

# The Music Subcultures

## THE PAŠTUNS

Thus far I have had little to say about Paštun music beyond that created in Kabul. Now it is time to turn to Paštun folk music, which stands out sharply from the shared music culture of the North. Of course, there is no single Paštun folk music; as an ethnic group, Paštuns are extraordinarily fragmented along lineage, tribal, and confederation lines, which shift over the years, and they "exhibit a great range of cultural and social forms" (Barth 1969:117) over the wide area they inhabit (cf. Barth 1969a). Nevertheless, when a thorough study of Paštun music has been completed, I believe the interesting factor that will emerge concerning ethnic boundaries is the existence of a strong pan-Paštun stream of folklore, including tales, poems, and songs. Barth has noted "the Pathans' self-image as a characteristic and distinctive ethnic unit with unambiguous social and distributional boundaries" (1969a:119), and he cites "Pathan custom" as one of the chief attributes of Paštunhood cited by Paštuns themselves. I would argue that among the items included in "Pathan custom," along with the celebrated Paštun code of behavior (*Paštunwali*), is an intimate familiarity with the rich Paštun folklore. Here one can perhaps make an analogy of the importance of oral expression often noted among the Arabs:

The Arab's virtual obsession with oral functions can hardly escape notice; it strikes the observer in Arab reverence for language and oral arts. . . . Oral testimony in Islamic law is superior to circumstantial evidence . . . an Arab political scientist . . . has gone so far as to claim that esthetic appreciation of the language has hindered its use as a means of conveying ideas clearly. (Berger 1962:139-40)

I would not wish to state the case so strongly for Afghanistan, but even limited acquaintance with Paštuns will impress an outside observer with their respect for and interest in effective use of language; the Tappers (1973:p.c.) have noted that language (specifically the Kandahar dialect of Paštö) is a key determinant in Paštun self-identification in the Saripul area of Turkestan. It is worth noting Barth's feeling

that in the case of a spread-out ethnic group like the Paštuns, the more obvious outward structures of social life may not be the key to understanding the underlying cultural pattern:

... We must expect to find that one ethnic group, spread over a territory with varying ecologic circumstances, will exhibit regional diversities of overt institutionalized behaviour which do not reflect differences in cultural orientation. . . . It is thus inadequate to regard overt institutional forms as constituting the cultural features which at any time distinguish an ethnic group. (1969:13)

Following Barth's line of thought, then, it may not be out of place to suggest that the study of oral expressive behavior might be useful for understanding Paštun ethnic boundary maintenance.

To get at the heart of the Paštun oral phenomena referred to, we might turn to the *landai*, the most widespread poetic-musical genre among Paštuns. While each area of Paštun habitation (Lağman, Kandahar, etc.) appears to have a flourishing regional school of songwriters and tale-tellers, "every Paxtoon everywhere knows some landey by heart and molds them into songs when the occasion demands" (Shpoon 1968:44). According to Shpoon, the tunes to which the *landai* are set vary from one region to another, but the basic pattern of *landai* composition remains the same throughout the entire Paštō-speaking area.

The distinctiveness of the *landai* lies in its verse structure. Every *landai* consists of two lines only, with the second line longer than the first (generally thirteen and nine syllables, respectively). Furthermore, the second line always ends in certain syllables: *ma* or *na*. To state Shpoon's formal definition, the *landai* is "a non-rhymed two lined catalectic verse with five anapestic paeon feet, two in the first line and three in the second, ending in MA or NA" (1968:43). The strictness of the form, its brevity, and its tendency to be epigrammatic have led some observers to compare the *landai* to the haiku of Japan. Like the haiku, the *landai* first sets up an image and then clarifies and deepens its meaning. Here are two typical *landai* as transcribed and translated by Shpoon (1968:46):

Golaab che pre she bea raa shin she  
Zzre che Zakhmi she tol wojoood wer sara mrina

You cut a flower and another grows  
As red, as tender as the first;  
This is not the way with hearts.

Pe loyo ghro de Khudaay nazar dai  
Pe sar-ye waawre warawi chaaper goloona

God has an affair [lit.: an eye] with lofty mountains,  
With snow he caps them and around them plants flowers.

The stylistic uniqueness of the landai is matched by its social context, which also stands out sharply from general Afghan practice. Shpoon found that of the landais he collected among Paštun nomads in central Afghanistan, approximately 80 percent, to the best of his knowledge, had been composed by women. Two aspects of this evidence strike the observer immediately: first, that women occupy such an important position in the creation of folksong, and second, that men find no objection to singing the poems composed by women. Indeed, most of the landais are decidedly female in orientation: ". . . landey describes beauty from a woman's point of view and no creator of landey has tried to depart from her feminine emotions" (Shpoon 1968:44). Shpoon contrasts this orientation with that of those few female poets (non-Paštuns) writing in Persian, who invariably adopt the traditional male stance in composing verse.

The landai seems virtually universal among Paštuns. I have recorded examples in as distant and non-Paštun an area as Badaxšan (e.g., Anthology AST 4004 and Chapter 3, p. 179). Though Shpoon found that my Badaxšani performer (Baba Naim) was unorthodox in his musical setting of the landai, and that his arrangement of landai lines and refrain text was not standard, there was no question that the basic texts were those familiar to Paštuns across Afghanistan. I have seen two Paštuns from regions hundreds of miles apart get together and sing landais they both knew well. Particularly interesting in this respect is the manner of performing landais, since the singer must necessarily string together several of these brief couplets to create a song-length composition. Generally landais are compiled topically on such occasions, and (according to Shpoon) a man's excellence as a singer may be judged by his ability to put together a rich and subtle combination of landais.

As must be evident from the above description, two of the hallmarks of the Paštun musical subculture seem to be a high regard for song as an aspect of expressive behavior, particularly of verbal expression, and an apparent universality of basic competence among the population. This profile again marks off Paštun practice from that of the surrounding peoples, among whom music is by no means so widely respected or so frequently performed. One cannot help wonder whether this "musical egalitarianism," which extends to the lack of male musical dominance, is not a part of a larger pattern of Paštun culture. Two of the main forms of Paštun settlement described are "villages of mixed agriculturalists, organized in egalitarian patrilineal descent segments with an acephalous political form," and a pattern in which "a large sector of the ethnic group lives a pastoral nomadic life, politically organized as tribes with, in part, very great autonomy." Another



*Fig. 2.1. Paštun nomads traveling to summer pasture  
(Turkestan steppe, looking south)*

grouping of Paštuns consists of a small number of landowners, who are also organized "in some places in acephalous systems," while the remainder are Paštuns who "live as administrators, traders, craftsmen or labourers in the towns of Afghanistan and Pakistan, as an integrated part of those two states" (Barth 1969a:119). The latter group, by virtue of their integration into the traditional sedentary, largely urban sector of Afghan (or Pakistani) life, have in fact lost many of the basic Paštun characteristics Barth describes, and they have also dropped the musical practices exemplified by the landai complex.

Thus in the North, those Paštuns who are nomadic transients, mixing temporarily each year with the local populace, tend to maintain their customary way of life, even inflicting it on the surrounding non-Paštuns by expanding their grazing lands at the expense of the local farmers (see Ferdinand 1962 for details of this process in central Afghanistan). Somewhat different is the situation of other Paštuns from the southwestern, southern, and eastern regions of Afghanistan who have claimed new lands in the North (principally in Katağan) and have settled down as landowners and merchants. These Paštuns have become northernized in many ways. Shpoon is fond of quoting a poem by a southern Paštun, addressed to his compatriots who have moved to the North; in it the poet warns the reader that he will learn

to wear a čapan (the traditional Central Asian long-sleeved cloak) and eat vegetable oil (as opposed to the sheep fat beloved by the nomads). Indeed, Paštuns in northern bazaars who wear čapans and take up the local eating habits become to a great extent indistinguishable from the local ethnic groups. It is quite possible that they will learn Persian along with Pašto as children, and they are likely to pick up Uzbek as well in some locales. One horsecart driver I met in Aqča was quadrilingual, alternately speaking Pašto, Persian, Uzbek, and Turkmen with his customers. We have already noted that Paštuns may become performers in the local teahouse style in the North as well.

It is clear that in speaking of a Paštun musical subculture one must first define which Paštuns are being discussed. For any given Paštun in the North, one must first note his general relationship to the region and its population before assessing his musical tendencies. Even among established northern Paštuns the situation is not uniform. For example, Shpoon's family, though resident in the Xanabad area of Katağan for some fifty years, has maintained strong Paštun identity: witness Shpoon's activity as a Pašto poet and as a folklorist. Ethnographic investigation into the overall cultural situation of northern Paštuns is only now beginning, and until we have data on the distribution of Paštun social structure and patterns of ecological accommodation in the North, we cannot properly assess the role of musical behavior in the general cultural orientation. It is already clear, however, that in addition to reaching a musical accommodation with the local population of the North, Paštuns (to a greater or lesser extent, regionally and individually) maintain a considerable interest in preserving their characteristic folklore and music.

