

Characteristics of Afghan Folk Music : A Comparative Study of the Musical Characters of the Tajik, Uzbek, Pashtun and Hazara Tribes

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Characteristics of Afghan Folk Music: A Comparative Study of the Musical Characters of the Tajik, Uzbek, Pashtun and Hazara Tribes

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The Afghan nation consists of four major tribes, the Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Hazaras, plus a number of minor ethnic groups, whose culture is a mixture of Persian, Central Asian, and North Indian cultures. In order to discuss the characteristics of Afghan music, therefore, it is necessary to consider the characteristics of each ethnic group. This article is a comparative study of tone scales, rhythms, vocal technique, and instruments and their combination in the music of the four major ethnic groups. Through an analysis of the membership and repertoires of each performing group, observations are made on inter-tribal intercourse in music.

It is difficult to find such modes as Indian *raga*, *tala*, and Persian *dastgah* among the tone scales and the rhythms of Afghan music. Noteworthy in terms of vocal technique is that the Hazara tribe is distinctive among all the Afghan tribes. Among the musical instruments, a notable Indian influence on the Pashtun music, Central Asian influence on that of the Uzbeks, and Persian influence on the Tajik music is observable. Very little Persian, Central Asian, and Indian influence can be detected in Hazara instruments, which seem to maintain a peculiarity of their own. There is also a high degree of intercourse between the Tajiks and the Uzbeks, whereas the Pashtuns and the Hazaras appear to mix little with other tribes.

Although each ethnic group has its own distinctive characteristics, some features are common to all Afghan tribes: In Afghan music, there is a lack of "classic" music. Then, including instrumental performances without any vocal section, every piece of Afghan folk music is predicated on the assumption that there is a "song". Finally, their music has a common tendency toward strong beats.

I. INTRODUCTION

In essence the folk music of Afghanistan can be included in the general category of Persian music.¹⁾ But despite universal qualities connected with Persian music, every tribe possesses its own distinct musical character, and the differences are so

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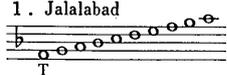
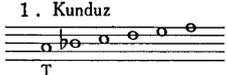
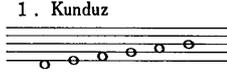
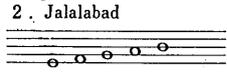
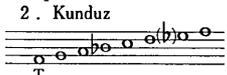
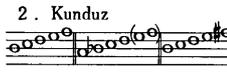
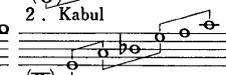
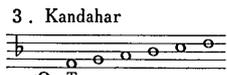
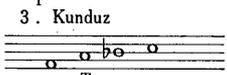
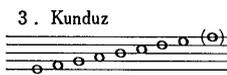
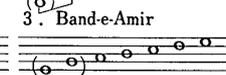
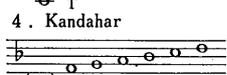
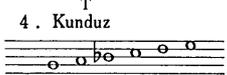
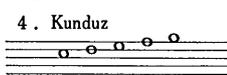
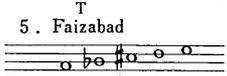
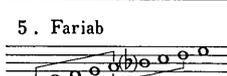
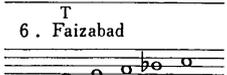
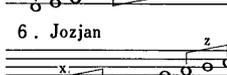
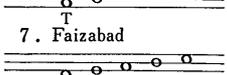
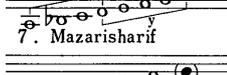
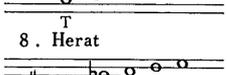
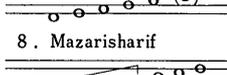
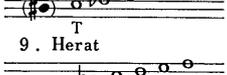
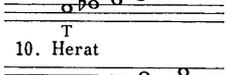
obvious that the relatively untrained ear can determine to which tribe a particular music belongs. Certainly, it is impossible to discuss the folk music of a heterogeneous nation such as Afghanistan as a single entity. First it is necessary to clarify the musical characteristics of each tribe, by taking its music as a basic unit. Only then can such general questions as whether the music of each tribe exists relatively independent of others, whether it intermingles with that of other tribes as a result of contacts and fusion, or whether or not there exists a musical character common to all Afghan tribes be answered.

This article presents a comparative study of several selected aspects of the musical characteristics of various Afghan tribes, using data collected in 1973 during field research financed by the Ministry of Education Fund for Academic Research.

