and septatonic scales, some consisting of whole tones only and others including semitones. It would be interesting to construct a distribution map based on a classification of these scales.

Much of Afghan folk music is based on septatonic scales. Only rarely, in Hazarajat and Faizabad, are some songs based on a pentatonic scale. It has already

been mentioned that some songs in Hazarajat have a twelve-tone system. This is a unique combination since most folk music that is based on a pentatonic scale exists in the seventeen-tone system. It is extremely rare to find a pentatonic scale in the twelve-tone system. In other words, in Hazara music the type of scale plays a dominant role, and temperament, on which scales are usually supposed to be based, plays a somewhat secondary role. The twelve-tone system is said to exist in music having a pentatonic scale. In Afghan music and songs it is possible to find occasional microtones, the tones between semitones. But it is questionable whether they can be regarded as tones to be placed on a scale, since they often appear only as passing tones. The musical instrument called *harmonia*, which has a structure similar to that of organ and accordion and is used mostly around Herat, has a keyboard based on the twelve-tone system; i.e., a keyboard constituting of twelve semitones. When a microtone has to be played on this instrument two consecutive keys are played at the same time to express a tone between two semitones.

In studying the folk music of any country it is necessary to consider comprehensively a number of other musical factors, namely mode, key, rhythm, and types of ensemble. Understanding the relationship between music and people's daily life is another important aspect of ethnomusicology. In addition, the questions of tone system and scale should give a better idea of the structure of Afghan music.

### 3. The Transformation of Music: Interaction and Acculturation

When two or more human groups come in contact they tend to influence each other. The process of adopting the cultural traits or social patterns of another group is called acculturation. This process also applies to the world of music. The transformation of the music of one ethnic group is activated not only by internal forces but also a number of external forces, including the influence of other cultures. Even in an extremely closed primitive society, or the traditional society of Japan, music is never handed down from generation to generation in exactly the same form or structure. Each generation adds some new elements and transformation is inevitable. In any group or society no music can exist independently of the music of other groups or societies. Contacts with other cultures may take place at various levels. In the field of cultural anthropology this process of acculturation is regarded as an important subject for study. The field of cultural anthropology has a long history: It started with the evolution theory; and after the accumulation of a number of theories and findings, the discipline has now advanced into the methodology of structural-functional analysis. And a social anthropological approach, which starts by comparing social variables among different ethnic groups and tries to discover certain generalities about social structure, is now becoming an independent discipline.

An attempt was once made to analyze and explain all the musical phenomena based on the classic theory of evolution. In the days before the development of ethnomusicology, Hisao Tanabe, a pioneer in the study of Oriental Music, wrote in a chapter entitled "The Significance of the History of Oriental music and Evolutionary Approach," in his book, *The History of Oriental Music*, that there were two principles

according to which music and musical instruments evolved, namely the process of natural selection and that of artificial selection. In 1930 this introduction of evolutionary theory into music was regarded as a revolutionary idea, and it is still deeply entrenched in the methodological aspect of musicological study. This classic theory of evolution, however, still haunts the field of musicology today and few musicologists pay much attention to such matters as "cultural evolution" and "acculturation" which are fundamental in the fields of ethnology and cultural anthropology. The study of the transformation of music from a new perspective should give a better picture of the structure of a society's or an ethnic group's music, and should provide a clue to understanding the generality about the transmissive and acculturational processes of music. The following section deals with the processes of transmission and acculturation of music in Afghanistan.

#### **4. The Transmission of Advanced Civilization and Acculturation of Music**

When advanced civilization is transmitted into a society acculturation often takes place. In the case of music, the more contacts one kind of music has with other groups under natural conditions, the more unchangeable and universal it becomes. Thus it can be more easily transmitted to other societies. Such music, on the one hand, becomes a major influential factor triggering the process of acculturation in the recipient music; and on the other hand, brings out more clearly those aspects of the recipient music prone to change and those which are not.