### THE KAZAKHS

The Kazakhs, of all the groups under discussion, tend to come the closest to maintaining a closed musical subculture. The preservation by a small minority people of its musical traditions on alien soil is not unusual; one need only think of the case of the Nekrasov Cossacks (see Listopadov 1953), who returned to their homeland singing their old songs after two centuries in Turkey. The case of the Afghan Kazakhs, however, is a bit more surprising, since they are surrounded not by hostile ethnic groups but by their Central Asian Turkic brethren, the Uzbeks and Turkmens, whose languages they well understand.

Unfortunately, we have so far only the word of the Mazar-i Šarif Kazakhs that their musical world is a sealed one. We would need considerably more research into Kazakh family life in Afghanistan to properly assess the musical situation. Thus, when musicians and



*Fig. 2.2. Kazakh musician in his textile shop*

merchants say that they take no interest in the shared urban music culture of Mazar, and play no Uzbek-Tajik teahouse favorites at their weddings, we must take the statements with a grain of salt at present. In fact, Sakata (1971:2) reports that among the Kazakhs of the Herat area "those born in Afghanistan are more interested in Persian and Uzbek songs." Nevertheless, the fact that some Kazakhs still sing and play songs of the Alma-Ata homeland in authentic style after forty-odd years in Afghanistan is remarkable. Perhaps the Mazar community is more conservative in this respect than the Herati Kazakhs, since one of the best musicians I recorded there, Kengšilbāi, was a young man who was born in Afghanistan. In 1972 I was told that Kengšilbāi had gone to Turkey for "garibi" (business); it would be interesting to follow up on his trip and gain his impressions of the musical world of Turkish Kazakhs, about which there is presently no literature to my knowledge.

The Mazar Kazakhs seem quite eager to perform their music. Thus far I have been unable to make direct correlations between their repertoire and that available in published sources of the music of Kazakhstan. This is hardly surprising, given the breadth of the Kazakh repertoire and its variegated regional inflection. However, many of the

names of songs and instrumental pieces (e.g., "Qiz-žibek," "Kokšetau") are familiar enough to anyone who knows Kazakh music. The Mazar Kazakhs' interest in keeping up their traditions is particularly well illustrated by their choice of lutes. Unable for many years to find an authentic *dümbra* to replace the much-repaired specimen they had brought from their homeland, they modified a Turkestani dambura by planing down the neck to the proper shape and adding frets. By 1972, however, they had managed to send one of their number to Kazakhstan and, much to their delight, had obtained a handsome new Soviet Kazakh *dümbra*. The playing style seems purely Kazakh, and it contrasts markedly with the plucking and strumming styles of the other lutes common to the Afghan North.

Despite the presence of a younger performer in Mazar, it seems unlikely that the Kazakhs can long maintain a distinct music subculture in the face of the homogenization created by the radio. Here again the new ethnic programming of Radio Afghanistan may be decisive. Aimaq, the director of the regional programming, agreed to my suggestion that Kazakh music, even if only in small quantities, be included alongside Uzbek and Turkmen selections in the broadcasts. We must wait some time for the results of such an introduction of Kazakh music over the airwaves. The Mazar Kazakhs indicated to me that they would be pleased by such a gesture and had in fact noticed the bit of their music that had already been broadcast. As noted earlier, even a very minor addition to radio programming can have important results in strengthening a group's interest in its ethnic identity.

### THE TURKMENS

I noted in the Introduction that the Turkmens are the only people of the North to live in three lands (Iran, the USSR, and Afghanistan). For Iran, data on the Turkmen music culture are extremely limited, and there had been no publications as of 1973. For Soviet Turkmenistan, curiously, the picture is not much brighter. Since the excellent work by Beliaev and Uspenskii of 1928 (*Turkmenskaia muzyka*), there has been practically no publication on Turkmen music and, as far as I could tell in a brief visit to Ashkhabad, little current scholarship is in progress. Thus it is quite difficult to assess the earlier social side of music in pre-Soviet days, before the Turkmens had clearly split off into "national" groups and had adapted to varying acculturational situations. Most of my information, then, draws on *Turkmenskaia muzyka*, Soviet recordings, my own fieldwork in northern Afghanistan, and data from Afghan Turkmen informants, particularly Allah Berdi Surxi, director of Turkmen programming for Radio Afghanistan.

Though the distribution and tribal identification of Afghan Turkmen has been well documented and a certain amount of historical reconstruction has been done (Bregel 1959; Jarring 1939a), the ethnographic data for Afghan Turkmen are remarkably sparse, particularly on the aspect of greatest interest to the present discussion: Turkmen acculturation to the patterns of living in the Afghan North. More than any other of the major northern groups, the Turkmen are still isolated in that region. Surxi puts the number of Turkmen students at Kabul University at less than ten, and there are not enough Turkmen in bureaucratic or military positions to consider as being culturally significant. Though no statistics are available (we do not even know the total number of Turkmen in Afghanistan), it seems that Turkmen are undereducated even by Afghan standards. There is still time for proper evaluation of Turkmen life in the large number of domed-roof villages scattered across the North, and it is to be hoped that anthropologists will shift their attention from the Paštun nomads, the perennial goal of so many fieldworkers, to the question of the once-nomadic Turkmen of the northern qışlaqs.

Although the Turkmen have turned toward teahouse music as part of a general pattern of adaptation into the basically Uzbek-Tajik culture of the North, it should not be assumed that they have jettisoned their own music culture. Since the Turkmen are by and large isolated from the main stream of change in Afghanistan, they have preserved in large measure their own approach to music. Surxi feels that teahouse music was adopted for two basic reasons: first, teahouse music is technically a good deal easier to perform than is traditional Turkmen music, and second, one can draw a crowd — in other words, make a living — only with Uzbek-Tajik music, the major musical current of the North. I find this evaluation perfectly reasonable. Part of the success of teahouse music certainly lies in the technical accessibility of the instruments used (dambura and ğičak), at least at the basic level necessary for ğaribi-şowqi competence; and Turkmen music unquestionably requires a greater virtuosity in both its vocal and its instrumental performance than do the samowad favorites. As to Surxi's second point, it is of course true that no urban audience will listen for long to Turkmen music, which is both linguistically and musically too alien from the lingua franca of the bazaar.

Turkmen music is a complete world unto itself. The three basic instruments employed are shared by no other ethnic group, and the vocal style, particularly the ornamental wordless sounds (vocalise) introduced at the ends of stanzas, is not paralleled in any neighboring music culture. As to the functions and attitudes associated with music,



Fig. 2.3. A Turkmen village

we are on much weaker ground due to the paucity of the data, but I will attempt to summarize the available information.

As is the case with the other peoples of the North, Turkmen musical roles are sexually ascribed. Women are restricted to roles as tambourine and jew's harp players and perform only at weddings, where the music reflects the interethnic music culture. Women also take part in two distinct dance styles, one a group round dance and one a dance for two girls using wooden spoon-castanets (cf. the Uzbek *qošiq* percussion; Karomatov 1972:51); the dances, like women's songs, are performed only at weddings. Presumably lullabies round out the female repertoire. Paradoxically, then, it is the males, who are in contact with outside ethnic groups, who preserve the particularly Turkmen instruments and repertoires, whereas the more isolated women's musical life belongs clearly to the shared music culture of the North.

Men's amateurism spans a variety of settings, occasions, genres, and musical instruments. Shepherds play solo tunes on either of the two distinctive Turkmen wind instruments, the *tiidiük* (lit. "reed") and the *dili-tiidiük* (lit. "tongue-reed"). Both instruments are made of readily available steppe grasses by the performers themselves. The *tiidük* is a very long (as much as one meter) open end-blown flute related most closely to various Near Eastern flutes of similar construction that are generally termed *nai* (Persian for "reed"). The *dili-tiidük* is a very short (pencil-length), much thinner single-reed pipe, related

most closely to the Uzbek *sibiziq*. Both the dili-tüidük and the *sibiziq* are rare in being unpaired single-reed pipes; most such aerophones in Europe and the Near East are lashed together in pairs. The existence of pastoral tunes and instruments tends to set off Turkmen music, since Uzbeks and Tajiks of Turkestan seem to lack shepherd's music. Here the Turkmens are closer to the Paštuns and Baluch of the southern and southwestern regions of Afghanistan; these nomadic groups play a much smaller version of the tüidük known as the *nal* (Pašto: "reed"). Turkmen shepherds, however, not only pipe tunes but also dance a distinctive round dance employing gestures with their staffs; I have not seen this dance, nor do I know a non-Turkmen who has witnessed it.