II. TONE SCALES

The tone scales derived from the songs of the major Afghan tribes, Pashtun, Tajik, Uzbek, and Hazara, are shown in Table 1. Songs which best represent the

Table 1. Tone Scales Derived from Various Afghan Folk Songs

1. Jalalabad 	1. Kunduz 	1. Kunduz 	1. Kabul 
2. Jalalabad 	2. Kunduz 	2. Kunduz 	2. Kabul 
3. Kandahar 	3. Kunduz 	3. Kunduz 	3. Band-e-Amir 
4. Kandahar 	4. Kunduz 	4. Kunduz 	
	5. Faizabad 	5. Fariab 	
	6. Faizabad 	6. Jozjan 	
	7. Faizabad 	7. Mazarisharif 	
	8. Herat 	8. Mazarisharif 	
	9. Herat 		
	10. Herat 		

Notes: T = finalis

characteristics of each tribe have been selected, and for each song all the tones appearing in the melody have been arranged on a scale. Hence, these tones are not arranged to form an octave scale. In other words, if a tone which has appeared in the middle compass reappears elsewhere in either an octave higher or lower, it has also been entered on the scale. Vocal music was mostly selected because it is assumed that vocal rather than instrumental music presents a more natural picture of folk music. There follows comparative observations on the tone scales depicted in Table 1.

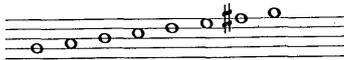
1. The Pashtun Tribe

Tone scale A-1 of the Jalalabad Region is equivalent to a major scale of Western music and, in this case, the finalis is "do" on an F-scale. This type of mode can also be seen in the scale of *Dastgah-e-Mahur* in an Iranian mode (Example 1). Similarly, *Vilaval* in a northern Indian mode called Hindustani *Raga*, also has the same mode as a Western major scale (Example 2). In this instance, therefore, the scale A-1 suggests a possible connection with these two.

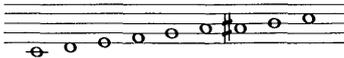
Tone scale A-2 has a different series of tones. Although the scale does not cover the whole range of an octave, it has the same characteristic as the mode discussed below for the Tajik tribe (See Example 4). This scale, also produced from a song sung by the singer of scale A-1, gives an impression of being a minor scale in relation to A-1.

Neither the compass of scale A-3 nor that of A-4, derived from songs of the

Example 1. *Dastgah-e-Mahur*



Example 2. *Raga-Vilaval*



Example 3. A Pashtun Song (The Kandahar Region)

The order of singing: (A × 2) + (interlude) + (B × 2) + (interlude) + (A × 2) + (postlude).

Kandahar Region, covers the range of a complete octave since the C-note below the F-note appears only as a major fourth C-F (See Example 3 for its original melody). The differences between these and the scale of the first Jalalabad song are that these scales lack the tone of "ti", and the tone of "fa" appears only in a transitional phase occupying a very weak position when the melody is actually sung. Thus, the songs give the impression of being sung on a pentatonic scale having no notes of a half-step difference, such as "fa" and "ti". The finalis is "F", which is the tone of "do" like the finalis of scale A-1.

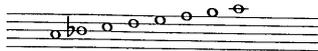
2. The Tajik Tribe

Many songs of the Tajik tribe do not cover the entire range of an octave, and it is quite difficult, therefore, to distinguish the scale or mode of one song from that of another. Nevertheless, it can reasonably be assumed that scales B-1, B-3, B-4, B-8, and B-9 fall into the same category. In other words, scale B-1 has nuclear tones of A and D, the finalis of A, and one to two tones of affixes on both sides of a tetrachord with the infixes of B and C. And if the infix G of scale B-4 is added to the suprafixes E and F of scale B-1, a scale shown in Example 4 can be assumed to emerge. When this scale is compared with some of the Iranian modes seen in *Dastgah*, certain similarities can be observed between the scale of Example 4 and the scales of *Dastgah-e Shur* in Example 5. But obviously the quartertone (indicated by ♮) that appears in *Dastgah-e-Shur* does not occur anywhere in the Tajik folk songs.

Chaharbaiti of the Kunduz Region, represented by tone scale B-2, is one of the rare cases that cover the entire range of an octave. The structure of the tone scale can be equated to that of the Pashtun tribe; i.e., to *Dastgah-e-Mahur* which has a Western major scale. The tone E-flat appears only temporarily in the middle of the melody (Example 6). *Dastgah-e-Mahur* also has a modulation called *Hesar* in which the same tone diminishes. But, in the case of B-2, the modulation occurs only partially and temporarily, and it is difficult to recognize any shift of either the pivotal or the nuclear tone. Tone scale B-6 is quite similar to scale B-2 except that it has a narrower compass.

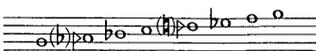
Although *Chaharbaiti* of the Faizabad Region, represented by tone scale B-5, has a tetrachord of A-D, which has already been noted in the first case above, it is different in the sense that the infix C is actually Cis. This type of tone scale also appears in *Azan*, a type of chanting. But this extremely peculiar tone scale of minor

Example 4.

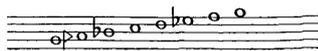


Example 5.

Dastgah-e Shur (ancient)



Dastgah-e Shur (modern)



Example 6. *Chaharbaiti* (Tajik)

prelude interlude

Example 7. *Hesar*

2nd . minor 3rd . minor 2nd has its counterparts in the Arabic *Hyaz* and Iranian *Hesar* which is a modulated form of *Dastgah-e-Chahargah* (See Example 7).