The Hindu-oriented Indian world and Islamic-oriented Afghan world are separated by the Sulaiman Range. The Pashtuns live in the area of southeastern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan. Although there are many cultural traits common to this area, the basic tone of culture differs between these two countries. In recent years there has been remarkable commercialization of Indian music through motion pictures, records, and broadcasting; and Indian traditional music and popular songs have surged into Afghanistan like tidal waves. Over 40 percent of music heard in Afghanistan is Indian, and people crowd into theaters showing Indian films. The popular music of India and themes from Indian movies are deeply ingrained in the young generation; many people attend Indian music schools; and the number of foreigners wishing to study music in India is increasing every year.

There is a large variety of Indian music because of the country's vast territory and complex ethnic composition. In ancient times, Austroasiatic, Aryan, and Dravidian music intermingled in this area, and after the 11th century, Persian and Arabic music entered with Islamic invasions. The greater part of today's Indian classical music is believed to have been completed by the 17th century, when the British colonial rule began. The music of India can be divided broadly into two types; Hindustani music of northern India, which has been influenced by Turkish, Arabic and Persian music and by the instruments which have been introduced to India through Islamic invasions; and Karnataka music of southern India, which still maintains the traditional form of ancient Indian music. The type introduced into Afghanistan is mostly Hindustani music.

How, then, has the music of Afghanistan changed under the constant inflow of Hindustani music? Let us look at the music of the Pashtuns which is believed to have been affected the most by Hindustani music? It is easy to see among the Pashtuns that Hindustani musical instruments, their combination to form ensembles, and thematic treatment and interpretation of music are firmly taking root. Today Hindustani music is pushing out the classic music of Afghanistan, the music having close association with Persian culture. But in spite of the Indianization of musical instruments and the manner of playing them, the philosophy of Sufism still maintains its strong hold on song texts. The ideologies found in such song texts as *Shāh-nāmeḥ* ("The King's Book") and *Laylā-Majnūn*, which are written in Persian, die hard under the impact of foreign influences. The above generalization applies to the professional musicians of Afghanistan.

At the popular level it is also possible to find many young people who prefer to sing Indian popular songs and movie themes. But the sound of these songs is far from Indian; rather, they sound Afghan. These Indian songs heard in Afghanistan no longer retain their Indian tone system, which has been intentionally or unintentionally transformed into that of Afghan music. Moreover, the voice quality in Indian popular music and movie themes is similar to that of Indian classic music; smooth, soft, and mellow. But the voice quality in Afghan folk songs is generally husky and tense. And in this peculiar type of voice the supposedly smooth and mellow Indian songs are sung. This change in voice quality seems to be largely unintentional. It is interesting to see that the Afghans import many Indian songs but they do so only after they have Afghanized them. This is an indication of the nature of the Pashtun and Afghan sense of music whose structure cannot be changed easily despite the surging tides of Indian music.

A similar phenomenon can be observed also in Nepal. Where commercialized popular songs and movie themes of India are also invading even small villages of the Himalayas. The spread of transistor radios is certainly accelerating this development. This phenomenon can be found among almost any ethnic group such as the Newars around Kathmandu, the Sherpas, the Limbus, the Gurungs, the Tamangs, and the Bhotiyas and Lepchas of Sikkim. But when the popular songs of India are sung here, they invariably sound like Tibetan folk songs. The smooth and soft Indian voice changes into rigid and tense voice. Not only does the voice change, but a completely new set of tones comes into play. Microtones, which are the characteristics of Indian music, and sometimes even semitones disappear and they are changed into forms more familiar to the Tibetan ear. Theoretically, when this kind of elimination of tones takes place, the nuclear tones found in Indian melodies should be preserved. But occasionally some of the passing tones are preserved instead of nuclear tones. In terms of music scale, two of the tones on a septatonic scale, on which the Indian songs are based, are eliminated or replaced by other tones in order to adjust the songs to the Tibetan sense of music, which is based on a pentatonic scale. Sometimes even the accenting and rhythm of a song are changed. Thus, the popular songs of India are completely transformed and entirely new Tibetan songs

are born. The Indianization of Nepalese music can be more accurately explained as the Nepalization of Indian music.

Since music is the expression of emotions it is an aspect of culture that is more deeply embedded in the life of a group than certain other cultural elements such as language. Thus it possesses a more concrete structure than other elements of culture. The sense of music peculiar and native to one ethnic group does not seem to be acculturated easily.