Outside the pastoral sphere, Turkmens are musically active principally around the hearth in the long winter nights. Surxi says that music making takes place nearly every night, and he cites a high degree of amateurism among males, most of whom have at least a nodding acquaintance with the dutar, the third member of the Turkmen instrumentarium. This long-necked fretted lute, like its Uzbek counterpart of the same name, has two strings, but it differs from its Uzbek namesake principally in its much smaller dimensions.

Turkmen amateurs who become recognized as master musicians have a special title, *baxši*, bestowed on them by the public at large. This practice is interesting in reflecting the Turkmens' respect for music, and also as it points up the lack of such titles for master performers in the shared music culture. We have noted that *ustad*, as a term of respect, is reserved for a handful of distinctive Kabul musicians; northerners, however, have no honorific term for their own musicians, be they *dambura* players or singers. The Turkmens' use of the term *baxši* is therefore highly suggestive. The word stems originally from the Chinese (Menges 1968) and was used for Uighur functionaries under Mongol rule. Later the Central Asian Turks adapted the term to a variety of functions (summarized in Centlivres and Slobin 1971), but it has been reduced to three basic usages at the present: (1) epic singer among Uzbeks; (2) master musician among Turkmens; and (3) shaman among Kirghiz, Kazakhs, and residents of the town of K. in northern Afghanistan. Beliaev (1975) states that *baxši* might at one time have denoted shaman among Turkmens as well. The argument advanced here is that the use of such an historic and affective term for musicians of a certain grade of excellence speaks for the intrinsic importance attached to music making among Turkmens. It is not accidental that among the Uzbeks epic singing and shamanizing were formerly practiced by the same man (Chadwick and Zhirmunsky 1969:334), that the Kazakhs and Kirghiz use the same horsehair



Fig. 2.4. Turkmen bazaar, Qizilayaq

fiddle (*qobuz* or *kiak*) both for healing and for musical performance, and that the *qobuz* was once in use among the Turkmens (Beliaev 1975). The Central Asian inheritance reflected among Afghan Turkmens by the persistence of the *baxši* term for superior musicians sets them off from Afghan Uzbeks, who have lost much of the heritage of their Transoxanian past in adapting to Tajik sedentary life.

Another distinctive aspect of Turkmen practice seems to be the diminished degree of conflict between music and religion as compared to the shared music culture described earlier. I found this particularly striking in the town of Qizilayaq, a major religious center for Afghan Turkmens and the home of the Xalifa of Qizilayaq, the personage most important to devout Turkmens throughout Afghanistan. Qizilayaq is also well known as a musical center, producing many celebrated performers, and the Xalifa gave his brother permission to produce performers for me, a non-Muslim foreigner. The music played was by no means religious but drew from various secular Turkmen traditions, and I was allowed to take photographs as well. By contrast, many informants among other ethnic groups and in other regions of Afghanistan have cited the religious leaders of villages and towns as being key opponents of music.

In addition to singing songs, another popular diversion during long winter nights is reading aloud poems and tales from published versions of Turkmen texts. In Afghanistan this is rather difficult; to my knowledge there have been no books published there in Turkmen (a similar situation applies in Iran), and Afghan Turkmens must rely principally on Soviet Turkmen books, published in Cyrillic script, which must be inaccessible to all save a handful of villagers. Nevertheless, Surxi states that such readings do take place on a regular basis. The importance of the readings is that they furnish source material for song texts. As Chadwick has noted,

The Turkmens are said to have been especially pre-eminent in the art of memorization. Their professional reciters were as remarkable for their highly specialized memories, and the verbal exactitude of their traditions, as the poets of the Kirghiz for their facility in improvisation. In the preservation of the past history of their tribes also the Turkmens were said to excel. . . . In regards to the songs the tradition seems to be one of verbal memorization rather than improvisation, and even in regard to the prose stories the form seems to be strictly memorized. (Chadwick and Zhirmunsky 1969:18, 216)

The emphasis on memorization stressed by Chadwick (who relies on earlier authorities such as Chodzko and Radloff) is distinctively Turkmen and is in contrast to the Kirghiz penchant for improvisation. Yet among Afghan Turkmens, at least, such excessive emphasis on memorization is not characteristic today. Rather, the Turkmens make a clear distinction between song texts that are memorized and that stem from the literary tradition (*xalqi*) and those that are the property of an individual singer (*uzduridan*). Thus the works of the great Turkmen poets such as Maxtum-quli, Nepes, and Žalili are considered *xalqi*, while the songs of outstanding baxšís (master performers) would be termed *uzduridan*. Surxi admits to the possibility that *uzuridan* compositions may eventually become *xalqi* through popularity.

The *xalqi*-*uzduridan* dichotomy points up major features of the Turkmen music subculture. The *xalqi* texts show the importance of the literary canon of the Turkmens and indicate strong pantribal unity in poetic matters, and the role of memorization indicated by Chadwick is seen to be verified in the spread and maintenance of the *xalqi* repertoire. On the other hand, the *uzduridan* songs confirm the existence of local and personal styles valued for their individuality. Here tribal and personal stylistic traits, dialects, and melodies come into play, factors of considerable importance to Turkmen culture.

Let us look at excerpts of *xalqi* and *uzuridan* song texts to gain some perspective on the styles involved. Both types of song are in

the repertoire of Axmad-baxši, an outstanding dutarist and singer who was chosen by a listener poll of Radio Afghanistan as the major Turkmen performer. The xalqi selection is from one of the numerous tales of recent centuries that circulate principally in written rather than oral versions. These have been termed "popular novels" by scholars, and their development has been well summarized by Zhirmunsky:

In the Near East popular novels (*Volksromane*), which are very widespread in Turkmenia, Azerbaijan and Turkey, have practically superseded the old heroic epos. Their plots draw in the main upon the novella and romantic love themes . . . Of great importance in the development of this genre were classical literary versions of medieval love-tales, presented first by Persian and later by Turkic poets (*Leila and Majnun*, *Farhad and Shirin*, *Yusuf and Zuleika*) which were then partly remodelled as popular chap-books (*kissa*). Most of the popular novels either go back to concrete written sources (*Seipul Melik*, *Hemra*, *Gul and Sanuabar*), or have undergone literary adaptation . . . (*Tahir and Zuhra*) not only by word of mouth, but also in the written texts which used to be read aloud by special-reciters. . . . (Chadwick and Zhirmunsky 1969:316)

These "popular novels" are quite popular among Afghan Turkmens; particular favorites are *Tahir and Zuhra* and *Hemra and Hurluqā* (which Zhirmunsky cites just as *Hemra*). It is from this latter tale that our xalqi excerpt comes:

Dur qardaşim sanden xabar alayen  
 Ārtiq niyāz yārim qarim amānme  
 Sarwadak builaring oidek yuzlaring  
 Āq yuzingda betan tārim amānme.  
 Mesering ilingden gelen xanlarim  
 Xabar bergen bizing iler amānme.

Stop, dear friend, I am inquiring of you.  
 Is my beautiful sweetheart well or not?  
 Her figure is like a cypress; her cheek is like a flower.  
 Are the two moles on her face well or not?  
 Friend, when you leave Egypt  
 Tell me if my people are well or not.

At the point in the plot where this song occurs, Hemra is being held captive in Egypt like Joseph in the Bible, who is the hero of the Near Eastern tale *Yusuf and Zulaixa* — one of the sources Zhirmunsky cites for the "popular novels" such as *Hemra*. Stylistically, the striking element of the excerpt cited above is its formalized structure and heavy dependence on the poetic imagery of classical Persian verse. Line 3 is particularly obvious in this respect, repeating in Turkmen the stock epithets for beauty used countless times in Persian poetry and folksong



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the Persian literary tradition. The difference clearly lies in the distinction the performer makes between the xalqi and uzduridan repertoires. Though evidence is still limited, it is possible to delineate a dichotomy between pan-Turkmen, memorized, Persian-influenced song texts and private, probably tribal, composed or improvised, more Turkic poetry, and we have seen that the two approaches to song texts can coexist in the repertoire of a single master performer. Details of musical structure will be discussed below, but it should be mentioned here that in musical terms every aspect of Axmad-baxši's performances is uniquely Turkmen, bearing little resemblance to either Persian or Afghan Turkestani styles. Particularly distinctive is the style of playing on the dutar, which is unparalleled in even so closely neighboring a style as that of the Uzbek dutar.

We know very little about the precise nature of the special ties existing between the Turkmens and their fellow Turks across the Caspian Sea, the Azerbaijanis. Azerbaijani culture seems to have had a particular appeal for the Turkmens, and the musical side of the relationship was well described by Vambery in 1865:

It is remarkable that, in spite of the bitter hostility reigning between the Turkomans and their Shiite brethren in Persia, the former still always especially name Azerbaydjan as the seat of a higher civilization; and whenever the Bakhshi is asked to sing something more than usually beautiful and original, Azerbaijanian songs are always called for; nay, even the captive Irani, if of Turkish origin, may always expect more merciful treatment, for the Turkoman says, "He is our brother, this unbeliever." (1970:375).