The scale B-10 is rather *Engemelodisch*, having a single nuclear tone of D. Since this can be considered an imperfect form of tone scale B-7, scales B-7 and B-10 can be classified into the same category. These scales have certain points in common with the scales of Uzbek music which will be discussed later.

As seen above, of several modes by the Tajik tribe—three in this case—the one most frequently used is the type of the first instance, as shown on Example 4. Although these Tajik songs were collected in three different regions, Kunduz, Badakhshan, and Herat, they share certain common characteristics and no major regional difference emerges. Among these shared features are: Many melodies that do not cover the entire compass of an octave; the existence of clear tetrachord governed by nuclear tones; and *Engemelodies* with only one nuclear tone are often observed.

3. The Uzbek Tribe

Compared with the songs of the Tajiks, many Uzbek songs cover the entire range of an octave or even more. They also have several types of mode. The following analysis is made according to the order shown in Table 3.

Samples C-1, C-5, C-6, C-7, and C-8 fall into the same category of tone scale. It can easily be seen, without further elaboration, that the scales of C-1, C-7 and C-8 are identical. Scale C-5 belongs to this category because B appears only temporarily in the melody. Scale C-6 also belongs to this category because the usage of B is limited only in the low compass (x), and in the high compass (z) it becomes H. Hence, the range covered by the middle compass (y) and high compass (z) can be

Example 8.

Bayat-e Tork (ancient) *Shekaste*

Example 9. An Uzbek Folk Song Played on the *Tambur* (Mazarisharif)



Example 10.



considered to be identical to the other in this category. A similar model structure to this type of tone scale can be found in *Bayat-e-Tork* and its modulated form, *Shekaste*, in the Iranian *Dastgah* (See Example 8).

Tone scale C-3 is identical to many of the Tajik scales mentioned above (Example 4), and scale C-4 can be regarded as a scale the range of which falls short of the entire octave of *Dastgah-e-Mahur*, which is equivalent to a Western major scale (Example 1).

Tone scale C-2, produced from an Uzbek folk song played on the *tambur*, is a good example of the repetition of highly skilled modulation technique (Example 9). Although this kind of modulation appears to suggest an intentionally adopted technique, probably to produce a variation in instrumental music, this type of modulation also appears in simple, vocal folk songs. It is possible, therefore, to regard this type of modulation as one of the musical characters of the Uzbek tribe. In the case of C-6, for example, H in the high compass becomes B in the low compass. This can be considered to be a partial modulation. In actually playing the song from which scale C-8 is derived, the pentachord of the middle compass (D-E-F-G-A) is repeated in the higher compass, in which the base note of the pentachord is A (A-H-C-D-E). In other words, this modulation is explainable only if it is assumed that the scale is a conjunction of two identical pentachords (Example 10: The higher pentachord is incomplete).

Many Uzbek songs have an imperfect cadence. The final note of each phrase always gives the impression of being unfinished and being perpetually continuous. This also dominates the melody throughout a song.

Another characteristic of Uzbek music is that many melodies have a strong tendency toward a descending nature. Most songs in the first category that have a

wide compass have melodies of a descending nature. Some have so-called tumbling strains in which the melody begins with a high tone and descends in a successive order, and others have phrases in which the melody rises successively three steps, descends successively six steps, and the following phrase begins with another high tone. This descending nature of melodies can be found in all Uzbek songs.

As discussed above, Uzbek songs, like Tajik songs, have several types of mode (three cited in this article) and the type that appears more frequently is represented by tone scale C-8 (Table 1). The characteristics of Uzbek songs can be summarized as having modulation, imperfect cadence, and a descending nature of melodies.

4. The Hazara Tribe

Compared with the songs of the other three tribes, those of the Hazaras have extremely peculiar characteristics. The most peculiar is the existence of an open fourth (E-1) as shown on scales D-1 and D-2. Above this open fourth, which has no infixes, appears E which is one octave higher than E in the open fourth which forms a fifth of A-E. As a result, a tone scale which is a conjunction of a tetrachord and pentachord is formed. Moreover, two infixes H and Cis, are added in D-1 and an infix B is added in D-2. And both in D-1 and D-2 the infrafix of H is added, thus forming another open fourth linked with the fourth above. This is elaborated below. Reporting on a similar instance, Sakata and Sakata²⁾ argue that the structure of this type of scale is a disjunction of two tetrachords (Example 11). But by actually listening to the melody, it is easy to tell that A is more dominant than H because the finalis is A. Therefore, their scale will, after all, show a similar structure to that of D-2 (Table 1). It should be noted that in tone scale D-1 Cis appears below the higher minor third which has a nuclear tone E, and the minor third of E-Cis appears frequently in the melody itself, thus making the H rather insignificant. The lower fourth of H-E appears between measures only as a transitional melody which has no verses but a prolongation of a vowel (Example 12). This portion in the melody should, therefore, be treated separately from the main melody of the song. Sakata and Sakata argue that this portion is sung in a fifth or fourth (Example 11-b). But according to our recordings, though the low H is an unsteadily oscillating tone,

Example 11. Sakata and Sakata (Hazara)



Example 12.