It is supposed that musical instruments have much to do with the interaction and transmission of music, and it is believed that the exchange and transmission of musical instruments bring about the transformation of music. Those who accept this supposition try to probe the chronology of music by making distribution charts of musical instruments and by investigating those items related to music found on ancient ruins and other remains. But the transmission of musical instruments from one culture to another does not necessarily coincide with the transmission of the sounds which they produce. For example, the sound produced by a stringed instrument can be changed so easily by a single manipulation of the strings, and of the decision of a particular people alone as to what kind of sound they create. Many musical instruments are common to Afghanistan, Iran, and Central Asia and there are similarities among the types of music played in these countries. But each nation has a type of music different from the others. The reason for this is that the human sense of music exceeds the superficiality of music when it comes to making the sound.

### **5. Keeping Records of Folk Music**

There are two aspects to the study of ethnomusicology: One is that of cultural anthropology and the other is that of musicology. There is also a branch in ethnology and cultural anthropology called ethnography, which is the study of describing scientifically the style of individual cultures. It makes an approach from the various perspectives of cultural anthropology such as occupation, social organization, language, and religion, and tries to describe a culture systematically. It could deal with an entire society or a particular individual as a member of a society in order to describe a culture. It provides a way to understand and systematize various elements of culture. Like many other elements of culture, music also must be described and recorded as an aspect of ethnic culture and the systematization of such efforts must be made. But music does not stay in any shape or form; it disappears the moment it is created. It is almost impossible to describe such a phenomenon with words. This has been the main obstacle to the development of ethnomusicology and is the reason why ethnomusicology has been left out of interdisciplinary ventures undertaken by the related fields. When attempts are made to record all musical phenomena as reproducible sounds, the technique of staff notation, which objectifies sounds, has tended to dominate. It usually requires highly specialized and advanced skills in music to do such work. To a human being with a limited capacity to think, it is like trying to understand a complicated electronic system or the nature of cancer,

which lie in a world beyond his reach. It becomes understandable only after illustrated explanation has been made. The study of music has required such specialized skills. One particular culture could be made an object of study by many academic disciplines, but the approach using the technique of staff notation has been virtually ignored by these disciplines as a method for understanding the culture simply because of the advanced skills required in making use of such an approach. As long as music is the subject of study, it is extremely important to analyze the tone system and theories about the structure of music to determine the characteristics of each ethnic culture. But music as an aspect of culture cannot be understood by analyzing the structure alone. The type of music is determined by a number of other factors. As Merriam argues, music is deeply related to man's physical, social, learning, linguistic ties and many other activities, of which his life consists. Thus it becomes necessary to look into the roles and functions of music in man's life. And these are the reasons why an ethnography of music is required. To describe and systematize the environmental factors which surround music is to give new life to the study of music and, at the same time, to encourage interdisciplinary studies which include ethnomusicology. Like ethnology and cultural anthropology, the study of ethnomusicology can be approached either intensively or extensively. To investigate music as culture, it is desirable to engage in long-term research concerning one group or one locality. This is a relatively easy task and many attempts have already been made. But there have been very few comparative studies of ethnic music and few such data have accumulated. It has already been mentioned that even in the fields of ethnology and cultural anthropology very few attempts have been made to approach the study of culture from the perspective of music. At present then, it seems necessary to collect data covering a wide geographic area to provide a general picture of the situation. For the time being it is necessary to engage in an extensive study.

Accordingly, this report has been on Afghanistan, the data on which have been chosen from the record of an extensive field survey conducted at the nation-state level. This field survey in Afghanistan was conducted after some preliminary surveys, as an Overseas Academic Survey sponsored by the Ministry of Education Fund for Academic Researches in 1973 and 1975.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

Change through time is a universal phenomenon in the world of music, especially of folk music. And in this process it is possible to speculate on those elements in the structure of music that change easily and those which do not. Those that do not change easily can become the core in establishing music culture areas. But in the study of folk music, which is highly complex and diverse, further close examination is necessary to clarify the entire structure of West Asian music.

The analysis in this specific case study attempts to approach such an end. The study is based on materials collected during my previous surveys and on two field

surveys mentioned above. However it may be reasonable to suppose some change has been compelled in a few aspects of music culture through the drastic political miseries of recent years.

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