Unfortunately, research on Turkmen music to date has neither substantiated nor disproved Vambery's statement.

## THE UZBEKS

Afghan Uzbeks are divided into two fairly clear-cut groups: the majority, long settled in the country, and the minority, recent émigrés from the Soviet Union. Though the line between the two blurs increasingly each year, it still remains an important factor. In custom, dialect, and even music the émigrés (*mohajerin*) form a fairly compact group, often with close internal ties. In recent years, the *mohajerin* have reestablished links with their homeland through visits to their families in Tashkent and Samarkand. Zia Xoja, the noted dutarist, used such a trip as an occasion to buy himself a prize antique instrument (recalling the efforts of the Kazakh émigrés of Mazar-i Šarif to procure a genuine Kazakhstani *dümbra*). The cultural tenacity of the *mohajerin*

Uzbeks is somewhat more striking than that of the Kazakhs, since the former are surrounded by a large number of fellow Uzbeks. Another difference setting off the émigré Uzbeks from the Kazakh community is the much higher socioeconomic levels attained by the Uzbeks. The latter have in many cases acquired wealth by becoming merchants and money changers, particularly in Kabul.

Let us examine the musical attitudes and practices of the émigré community before turning to the native Afghan Uzbeks. The mohajerin brought with them a whole set of musical values that pertain to Transoxanian Uzbeks but not to the Afghan situation. Chief among these is the complex of interests related to the maintenance of an art music tradition, unknown in Afghanistan save for the limited practice of North Indian classical music. The Uzbek tradition relates to the world of the Buxaran maqam mentioned in the discussion of musical zones in Chapter 1. Briefly, this involves a canon of six lengthy, modally organized suites of instrumental and vocal music performed by a highly trained group of professional singers and instrumentalists; the tradition is backed up by extensive theoretical writings that go back over several centuries. Allied with this repertoire is considerable respect for its practitioners and a serious interest in matters musical and poetic.

The master musician achieves a special status within the mohajerin community. Though the Uzbeks do not have a term analogous to the Turkmen "baxşı" for performers of high distinction, the concept is nevertheless clear in their minds: certain performers are singled out for special commendation. For example, the Uzbeks honored Ğafur-i Wafa of Andxoi by choosing him as one of two performers for the new Uzbek programming on Radio Afghanistan. Ğafur, though an Afghan Uzbek, plays exclusively in the Transoxanian tradition, whereas the other official Radio Uzbek performer, Saidullah Ağa Kunduzi, tends to play a more Afghan Uzbek repertoire. The major difference between the Turkmen and Uzbek attitudes towards the master musicians is that the Uzbek virtuoso is expected to disdain compensation for his work, whereas Turkmens are invariably paid for performing. This concept of the true amateur is a special mohajerin value far removed from that of the working šowqi Uzbek of the Turkestani teahouse. Ğafur-i Wafa is himself the son of a rich land and sheep owner of Andxoi, and is thus a true gentlemen-musician akin to the old troubadour-artistocrats of twelfth-century France, or to minnesingers like Oswald von Wolkenstein. In an interview for *Žwandoon* magazine (5/13/72:23), Ğafur notes that he took up the dutar only in his late teens and was for a long time quite shy of public performance, not expecting to be well received. Musicians like Ğafur-i Wafa perform by invitation only, usually at the homes of bais (land and livestock owners like Ğafur's father) and

merchants, for a select circle of guests. Andxoi is particularly rich in musicians and patrons of Transoxanian Uzbek music, and the town is famous across the North as a center of Uzbek culture. Badruddin Sarafi (the connoisseur who spent some childhood years in Andxoi) feels it is "the most Uzbek" of towns, and even a self-proclaimed non-Uzbek, Bangeča Tašqurğani, says "all the Uzbek music comes from Andxoi." Indeed, outside of Kabul, it is only in Andxoi that one glimpses the Transoxanian attitudes toward music and musicians. None of the Andxoi dutarists would deign to play in a teahouse, or even for a general audience; all are proud of their achieved status as appreciated master musicians. One leading musician, Šoqol Sufi, refused to play for me or even to admit to his identity, despite prompting by his friends. Both Ğafur-i Wafa and Ğafur Xan, another leading dutarist, have made tours of Mazar-i Šarif, Kunduz, and Xanabad at the request of prominent mohajerin Uzbeks who long for the music of their homeland. I have been reliably told that they are not paid on such trips, though in the case of Ğafur Xan, a poor shoemaker, I imagine that at least his expenses are covered. Judging by the enthusiasm with which this dutarist was received in Kunduz, where twenty-odd guests were invited to his performance, it seems likely that he is the recipient of some gifts, if not cash payment; however, the tradition is clearly against such remuneration for musical services.

The relationship of such performers to Uzbekistan, the true homeland of the musical style they favor, is somewhat ambiguous. They would rather not admit to being avid listeners of Radio Tashkent (which is easily heard in northern towns such as Andxoi), but when I played tapes of Ğafur Xan to musicologists in Tashkent, they dismissed him as a not especially gifted imitator of Uzbekistani performers. Even allowing for a certain amount of local chauvinism in Uzbekistan, it does seem clear that Andxoi musicians learn much of their repertoire from Radio Tashkent, mixing it with material learned from their native Afghan or mohajerin fathers and acquaintances. Some listeners rely heavily on Uzbekistani broadcasting, tuning in to Radio Tashkent all day long in shops or homes. However, the new Radio Afghanistan Uzbek broadcasts will probably influence these listening patterns, at least for that one hour per day, particularly since Transoxanian music is included along with Afghan styles. Faizullah Aimaq, the director of the ethnic programming, is himself an Andxoi Uzbek and therefore leans toward inclusion of both basic Uzbek repertoires. In the long run, the radio may have a decisive effect in eradicating some of the cultural differences between Afghan and Transoxanian Uzbeks by acquainting each group more closely with the dialects and repertoire of the other.

The dutar is not the only uniquely Uzbek instrument found in Afghanistan. Çagatay (pseudonym of B. Šarafi) cites a special type of ğičak "made from a large gourd, the top of which has been sliced off. . . . Over the opening is stretched a dried sheepskin . . . and three strings" (Çagatay and Sjoberg 1955:107). I have never seen such an instrument nor heard of one used, but have no reason to doubt Çagatay's statement. The interesting feature of the ğičak he describes is its three strings, which would relate the instrument closely to Uzbekistani practice rather than to the standard tin-can, Taşqurğani-made ğičak usually used in Afghanistan. However, Çagatay's added statement that ". . . a metal container may be employed instead" (1955:107) points to a convergence of the type of ğičak he describes and the common model usually seen.

More specifically traceable as Uzbek is the *qoşnai* mentioned by the same author (Çagatay and Sjoberg 1955:107). This is a paired single-reed aerophone most closely related to similar Near Eastern pipes. The instrument described by Çagatay, however, is interesting for its deviation from the Uzbekistani norm: "The qosnay is an instrument of brass or wood consisting of two tubes connected to form a V" (1955:107). The standard *qoşnai* as described by Karomatov (1972: 72-73) is quite different and always features reed construction and parallel tubing. Thus the Afghan *qoşnai*, like the ğičak just cited, seems to be a local adaptation of the Transoxanian model. Çagatay also notes that the *qoşnai* "is rarely used in Kabul," which again suggests its particularly northern affiliation. Also "not used in Kabul" is the Turkestani version of the Uzbek *karnai*, which the author gives as "*kannay* . . . a wood-wind instrument of copper with a bass tone. It is extremely long, at times over ten feet . . . it is employed by Uzbeks in northern Afghanistan at marriage ceremonies, wrestling matches, and other games" (1955:107). This time Çagatay's description matches those of the standard Soviet Uzbek references (Karomatov 1972:90), with the exception that the instrument is cited there as being used primarily for alarms or for military purposes (in the old Buxaran Khanate) rather than for ordinary entertainment. The *karnai* is another instrument that has just about gone out of use in northern Afghanistan; I have not been able to even locate a specimen for observation, though Aimaq remembers seeing a *karnai* in Andxoi when he was a boy, in the 1950s.

Summarizing the discussion of musical instruments, it seems that there is considerable material evidence to indicate old ties between Afghan and Transoxanian Uzbeks, even though the former have tended to modify their instruments to suit local conditions. It is unfortunate that we have no data regarding the musical life in the city-states of

Afghan Turkestan in the nineteenth century. Most of those towns, from Maimana to Kunduz, were ruled by local Uzbeks for some time; it seems unlikely that, in the course of intensive contact with Buxara, none of the strong Transoxanian music culture would have rubbed off on the petty potentates of Andxoi, Maimana, and other towns. One can imagine them patronizing local musicians who played in Buxaran style and evolved a local dialect of Transoxanian art music. However, there is no hard evidence for the survival of such a tradition, so we must be content with speculations. The survival of musical values, instrument making, and repertoire in Andxoi even today, however, does point to the possibility that more than just émigré influence has been at work, especially since some of the musicians (Čafur-i Wafa, for example) come from old Afghan Uzbek families.