2) Sakata [1968: *Explanatory Text*].

it is hardly recognizable as A. Thus, the example shown on Example 12 should be regarded as my conclusion.

In addition, the Hazara tribe has another type of tone scale. Tone scale D-3, produced from recordings made in the Band-e Amir Region, is clearly a different scale from D-1 or D-2. In actual singing, the melody begins with a high tone and descends succeedingly, a characteristic similar to that of the Uzbeks.

III. RHYTHMS

There is no such thing as “rhythmic mode” in Afghan songs. In order to determine the characteristics of Afghan rhythms, therefore, it is necessary to observe many different aspects of the rhythm: Is it metric or melismatic? What are the meters? Can the beats be divided evenly, into 3 to 1, or into 4 to 1 ratio? What are the tempos?

The characteristic of Afghan folk music common to all the tribes is that very few songs have a melismatic tendency. Except for a few melismatic songs of very free rhythm consisting of prolonged vowels heard among the Turkoman tribe, for an introductory portion of a Pashtun song called *Ghazal*, and for a short phrase consisting of prolonged vowels that appear temporarily in the songs of the Hazara tribe discussed above, most Afghan songs have metric and accentual rhythms. There is virtually no song with a “slow” or “leisurely” tempo. Their tempos are at least M.M. ♩ = 70, and an overwhelming majority of songs have tempos around ♩ = 100; i.e., Allegretto or Animato.

Tribal Rhythm Preferences

1. Pashtun

The basic rhythm of the Pashtun tribe is duple time. But occasional 6/8 time can be found in addition to the 2/4 time. In the 2/4 time, the pattern of rhythm can be described as “vivacious” with dotted beats like .

Also in the 6/8 time, the rhythm is “vivacious” as  and has no indication of being legato.

2. Tajik

The rhythm of the Tajik tribe shows more variety than that of the Pashtuns'. Although the basic rhythm is duple time, one of the songs in the Kunduz Region has 3/4 time and others have 6/8 time. Moreover, when the tempo of a duple time song quickens as the singer becomes excited, the rhythm sometimes changes into septuple time by creating an insufficient beating effect as 2/4  → 7/16 .³⁾ Although this tendency is rather common in the

3) For a good example of this pattern, see “Pattern by Aoki” Fujii [1975: 29], *Explanatory Text*.

Kunduz Region, it is especially noticeable among the Tajiks of the Badakhshan area.

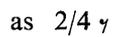
Among the most popular folk songs (*Chaharbaiti*) in Afghanistan is a song called “*Shakukujan*”, that is in septuple time. But the Tajik children clap their hands as they sing like  (▽ = clapping). Although this uneven rhythm is quite naturally and unconsciously done, it is impossible for an outside observer to catch it without making a conscious effort.

Another characteristic is that a cross-rhythm often appears in a song’s relationship to its accompaniment. One song, for example, has 6/8 time, but the accompaniment keeps 3/4 time as:

song (6/8)  . Sachs calls this type of cross-rhythm *Hemiola* and notes that it is the simplest form found in the folk music of various places.⁴⁾ Although the tendency toward 7/8 time occurs most frequently in the northeastern region, around Badakhshan, the tendency toward cross-rhythm is found relatively often among the Tajiks in the western region, around Herat. In addition, some songs have a reversed type of cross-rhythm; i.e., a song of 3/4 time

is accompanied by 6/8 time rhythm as:  . This type of

cross-rhythm is most often found in Iran. Our ears, which would normally interpret a rhythm as  , by dividing it into three parts, would be jarred when an audience starts clapping the same rhythm as  by dividing it into two parts. This apparently results from an obvious national difference in the sense of rhythm or the taste in rhythm, just as it is in the case of the septuple time.

In Tajik music, dotted notes such as  appear most frequently in the apportionment of beat length, as they do in Pashtun music. Patterns such as $2/4 \gamma$  ,  , γ  ,  and $2/4 \gamma$  , which are lacking the first beat, are also discernible.

3. Uzbek

Almost all Uzbek songs have duple time. The tempo is slower and calmer than that of the Pashtuns or the Tajiks. The beats in each measure tend to be divided evenly as $2/4$  ,  ,  , \downarrow with very few or no dotted notes being employed. The pattern which lacks the first beat, such as γ  , can also be found, though less frequently than in Tajik songs.

4) Sachs [1961: 255].

4. Hazara

There are two major tendencies in the rhythm of the Hazaras. The first is that quintuple time and septuple time based on duple time are widely employed, just as in Tajik songs. This tendency is especially noticeable in *dambura* solos and *dambura* accompaniments. The second is that free timing of rhythm throughout a song is often observed as mentioned in the discussion on tone scales D-1 and D-2 (Table 1). In this case, free rhythm does not mean that the melodies are melismatic, as stated above, but rather that they have a strong tendency to be syllabic. This type of rhythm may therefore be more properly called irregular time, or a single beat. The melody from which tone scale D-1 has been derived sounds, at first, as if it were a repetition of quintuple time measures; but its pattern fails to continue. In this case, although it could be interpreted as an irregular alternation of duple and triple time, this pattern is, rather, an adaptation of the rhythm to the syllables of the verses; or, stated differently, the rhythm is mostly controlled by the syllables of the verses.