Let us turn now to examination of the native Afghan Uzbek music subculture. We have already discussed at length the repertoire of the teahouse, in which a strong Uzbek component has fused with Tajik elements to form a major contribution to the shared musical life, at least in Turkestan. When it comes to distinctively Uzbek elements, there is an equally rich field of investigation, at least in the area of repertoire. Unlike the mohajerin, the Afghan Uzbeks do not seem to have any special attitudes toward the practice of music to set them off from surrounding peoples, nor are there special instrument types other than the qošnai and karnai just cited. The dambura and to a lesser extent the ġičak remain the major lute types, with the doira and čang still reserved for women and children. Perhaps a special case might be made for the tüsak (Persian: zang or tal), the finger cymbals that accompany the teahouse songs. Although they form a part of the samowad presentation described here as part of the joint music culture, it is nearly always Uzbeks who are seen playing the tüsak; yet the instrument is probably Indian in origin. Noticeably absent from the instruments one might expect among Uzbeks are the percussion (idiophone) sets of spoons and stones commonly found in Uzbekistan (Karomatov 1972) under the names *qairaql* and *qošiq*, respectively. Paradoxically enough, only Turkmens seem to use the *qošiq*, as accompaniment to a girl's wedding dance, and the only practitioner of *qairaql* I found in the North was a Tajik from the Samangan area (recorded on Anthology AST 4007). Such irregularities point up the mixing of instruments that is typical of northern Afghanistan, and they underscore the presence of considerable acculturation.

Within the specifically Afghan Uzbek repertoires, four principal areas of interest can be defined: urban *gazals* as song texts, na't religious songs, secular tales, and instrumental dance music. Let us examine them individually.

## **Urban Ğazals**

The ğazal is a basic genre of literary Persian verse, perhaps most classically exemplified in the works of Hafez (d. 1389). It is still widely used by poets in all the Persian-speaking regions and has been adopted by writers of Uzbek, Pašto, and Urdu poetry in Afghanistan, Soviet Central Asia, Pakistan, and India. In Afghanistan the Uzbek urban ğazal seems to be a direct counterpart to the urban Tajik ğazal of the same region. Thus the ğazal repertoire tends basically to confirm the existence of a joint music culture rather than that of a distinct subculture. Nevertheless, the fact that the ğazals are held by Uzbeks to be part of their own heritage and their exclusion of Tajiks from full appreciation of the genre seem to point to a "separate-but-equal" position, which at once confirms acculturation and denies it.

Not surprisingly, Andxoi is seen by some as the center of the urban Uzbek ğazal. Performers in Aqča, for example, spoke of a whole school of poets in Andxoi who turned out ğazals that could be set as song texts. Singled out as exceptional was Kamal Andxoi, father of Ğafur Xan, the shoemaker-dutarist mentioned above. As in the case of Andxoi dutar music, there seems to be some connection with the Transoxanian classical tradition — in this case, with the heritage of classical Uzbek poetry. However, like the art music, the poetry has at least geographic roots in Afghanistan proper, since the great Uzbek classic poet, Mir Alisher Navoi (d. 1501), lived, worked, and died in Herat under the last of the Timurid rulers. Structurally, both the works of Navoi and recent urban ğazals tend to be highly imitative of classical Persian verse models, including a large number of Persian words and principles of prosody.

## **Na't Religious Songs**

Here again we find Uzbek practice running parallel to that of other groups. Basically, Uzbek na't song seems to be quite similar in function and structure to the religious song outlined in Chapter 1. However, Uzbeks compose texts in their own language for sacred use, bypassing the pan-Islamic Arabic and the Persian lingua franca of Afghanistan. Because of the high degree of interrelationship with Tajiks, a separate Uzbek na't repertoire calls attention to itself as a distinctive feature, especially since the occasions for na't singing — major Islamic holidays — would seem to suggest shared public songs rather than individualized ethnic compositions. We thus return again to the home as the guardian of distinctive ethnic traits as opposed to the intergroup accommodation of the bazaar.

## Secular Tales

The body of secular tales falls into two distinct categories: the various Uzbek versions of the widespread, multiethnic tale "Köroğlu," and the purely Uzbek tales. "Köroğlu" seems to be diminishing in popularity in Afghanistan, as the older tellers have died and do not seem to have been replaced by younger reciters. Unlike the situation in Uzbekistan, where epic recitation is widely supported, the Afghan outlook is somewhat bleaker. Whether this relates to change in taste or to the disappearance of the older members of the first émigré generation is hard to tell; there are simply not enough data to properly judge the case. Nevertheless, there are still singers of "Köroğlu," such as Xodai Qul, a young man of Andxoi (recorded on Anthology AST 4001). A striking feature of Xodai Qul's performance is his insertion of an introduction in Persian before beginning the Uzbek segment of his tale. Here again the tendency towards ethnic accommodation becomes evident. Xodai Qul knows little of the epic, having learned only selected passages from an old reciter before the latter's death in the mid-1960s.

In the case of the local Afghan Uzbek tales the situation is quite different, and the tradition is still flourishing in areas of heavy Uzbek population. Local tales can be subdivided into two genres: quasi-literary "popular novels" related to a Transoxanian Uzbek repertoire ("Zibājān"), and stories based on actual events and personages of the locale of origin ("Bāijura"). Let us examine them separately.

Zibajan is the female side of a standard pair of star-crossed lovers, whose male half is Yāzi. "Zibajan" and similar tales, according to Aimaq, tend to be identified with particular locales; thus "Zibajan" is sung primarily in Fariab province, particularly in the Qaisar area. Karmysheva (1960a:74) indicates that in Uzbekistan similar localization of the heroes occurs. The local Uzbeks speak of Ziba's home as the qışlaq of Birqa, near Qaisar. The time and setting for women's performance of "Zibajan" is distinctive and constitutes a special area of Afghan Uzbek music culture. Women sing "Zibajan" at several times: while cooking, while grinding flour (not all towns have ready access to mills), at weddings, and while weaving carpets (a skill quite recently learned from neighboring Turkmens). The combination of singing at work and performance at weddings is particularly notable, in that it indicates a continuity of women's customs and music. This tends to confirm our earlier identification of a special women's sector, and the tendency of women to expand the sector of musical expression to a multiplicity of occasions.

If Aimaq's observation for the Andxoi area can be generalized for other Uzbek areas (which seems reasonable, given the wide spread of the local tradition), it would appear that Uzbek women maintain a considerable body of musical activity, both work-related and occasional. Such a picture would strongly link Afghan Uzbeks to those of regions of Uzbekistan such as the Ferghana Valley, which has been studied by Soviet researchers. In 1931, Romanovskia collected an extensive repertoire from women of Andijan, Osh, and Margelan, covering a wide variety of genres (ceremonial, lyric, game and dance, Soviet topics). Yet the Ferghana situation differs from that of the Afghan Uzbeks in several important ways. First, the Ferghana women's repertoire apparently contains neither tales such as "Zibajan" nor songs sung during work. Second, the Ferghana Valley women commonly play the dutar, albeit a smaller version of the instrument, and with a more limited repertoire, than is common among men (Romanovskia 1959:66). As far as I can tell, no Afghan Uzbek women play any stringed instrument; they are limited, as noted earlier, to the tambourine and jew's harp. Finally, the tradition of professional female performers seems to have been much more comprehensive in scope and more widespread in Uzbekistan than in Afghanistan. Romanovskia (1959) cites the high number of professional women performers in the Ferghana Valley. Kadyrov also describes women's theaters for various areas of the country in recent years: ". . . in many towns and villages of Uzbekistan there existed . . . theatre companies, of which about twenty continue to function nowadays." The repertoire of these female troupes is quite broad, consisting of comedies, dramatic stories, comic songs, comic dances, dramatic parodies, and pantomimes; in addition, each local company has its own genres (Kadryov 1969:94). In Afghanistan one finds occasional female professional performers, such as Zulaixa and Gulandam in Andxoi, mentioned earlier; however, such entertainment is extremely limited in scope (to singing only), in number of performers, and in social acceptability. Thus, while it seems clear that Uzbek women everywhere have a strong stake in musical expression, Afghanistan presents a much more limited spectrum of outlets and repertoires than does the Uzbek heartland in Uzbekistan.

Turning to male performance of "Zibajan"—or, more properly, "Yazi and Zibajan"—once again the Transoxanian usage seems more functional and widespread. Karmysheva (1960:72–73) describes the tale as being sung by the Uzbeks in numerous regions of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan as an accompaniment to harvesting, with noted singers (*yazigui*, "yazi-tellers") being invited to perform this task. On the

Afghan side, I have not witnessed nor have I heard of such Uzbek work parties with tale-singing soloists.