Although each tribe has a different pattern of rhythm, there is a common preference for non-melismatic and accentual rhythms. Odd numbered time and irregular rhythm also appear frequently. But only the second tendency found among the Hazaras can be said to be the rhythm of an 'additive' nature.⁵⁾ The other quintuple time and septuple time are some type of shortened pattern of duple time rhythm.

IV. TECHNIQUE OF SINGING, STYLE OF SINGING, AND MANNERISM OF VOICE⁶⁾

So far this article has been a comparative study of tribal characteristics in terms of tone scale and rhythm. But these two factors alone are hardly enough to determine the musical characteristics of each tribe. In reality, however, when a song is heard the first thing that can be clearly distinguished is the voice and the method of singing. Even if two songs had an identical tone scale and rhythm, they would sound completely different when they sung in different vocal expression. Quality and color of voice, technique of vocalization, and mannerism in following melodies are, therefore, all extremely important factors in giving clarity to the characteristics of songs. In Afghan songs, too, certain voice mannerism can be distinguished for each tribe.

The most noticeable characteristic common to all the Afghan tribes is a wide compass of voice, especially in the higher range. Some of the samples for each Afghan tribe are: from Fis to Áis and from G to Á in Pashtun songs; from A to Á, from B to Ḟ, and from H to Ḟ in Tajik songs; from As to Ás, from Fis to Ġis, from H to Ḟis, and from E to Ġ in Uzbek songs; and from H to Ḟis and Cis to Ċ in Hazara songs. In these instances the low compass is not utilized. Only the middle and high compasses are used. Moreover, not everyone can vocalize such high pitches as Á and Ḃ (=Áis), those most frequently used, or Ċ, which is vocalized falsetto for a

5) Sachs [1953: 25].

6) Terminology used by Sachs [1961: 118].

fleeting moment in Hazara songs. This tendency toward the emphasis of higher compasses, which can be found in many parts of the world, is extremely interesting since it can be interpreted as a way of distinguishing between the "singing voice" and the "speaking voice or voice in everyday usage". The "singing voice" occupies its position by being "different" from the voice of everyday conversation. This suggests that unless an act of singing takes place for the purpose of "penetrating through" as a means of signaling, it is different from an act of everyday life. Another inference that can be made from this is the established "conditions for being a singer". That is to say, an ability to vocalize a high compass is one of the conditions or qualifications for becoming a singer. In all tribes in Afghanistan, singers are always male vocalists of high voice range (tenors).

Among all the voices that command high compasses, that which gives an impression of especially "shrill" is the Pashtun voice. The throat is contracted by straining the larynx region, and the vocal chords are also extremely strung up, thereby producing a powerful voice with a quality of keenness. The "echoing" effect is mostly produced in the oral cavity, and the "placing" takes place around the front teeth. Since frictional noise in the larynx and howling are effectively avoided in making the sound, a clear voice with very little noise can be produced. It is a very smooth voice with little vibrato.

The voice produced by Tajik and Uzbek singers is also made by straining the larynx region and contracting the throat. But compared with the Pashtun method, their method does not require an unnatural effort to produce the voice, and since both the placing and echoing take place farther inside the mouth, the voice itself sounds more natural. Although it has no vibrato, there is a type of tremolo for the purpose of figurating notes and melodies. The tremolo occurs most frequently at the end of a phrase, and a vocal technique resembling portamento, which shows a smooth descent from one tone to another, is salient. Especially in Uzbek songs, such an effect gives an impression that the melody line is roundish or curvilinear.

The Hazaras have the most complicated and peculiar vocal technique. One of the techniques used in songs, the tone scales of which are shown on Table 1 (scales D-1 and D-2), is the usage of falsetto at the highest pitch \dot{E} (actual pitch is \dot{F} is). In the song represented by tone scale D-1, whenever the pitch of E appears, only this pitch is sung in falsetto. The song of tone scale D-2 is characterized by additional falsetto pitches of \dot{F} and \dot{A} (actual pitches are \dot{G} is and \dot{C} is). Another peculiar technique of the Hazara tribe is the usage of vibrato. Since it is really a technique to oscillate between falsetto and natural voice while maintaining the same pitch, it may not be appropriate to call it a vibrato. Rather, this may be related to what Sachs calls a "quivering voice like that of a sheep found in the area extending to the east of Mongol".⁷⁾ Indeed, Mongolian songs frequently contain falsettos in the high compass and a type of trill done in skillfully manipulated falsetto—in this case,

7) Sachs [1961: 119].

between two different pitches. On this point, it can be said that of all the Afghan folk songs, those of the Hazara are the closest to Mongolian songs.⁸⁾

V. INSTRUMENTS, THEIR COMBINATION AND THE PATTERN OF PERFORMANCE

1. Introduction

Each tribal group has different types of musical instruments. Although the tone scales, rhythms, and voices discussed above are essential to the study of tribal differences, they contain some uncertain or indefinite elements since they often indicate traces of acculturation and assimilation. But because musical instruments are quite tangible and provide less transitional evidence, they are the most convincing elements with which to show the relationships among the music of different tribes and culture areas. Since other scholars have already made studies on the classification, distribution, and diffusion of musical instruments, emphasis here will be placed on the pattern of the combination of instruments.