The tale of "Zibajan" itself pulls in two directions stylistically. On the one hand, there are the elements that tend toward the multi-ethnic concept of the tale: a plot turning around a highly romanticized couple, the introduction of a great many turns of phrase related to the stock epithets of Persian classical verse, and a basic verse form organized in couplets like the Persian *ğazal* rather than in the typically Turkic folk quatrains of the Turkmen tale. These elements Karmysheva does not describe for the Transoxanian version. On the other hand, there are elements of "Zibajan" that are strongly local in imagery and even locale. Let us look at some sample lines to pinpoint both elements of "Zibajan:"

Zibājān howli saldi pas pas ġina  
 Gul ikubān yā ekan birdas gina  
 Gulidan iskeidisan tekānebār  
 Labidan upaidisam čārxālebār.  
 Duganamni šaftäluzar qarsibār  
 Mastiwāna arqasida sālibar.  
 Borup aiting motarwāni uziga  
 Akagenam Mazār saxi kitida.

Zibajan built a house below;  
 Her low house was full of flowers,  
 If you try to smell them, they're thorny  
 I can't kiss her because of her moles.  
 Her shawl is peach-colored;  
 It is more beautiful than the trappings of a fighting-camel.  
 When the drivers cross the bridge  
 Tell them to take my friend [Yazi] to the pilgrimage at Mazar.

The first four lines cited seem Persian-related in presenting an image of flowers and thorns and then tying it to the standard beauty spots of the Persian lover's face. The second couplet cited is more localized. Noting the color of a woman's veil (the all-encompassing Afghan *čadri*) is a local pastime, since in a village or town one can identify women only through such features of dress. The comparison to a fighting-camel is also regional; Turkestan is famous for such tournaments, and it would be typical for a male to make such a metaphor. According to Jarring's informants in Andxoi, in the 1930s every *bai* had about ten fighting-camels (1939a:79). Even more localized is the last couplet quoted, which refers to the annual spring pilgrimage to the putative grave of Ali in Mazar-i Šarif, the major religious event of northern Afghanistan. The switch from the male to

female point of view apparent in the excerpts above perhaps indicates the catholicity of the tale and illustrates how segments can be sung by men or women. Here the Uzbeks seem to differ from the Turkmens, among whom it seems women do not recite tales at all, but an analogy can be seen with the Paštun approach, in which men and women share a repertoire largely related to the women's realm. It would be useful to research the authorship of tales such as "Zibajan" to substantiate the feeling gained from informants that they are primarily female in origin.

Turning now to "Baijura," we find the most localized type of Uzbek tale. The tale is sung across Turkestan, with excerpts performed to dambura accompaniment by professionals and nonprofessionals alike. It refers to an actual drowning of a shepherd during the

### **"BAIJURA"**

Bāijureya bāijura senang senamga jura  
 Iki kuzing qabqara dowreia kulugara  
 Bāila čegū tulälde teira siya pulälde  
 Sangalağni gulida bāijurani seilälde  
 Igar uzde tāidan pākat kelde bāidan  
 Bāijurana seiläldi yātu qālian jāidan  
 Āstanāni čulida qizilputa beilida  
 Bāijurana seiläldi sangalāğni kulida  
 Beilda puta beilgardān qulda rumäl qulgardān  
 Bāijurani seiläldi qaum o xiši sargardān  
 Zardälune dānase kup yāzilyen šānasen  
 Seil içida saragardān bāijura ānasi  
 Kup čaini şamase zardälune tammasi  
 Balamlaidi yiğlaidi bāijuraina aması  
 Uzul qildi tāqlari gup be sini čakları  
 Kitidan yeğlaow qāldi jurana bibālarai  
 Budanani qapasi čigukiti napasi  
 Ukam dide yiğlaidi bāijurana āpasi  
 Māşinqantai čakası quytartade sirkası  
 Ukam didi yiğlaidi bāijuranai akası  
 Kalawani ahāri yilda kilyen bāhāri  
 Akam didi yiğlaidi bāijurani xāhari  
 Bāğimumen araiğı šildilaida barğe  
 Turam didi yiğlaidi baijurana qallare  
 Dalāq lani pāksi qulida tamäksi  
 Waxjiendi yiğlidi jurana amaksi  
 Zardälune şaxası bātaigen paraxisi  
 Wāxjiendi yiğlaidi bāijurana tāğası  
 Telārgarni qāşı kisildi quinibāşı  
 Kitidan yuğlin qāldi jurana qarandāşkan  
 Bāğdan uzdi ġurani aiting mullā tarane

flood season some fifty years ago in the area of Širin Tagow, a village along the Andxoi-Maimana road. In the version of the tale presented here (as performed by Mati Sagir from Širin Tagow and broadcast over Radio Afghanistan) Baijura appears only in the past tense, and the content could be seen as an extended lament over a fallen hero. Throughout, there is an extraordinary likeness to the techniques and imagery of the Central Asian Turkic epic tale, in contrast to the heavy iranization apparent in the Uzbek urban ğazal and (to a lesser extent) in the "popular novel" tales of both the Afghan Turkmen and Uzbeks. Mati Sagir's text is presented below in toto, both for its interesting epic style and as a contribution to the still nearly non-existent ethnography of Afghan Uzbek life.

The description of Baijura's funeral proceedings jibes with Çagatay's

### "BAIJURA"

Baijura o Baijura let us be together  
 Your eyes are black; look at me  
 During the sheepherding time  
 Baijura was carried away by a flood  
 Letters came from all the *bais*  
 That Baijura was taken by the flood while asleep  
 In the Astana steppe wearing his red belt  
 The flood carried him to the stony riverbank  
 While he wore his belt and held a kerchief  
 The flood carried him off causing all his relatives unhappiness  
 His shoulders were broad; he was handsome like an apricot  
 His distracted mother looked for him down by the flood plain  
 Green tea leaves; apricot bough  
 His father's sister cries "Balam, Baijura!"  
 His arbor yielded grapes; he wore a *gup* [Uzbek shirt]  
 All his friends lamented Baijura  
 Baijura's soul flew out like a quail from a cage  
 His little brother cried, saying "Older brother!"  
 His face was white like sugar cubes  
 His sheep were led by a bellwether  
 His older brother cried "Baijura!"  
 His life became like a tangled ball of thread  
 Another spring will not come  
 His little sister cried, saying "Brother!"  
 Even the fishes of the Bagmumen river cried  
 His fiance cries, saying "Husband!"  
 Barbers came crying with their razors  
 Smokers came crying with their tobacco  
 The apricot bough and twigs scraped "Baijura"  
 His uncle cried, saying "Nephew!"  
 For his death they killed sheep  
 His relatives and tribe cried for him

## [“BAIJURA”—Continued]

Xasgirya band gälwakan taptila bāijurana  
 Xirman naxurdasina yägena dardesini  
 Daryādan tāpa āldi jurana murdasim  
 Bāijura qilda qazā ātasib bulda razā  
 Bāijurai āqulda unming nafar janāza  
 Xirmanni zāti yermi bulyen nāoti  
 Asel činardan akan bāijurana taoti  
 Guyabağrani telow tarsiya qara qulo  
 Taotini duzatyan ikita najär kelo  
 Maimanain yigit ayāgilde bār buti  
 Quldan qulya ti maida bāijurana taoti  
 Yuldum baru parina kursati hunarini  
 Dowreşıya quidila katārdaki narina  
 Şirinşakar suzāni iki xumār quzini  
 Talaşān qelan birdi ikinni hokuzini  
 Gačkäreql uyina xinčadai qadbuina  
 Xairat qelo birdala suridakı quyina  
 Tarifitai bāina piyālani čaini  
 Isqātya quidāla anbārni buğdai yini  
 Dušmanam dustini ālāl maida qustini  
 Mulälai birdala tamām hasto bustina  
 Ketsala xoda yāri dumburagi nātāri  
 Kiči qunduz yātipti yetim mullā qarāri  
 Hawāya čeğar yalduz terama kitsai qunduz  
 Yetim mulla qarāri hamkeča o ham qunduz  
 Xareidan kilyan maxi unbirātarne sixi  
 Dunqqizdai tuyukiti audiyāsina sixi  
 Yenuqildem yeniştan kizanyeql kamiştan  
 Jurajani qaori yetming beşix xişdan  
 Jānqutiya qawalyan salalari čuwalyan  
 Jurajāni qaori simintmenam suwalyan  
 Sizye biryan sälani kisasida kalamī  
 Yetiğaz darāida hawāsini alimi  
 Tarif itai bāine içalmaidi čaini  
 Bairaq qelow quyčakam yetigaz durāini  
 Dušman manam dustiya harflar jelustiya  
 Xaimani yettu urdi qowrami ustiya  
 Čupana eştim čalow biz emas maqsad palow  
 Jurani juma siya damlandi unqainā palow  
 Başıya saldi alās turkman tuqida paläs  
 Bāijurani ksasi šuyerda buldi xatas.

## [“BAIJURA”—Continued]

They picked the raw grapes from his arbor  
Tell the mullah to sing a lament  
They found him in an eddy of the river  
People gathered as for a harvest  
The people remain but Baijura has left [simile: butter sediment]  
They found dead Baijura in the river  
Baijura died; his father had to accept it  
Ten thousand people sang his lament  
He had goods, all of it was lost to people  
They made his coffin from good plane-tree wood  
All his dear ones' hearts were as if cut  
They ordered two carpenters to make his coffin  
The young men of Maimana came wearing boots  
There were so many not all could be pallbearers  
His father showed his art by giving things away [simile: plucking bird]  
He gave all his camels as lament-gifts  
His speech was sugar, his eyes were love-drunk  
His father gave away his plough oxen  
All his houses were beautiful and spacious  
His figure was like a sapling  
He gave all his sheep away  
The *bais* and even his teacups are worth recounting  
He gave away all the grain in his granary  
His death cannot be laid to friend or foe  
He gave everything away to mullahs  
I play my *dambura* and may God bless Baijura  
Mullahs pray in his house night and day  
Stars are in the sky; in autumn we go towards Kunduz  
Seven mullahs pray night and day in Baijura's house  
He even gave away his good rifle  
The grave guarders became fat as pigs  
We make spurs so we won't fall on the way  
His grave was made from seven thousand precious stones  
His turban became raveled and his soul was lost  
His grave was made of cement  
He greeted everyone and had a pen in his pocket  
Seven meters of *qanawi* fabric went in his grave-cover  
I sing of Baijura who can't drink his tea  
They put a *yurt* over his grave  
All his friends and foes were sad at his death  
I go eat *challow* [rice] with shepherds  
I don't intend to go to his grave  
On Friday they gathered people and gave *palow* [meat dish]  
Seven pots, each of twelve *sirs* [1 *sir* = 16 lbs.]  
Everyone wore veils and Turkmens cried weaving carpets  
The story of Baijura is ended.

description of Afghan Uzbek custom (Çagatay and Sjoberg 1955:97–99). Perhaps the extensive lament presented here relates to the tradition of having a close friend tell “the story of the person’s life and his or her contributions to family and society.” Çagatay notes that “on the fortieth day after the death the family will, if financially able, hold a large feast for the poor.” “*Pilaw* with *qawrma* is the principal dish served,” and it corresponds to the killing of sheep for a feast in “Baijura.” Also found in the tale is the custom of setting aside a special place for prayers for the deceased. Çagatay does not mention giving away the deceased’s possessions, which is probably added into the narrative to further the image of wealth imputed to Baijura’s family. Schuyler (1877:151) describes Uzbek funeral customs that also fit well with those described in “Baijura.” He speaks of burial “chambers . . . made of bricks plastered over with clay, in different forms, usually square or oblong, and sometimes with a pavillion or temple over them,” which would correspond to the special tent mentioned in “Baijura.” It is the high degree of hyperbole that lends the true epic flavor to ‘Baijura.’ It must be “ten thousand people” who sing the lament, and “seven mullahs” praying night and day, plus “seven thousand precious stones” to make up the grave. The addition of cement as the building material is a contemporary hyperbolic touch as well, as Çagatay simply speaks of “a rounded mound of earth . . . topped by a large stone” (Çagatay and Sjoberg 1955:98).

Laments have an old history among Turkic peoples. Chadwick mentions an eleventh-century manuscript with laments for heroes, “probably from an earlier copy” (Chadwick and Zhirmunsky 1969:77). She quotes Radlov to the effect that “among the Kirghiz the wife sings elegies . . . for a whole week beside the clothes of her dead husband, and a dead man is always celebrated in poetry . . . professional minstrels . . . will sing in public assemblies in honour of a famous man” (1969:71). It is interesting to note Chadwick’s statement that “elegiac poetry is commonly composed by women in celebration of the dead” (1969:70); one wonders to what extent this Turkic custom might hold true for Afghan Uzbeks. In the case of “Baijura,” the singer identifies himself as a dambura-playing male, and attributes singing and lamenting to members of both sexes.

### Dance and Dance Music

Uzbek dance is associated with the long-established custom of training dancing boys. We are fortunate to have a description of this practice from Andxoi in the 1930s, as told to Gunnar Jarring:

. . . among Turkmens or Uzbeks the habit is this: the men tie bells at the feet of young boys and dress them in women's clothes, and keep them in a cellar. Having caused them to stay there for some years, they take them away whenever they want, and having assembled people in the night they play the dutar and tambur and beat tambourines and have these children dance. This is very current in all Turkestan. And if young boys are to be found, they never let women dance. Having decorated the dancing-rooms beautifully, and having spent money on it, they enjoy themselves. For this reason, ever so many boys at the age of ten or fifteen disappear. Because they bring the young children in the night or at day-time from hidden places and imprison them in some place. In many cases their father and mothers are not able to find them. In some cases their children came back after fifteen or twenty years. (Jarring 1939:159–160)

Dancing boys are an old Uzbek-Tajik tradition, described numerous times by nineteenth-century travelers to the Kingdom of Buxara. Schuyler (1877:132–37) has given the most extensive and vivid description of the Buxaran dancing-boy tradition; it is worth quoting some passages to indicate the pervasiveness of the practice among Uzbeks:

These *batchas*, or dancing-boys, are a recognized institution throughout the whole of the settled portions of Central Asia, though they are most in vogue in Bukhara, and the neighbouring Samarkand . . . the mere rumor that there would be a *bazem*, or dance, was sufficient to draw great crowds. . . . These *batchas* are as much respected as the greatest singers and *artistes* are with us. Every movement they make is followed and applauded, and I have never seen such breathless interest as they excite, for the whole crowd seems to devour them with their eyes, while their hands beat time to every step. . . . Even when a *batcha* passes through the bazaar all who know him rise to salute him with hands upon their hearts. . . . In all large towns *batchas* are very numerous, for it is as much the custom for a Bokhariot gentlemen to keep one as it was in the Middle Ages for each knight to have his squire. In fact no establishment of a man of rank or position would be complete without one; and men of small means club together to keep one among them. . . . The dances, so far as I was able to judge, were by no means indecent, though they were often very lascivious. . . . The songs sung during the dances are always about love, and are frequently responsive between the *batcha* and the musicians. . . . The *batcha* practice their profession from a very early age until sometimes so late as twenty or twenty-five. . . . Rarely do they lay up any money, and more rarely still are they able to profit by it afterwards. . . . Occasionally one succeeds, and becomes a prosperous man . . . in the old days . . . a handsome dancer might easily become . . . Grand Vizier. More often a *batcha* takes to smoking opium or drinking *kukhnar* and soon dies of dissipation.

From Schuyler's picture we can perhaps gain a glimpse of the status of bačabazi in former times in northern Afghanistan, even if the "backwoods" courts of Turkestani city-states could not have maintained the level of dissipation of Buxara. His picture of the post-*bača* life of dancers would seem somewhat overdrawn for the Afghan situation. Though information on boy dancers' careers is rather limited, it appears that they may simply take up ordinary working lives after they have passed their days of stardom, rather than rising meteorically or declining disastrously. Occasionally they may stay in the field as adult performers; one such example is Faiz Andxoi, who continues to dance and play instruments and is also known as a dance teacher for boys in Andxoi. Faiz may be an exceptional case, in that he is known to come from a kespi (hereditary-professional) family of performers in Andxoi, which includes the female wedding singers Zulaixa and Gulandam. Another former dancing boy from Andxoi, Mowlanqul, works in the bazaar and occasionally performs musically around town. In any case, the boy dancer finds it hard to live down his career; as Schuyler stated, "The remembrance of his past life will frequently place the then odious affix batcha to his name" (1877).

In Afghan Turkestan today the institution of the zirxana, the cellar in which fledgling dancing boys are kept, is said to be considerably diminished since the days of Jarring's informant. This is perhaps due more to the efforts of the central government and provincial authorities than to a change in the interests of local Uzbeks. Doubtless the custom has not entirely died out. Informants in towns such as Kunduz and Xanabad still respond with knowing smiles when asked about dancing boys and will admit to the existence of private parties attended by such performers. In those towns I have been told that dancing boys are to be found in the *atrāf*, the environs of the town, rather than in the bazaar area, because of restrictions by the authorities. Paštun villagers near Xanabad declined any knowledge of dancing boys in their area, confirming the general feeling that the custom in the North is generally connected to Uzbek surroundings.