First, a type of performance that uses no musical instrument should be discussed. Many Hazara songs are purely vocal and are presented with no instrumental accompaniment. When a member of another tribe happens to sing a song, such as *Chaharbaiti*, without using musical instruments, it is only spontaneous and a substitute, such as clapping by Tajik children, is often employed. But the Hazaras seem to have songs that intentionally exclude any type of musical instrument. According to the Hazara tribesmen interviewed, singing without musical instruments sometimes continues all night during village celebrations.

The only musical instrument used by the Hazaras is the *dambura*, which, although a stringed instrument, can be considered more of a percussion instrument, judging from its function. It is generally used to accompany vocal music. Possibly, the Hazaras borrowed the *dambura* from either the Uzkebs or the Tajiks. Although the Hazaras have long maintained a highly developed form of vocal music, it is most unlikely that they have never had any musical instrument of their own, but, for some reason the transmission of their own musical instrument may have ceased. It can be further assumed that they could have developed the advanced form of vocal music after the disappearance of their musical instruments.

Songs for singing in unison by a chorus are rare. But the Hazaras have some, as do the Pashtuns. And in all tribes, *Chaharbaiti* is sometimes sung by a number of people using a method resembling responsoria, in which whenever a solo verse is finished a short phrase is inserted in unison.

2. Basic Patterns of Instrument Combination

Examples of the combination of two or more musical instruments are shown in

8) Although a more interesting observation could be made if the fact that the Hazaras are Mongoloid is taken into consideration. But beyond a brief mention this point will not be further discussed here.

Table 2. Combinations of Musical Instruments in Afghan Music

Number of Kinds of Instrument	Group No.	Tribe	Region	Voice	Melody-Playing Instruments			Rhythm-Playing Instruments	
					String	Wind	Keyboard	Drum	Other Percussion Instruments
two	1	Pashtun	Kabul	No	sarinda			dohl	
	2	Hazara	Bamyan	No	dambura			zerbaghali	tal
	3	Uzbek	Mazarisharif	Yes	tambur			zerbaghali	
	4	Uzbek	Mazarisharif	Yes	dambura			zerbaghali	(tal)
	5	Tajik	Kunduz	Yes	ghichak			zerbaghali	(tal)
	6	Tajik	Kunduz	Yes	dambura			zerbaghali	(tal)
	7	Tajik	Kunduz	Yes	tambur			(zerbaghali)	
	8	Tajik	Mazarisharif	Yes	(tambur)			tabla-baya	
	9	Tajik	Mazarisharif	No	(tambur)	tula		zerbaghali	
	10	Tajik	Mazarisharif	Yes	(dotar)			(zerbaghali)	
	11	Tajik	Herat	Yes				(zerbaghali)	tal
three	12	Pashtun	Kabul	Yes	rubab			dohl	
	13	Pashtun	Jalalabad	Yes	rubab		(harmonia)	tabla-baya	
	14	Pashtun	Jalalabad	Yes	rubab		(harmonia)	tabla-baya	
	15	Tajik	Kunduz	Yes	(ghichak)		(harmonia)	zerbaghali	
	16	Tajik	Faizabad	Yes	rubab		(harmonia)	zerbaghali	tal
	17	Tajik	Herat	Yes	(tambur)			zerbaghali	
					dotar			(zerbaghali)	
	18	Pashtun	Kandahar	Yes	tambur		harmonia	tabla-baya	
	19	Pashtun	Kabul	Yes	rubab	tula		tabla-baya	
four or more	20	Pashtun	Kabul	Yes	sarinda		(harmonia)	tabla-baya	
	21	Tajik	Mazarisharif	Yes	dilruba		(harmonia)	dohl	
				sitar					
				tambur					
				rubab					

NOTES (1) Categories such as melody-playing instruments, rhythm-playing instruments, etc. are based on Sakurai's classification, since they seem well-suited to the purpose of this study. Although Sakurai classifies harmonium under "chord-playing instruments", it is a melody-playing instrument in Afghan music. Since there is no harmonic aspect in Afghan music, it has been deliberately classified differently in order to avoid confusion.

(2) () indicates the player of this instrument is also a vocalist.

Table 2. The first basic pattern that emerges from this table and one common to almost all songs is **VOICE** + **MELODY-PLAYING INSTRUMENTS** + **RHYTHM-PLAYING INSTRUMENTS**. Depending on the type of instrument and combination, the characteristics of each tribe emerge.

It is necessary to add a note on the VOICE column. In all the tribes, the vocal part is included in all songs as an essential element, and music with no vocal part is exceptional. Musicians seldom play an instrumental solo on their own initiative. An exception was when they were requested to do so in order for the research team to study the tones and characteristics of their instruments. Typical of music without the vocal part is the example of the Mazarisharif *tambur* player of Group No. 8. This player possessed an outstanding technique, and could perform a wide variety of figuration, variation, and modulation (Score 9). Such a player who can play a melody playing instrument that could replace singing, should perform very well without a vocalist. But even in such a case, the tune played on instruments always follows the melodies of vocal part. This is true for any combination of instruments, and indicates that singing is an absolutely indispensable element in Afghan music.

3. Tribal Characteristics in Musical Instruments

(1) UZBEK

The Uzbek tribe has the *tambur* and the *dambura* as melody-playing instruments and the *zerbaghali* as a rhythm-playing instrument. The *dambura* is similar to the Central Asian *dombura* and the Turkish *saz* in its tones and method of playing and can be considered a native instrument of a Central Asian Turkish tribe such as the Uzbeks.

(2) TAJIK

There is a notable difference in melody-playing instruments between the northern and northeastern Tajiks inhabiting the provinces of Badakhshan and Kunduz, and the western Tajiks living in the province of Herat. The former uses the *ghichak* and the *dambura* along with the *tambur*, and the latter uses the *dotar* with the *tambur*. Whereas the instruments of the northern Tajiks show evidence of having been influenced by the Uzbeks, probably because of long cultural intercourse, those of the western Tajiks (although the *tambur* and the *dotar* have been enlarged) retain a degree of Persian influence, especially that of the *setar*, judging from their tones and method of playing. The *zerbaghali* is mostly employed as a rhythm-playing instrument, and although made of different materials, it could possibly be a variation of Persian *tombak*.

(3) PASHTUN

Instruments used by the Pashtuns are clearly different from those of either the Tajiks or the Uzbeks. Although the *tambur* is their melody-playing instrument, just as it is among the Tajiks and the Uzbeks, the *rubab*, supported by the *sarinda*,

the *dilruba* and the *sitar*, is their basic instrument. These clearly indicate the influence of Hindustani music. As rhythm-playing instruments, the *dohl* and the *tabla-baya* are employed instead of the *zerbaghali*. Although the *dohl* is an instrument peculiar to the Pashtuns, the usage of the *tabla-baya* is another indication of Hindustani influence.

The Pashtuns have a clear tendency to combine several kinds of instruments for melody playing. A typical example is Group No. 20 (Table 2), which consists of five kinds of instruments, including the *harmonia*. In this case, instead of all the instruments playing different parts they all play the melody only by figurating it occasionally. Their function is strictly playing the melodies. Thus, although the Pashtuns employ a variety of instruments, the basic pattern $\boxed{\text{VOICE}} + \boxed{\text{MELODY-PLAYING INSTRUMENTS}} + \boxed{\text{RHYTHM-PLAYING INSTRUMENTS}}$ remains unchanged. When two or more instruments are combined for playing melodies in the music of other tribes, their role in performance is the same.

From another perspective this kind of group performance, including Indian musical instruments, illustrates an aspect of the state of contemporary Afghan music. The leader of Group No. 20, who is both composer and performer, once studied music in India, and this is one reason for the number of Hindustani instruments used by his group. He also performs on the radio and makes recordings. The inclusion of many Indian instruments is an indication of the newness and authoritativeness of his music. This aspect of Afghan music as a new trend or fashion cannot be ignored in the study of folk music. His music and his group are, in contrast to the traditional folk music, a new type of "city music" representing the "urbanization" or "Indianization" of Afghan music, which is mostly taking place in Kabul and its hinterland. His influence, however, is spreading to many other localities. The large number of instruments used by Tajik group in Mazarisharif (Group No. 21), and the adoption of the *harmonia* by many other groups are obvious indications of the Indianization or urbanization of music that is taking place outside of the Kabul Region.

4. The Significance of Rhythm-Playing Instruments

At this point it is useful to return to the original discussion of the basic pattern, $\boxed{\text{VOICE}} + \boxed{\text{MELODY-PLAYING INSTRUMENTS}} + \boxed{\text{RHYTHM-PLAYING INSTRUMENTS}}$, and to examine it from a different angle. It has been shown that even if several kinds of melody-playing instruments are employed, their function in performance is strictly the playing of melodies, and voice is the indispensable element in every performance. But it should be recognized that in every case the rhythm-playing instruments is another indispensable element. This Afghan practice cannot be dismissed as a matter of course, considering that in many parts of the world folk music does not necessarily require rhythm-playing instruments in the performance of vocal music. As previously stated, Afghan music lacks in melismatic nature and has accentual rhythms that can be described as "vivacious". Another

noteworthy characteristic of Afghan music is an emphasis on rhythm or an "attachment" for beats.

VI. INTER-TRIBAL RELATIONSHIPS

Another question regarding tribal characteristics should now be addressed. To what degree are such characteristics and peculiarities confined within each tribe and how far have they been adopted by other tribes?

Almost all the Pashtun and Hazara performing groups are composed of homogeneous members.⁹⁾ But some members of Tajik and Uzbek groups occasionally

Table 3. Tribal Orientation of Repertoire According to Performing Groups

Tribal Affiliation of Performing Groups	Tribal or Local Affiliation of Songs Performed	Proportion (percentage)
1. Pashtun	Pashtun	100
2. Tajik	Tajik	73
	Uzbek	8
	Mazarisharif ^{a)}	7
	Kabul ^{a)}	5
	Pashtun	3
	Logar ^{a)}	2
	Shomali ^{a)}	2
	Total (Tajik)	100
3. Uzbek	Uzbek	55
	Mazarisharif ^{a)}	37
	Tajik	8
	Total (Uzbek)	100
4. Hazara-vocal ^{b)}	Hazara	approx. 100
	except: ^{c)}	
	1 Mazarisharif song	
	1 Aibak song	
	1 Kuchi (Pashtun) music played on the <i>nai</i>	

- a) These songs of Mazarisharif, Kabul, Logar, and Shomali are not tribally oriented, rather, they sing about the peculiarities of each locality. In these cases, it is not clear which tribal group is the subject of each song. These songs are, however, most likely sung by the tribal group most dominant in each region.
- b) Most Hazara songs are performed by a single vocalist.
- c) Of these, Mazarisharif and Aibak songs are performed by the Bamyan group (footnote 9), which consists of Hazara and Tajik members. Kuchi song is an instrumental solo on the *nai*. Hence, both instances can be considered as exceptional. Since the total number of samples was small, computation of percentages was not made.

come from other tribes. The following heterogeneous groups were found: 4 Tajiks and 1 Pashtun; 2 Tajiks and 1 Uzbek; and 2 Uzbeks and 1 Tajik.

To see if these groups perform songs of other tribes, a study was made on the portion of each group's repertoire that consisted of the songs of the others (Table 3). For heterogeneous groups each group's tribal orientation was determined by the origin of its leader or vocalist, as the case may be, since songs tended to be selected according to the vocalist's tribal affiliation.

The pattern of inter-tribal intercourse in the members of performing groups and in repertoire show a certain degree of parallelism. Whereas the Pashtuns and the Hazaras tend to confine themselves their own tribal music, the Tajiks and the Uzbeks show a notable degree of interchange. Moreover, in addition to accepting Uzbek songs, the Tajiks also sing Pashtun and other tribal songs.

VII. SUMMARY

This article has compared, from several different perspectives, the characteristics of folk music of various Afghan tribes. To set the course for future studies several problematic aspects are discussed in this summary section.

Three points should be made in summary. First, although each tribe has certain musical characteristics that distinguish it from other ethnic groups, the Tajiks and the Uzbeks share many features, probably as a result of the exchange of musicians. But the Pashtuns and the Hazaras have very little intercourse with the other tribes. Furthermore, whereas the music of most Afghan tribes seems to indicate Persian, Central Asian, or Hindustani influence, only the Hazaras appear to have been exempted from these influences. As a consequence, their musical character is quite distinct from that of the tribes.

Second, a general characteristic of Afghan music is that any type of performance is organized on the assumption that singing must take place. Hence, there are very few all-instrumental performances, but occasional recitals of instrumental music by so-called virtuosos do take place. In this respect instrumental music is most developed among the Tajiks. Third, except for Hazara music, which uses comparatively few musical instruments, another characteristic of Afghan music is the emphasis on producing clearly accented beats by the use of drums.

Three main topics are in need of further research. First, the study of singing style and mannerism of voice should be further elaborated. This article has broadly discussed all the musical aspects of Afghan folk songs, and no single aspect has been discussed in detail. There are, however, many hidden factors not discernible on tone scales or rhythmic patterns extracted from actual singing. The study of singing and

9) One exception is that when the research team was making a recording of Hazara *dambura* music, in *chai-khaneh*, Bamyān, a Tajik man who happened to be there joined the performance with his *zerbaghali*. Since this was more of an accident than normal practice, it was not counted as a heterogeneous Hazara group.

voice itself should add much to what are the more mechanical aspects of musical analysis.

Second, another important aspect of music is its social setting. The function of music in a society and life, qualifications for and roles of musicians, and music as sub-culture with regard to sex and age are all significant factors that might make a large contribution to a comparative study of music. Hopefully, these will become the topics of the future study on Afghan folk music.

Third, this article is based on limited field research conducted in 1973. Because of the limited available data, it is regrettable that the music of many minority tribes, such as the Nuristan and Turkoman, could not be included. There remains much more to be studied in Afghanistan.

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