It is difficult to distinguish between the superficially similar Paštun and Uzbek dancing-boy traditions, if one relies solely on the outer trappings: an atmosphere rife with immorality and suggestive of lewd behavior, and the appearance of young nubile boys dancing to accompaniment of folk music. However, significant differences separate the two ethnically related expression of a single institution. Paštun performances in the North tend to feature dancing boys from the Kabul-Mašreqi zone rather than northern Paštuns. The accompanying

band, though it may include some local pickup musicians, is largely from that same region, and the music played is usually Logar Valley style rather than northern. At one performance in Tašqurğan, a major local musician (*Bangeča*), who was earning a small fee as an accessory player, looked and sounded quite out of place as he tried to fit in with the Logar musicians and their style.

More central to the distinction between Paštun and Uzbek dancing boys is the place and occasion of performance. Paštun troupes may appear in the spring holiday season or at other relaxed times of year. They perform in public in the center of a town and charge a fixed admission price, and they expect spontaneous donations from devotees of one or another dancing boy, who may then make his own arrangements for private appearances. Uzbek boys, on the other hand, may well find considerable employment in the long winter months, when many Uzbek circumcisions are held as major pastimes complete with horsemanship matches and feasts. Their appearances are privately arranged, with no standard cover charge for the entertainment. In the absence of reliable evidence, I would hazard the guess that in the case of both Paštun and Uzbek performers, the dancers operate with considerable independence and under different contract arrangements from those of the band members. The latter are hired for a fixed fee arranged in advance by the host or entrepreneur, while the former seem free to wheel and deal with admirers. As mentioned in Chapter 1, northerners may view attachment to dancing boys as a form of *šowqi* enthusiasm — almost a type of hobby — rather than necessarily as a sign of debauched homosexual activity. Nevertheless, a certain stigma hangs over the performers and their appearance; it seems to stem from an understanding that a breach of public morality is involved, one that might be looked at askance by the local guardians of Islamic ethics. Here the Uzbek and Paštun versions of *bačabazi* diverge again, in that I have not heard of northern performances by Paštun troupes being actively suppressed by local police, whereas similar Uzbek performances have been quite effectively curbed, at least in the urban situation. It is hard to say whether the fact that custodians of morality tend to be Paštuns plays a role in this policy or whether some other, unexplained principle is at work. As to the type of dance itself, there are considerable differences between Uzbek and Paštun styles. Unlike the style of Paštun dancing boys and their Uzbek and Tajik imitators, which is derived from Indian films, true Uzbek dance relies hardly at all on serious shoulder rolls, eyebrow wiggles, and neck jerks. The dance unfolds as a series of discrete gestures performed in a free sequence under the general guidance of a *dambura* player.

This brings us to the question of dance music. Outside of the dancing-boy situation, the Uzbek instrumental pieces that accompany dance must be considered on their own terms as expressions of a clearly Uzbek music subculture. The tunes are universally acknowledged in the North as being Uzbek in origin, and they tend in some cases to be specifically linked to a given place of origin. Tunes are named "Aqčai," "Sangčeraki," "Maimanegi," and so on, in reference to a town that has made the piece famous. This name is often the only designation one can obtain from either musicians or laymen for any given musical entity, apart from an occasional ascription to a specific musician who has popularized a piece of his own composition. Often the same tune may be ascribed to different towns with complete confidence by different informants. This seems due partly to the strong melodic overlap in the repertoire, which tends towards confusing one tune with another, and partly to a blurring of the musical boundaries in recent times. The latter phenomenon could be traceable to several causes: (1) the great increase in mobility in the North since the 1950s, thanks to motorized transport, allowing for more exchange of regional repertoires; (2) the impact of the radio, which has minimized local differences by introducing a variety of outside repertoires as background against which subtle distinctions between, say, Aqča and Sangčerak tunes lose their meaning; and (3) the general homogenization of northern culture through cultural accommodation, advanced by the absorption of Turkmen and Uzbek émigrés after the northern border was effectively sealed in the late 1930s. There is no doubt that these three factors overlap in various ways and have a combined effect on the musical situation, certainly leading to so simple a manifestation as loss of local identification of tune types, in addition to more serious effects detailed in other sections of the present study.

Nonetheless, a certain degree of local color remains in the repertoire whenever a strong hometown musician achieves a high degree of recognition for performing in a traditional manner. The main examples of this trend would be the songs of Baz Gul Badaxši, associated with the Keşm border area between Badaxšan and Katağan, and the work of Aq Pišak of Aqča, who is almost single-handedly preserving the traditional instrumental music of his town. Indeed, a large part of his total repertoire consist of Aqčai tunes used for dance accompaniment, and in Chapter 3 we shall examine a large number of his variants of these tunes.

Summarizing our foray into the world of Afghan Uzbek music, it is apparent that this ethnic group has maintained a highly diverse and comprehensive music subculture above and beyond the components

of the shared music culture of the North. The extent to which this situation will continue to obtain depends at least in part once again on the success of the ethnic broadcasting of Radio Afghanistan. Even from very tentative preliminary soundings it seems that the programming, directed by an Afghan Uzbek, has been extremely well received by its intended audience. Aimaq has received a disproportionately heavy volume of mail from Uzbek listeners (considering the high rate of illiteracy) commenting favorably or critically upon the early programs he has produced, and he has shown himself highly sensitive to listeners' interests. My impression is that Aimaq's work will have considerable impact upon Uzbek musical practices in the North as well as in Kabul, and may well spark a renascence of ethnic pride, perhaps to the extent of turning Uzbek youth towards performance of their own traditional music rather than simple adoption of Kabul musical styles. In the long run, this situation cannot but help to increase national unity, by ending the alienation from Kabul which had led the older generation to tuning in Radio Tashkent, and by giving ethnic groups such as the Uzbeks a feeling of participation in the shaping of Afghan culture.

## PAMIR PEOPLES

To date there has been no musical investigation of the Pamir peoples, whose rich storehouse of archaic languages has been well-mined by linguists (Morgenstierne 1938). The data at my disposal is based on conversations with Nizam Nurjanov of the Tajik Academy of Sciences, who has done extensive collecting in the Soviet side of the Pamirs, and on travelers' accounts for both Afghan and Soviet sides from the nineteenth century. Turning to the latter first, Schultz (1918) is particularly voluble on the subject of music, giving extensive illustration of the instruments he saw. Some of these — Afghan robab, Kašgar robab, Tajikistani tanbur, daf (tambourine) — relate to outside neighboring music cultures, but one instrument also named robab is strikingly different and purely Pamir in provenience (Schultz 1914:79–80). I have seen a specimen of this instrument (Figure 4.20) that was brought back by the French Hindu Kush Expedition of 1968 from the village of Sarkan, near Qala-i Panja in the mid-Waxan area, and it tallies closely with the "Pamir robab" pictured in the Soviet *Atlas of Musical Instruments* (Vertkov 1963:Plate 639). The only linguistic evidence I am aware of for the instrument being called robab in local languages is among Parači speakers (Morgenstierne 1938:27\*); Morgenstierne (1938:27\*) gives *tubur* (dambura?) for "guitar" in Yidga-Munji. The broad neck, bent pegbox, protruding spurs, and

thick leather-covered belly are characteristic. Another early observer (Capus 1884:115) said the instrument was played by the women of Kašgar, which indicates a wide range of distribution. It is difficult not to see a connection between the Pamir robab and the *damyan* lute of Nepal, found as far as Sikkim; Lieberman, the chief investigator of Sikkimese music, says he feels the identification of the two lutes is indisputable (1972:p.c.). The Tibetan lute of similar construction also appears to bear some relationship to the Pamir and Nepalese instruments, which suggests that the Pamir robab belongs to a series of high-mountain lute types in a special musical region at "the roof of the world." The music played on the robab, at least in the examples kindly supplied by Nurjanov, is quite distinctive, and bears little resemblance to Badaxšani styles.

An important component of Pamir music culture is the dance tradition cited by Schultz (1914:83–84). This includes a number of "action" dances such as a vigorous sword dance and dance-staff numbers. He was particularly impressed with the virtuosity of the latter: "Der Stocktanz erfordert einige Kunstfertigkeit, da die heftigen Schläge leicht die Hand des Partners treffen können." I have not seen descriptions of Badaxšani dances that would parallel these Pamir performances. Other dances mentioned by Schultz and, more recently, by Andreev (1953) — spoon dances and masked animal dances — may well relate to forms widespread among mountain Tajiks (Nurjanov 1956) and perhaps point to an old Iranian substratum of dance and mime performances, especially since totemic associations tend to be imputed to masked and animal dances. Schultz (1914:83–85) lists the following dances of this type: a horseman dance (in which the performer plays both horse and rider), a camel dance (with two men as camel and rider) a chicken dance, a bird dance, and a devil-madman dance (Schultz is not clear as to which is involved). Also perhaps tied to mountain Tajik practice are small dance-theatrical scenes, such as one portraying an old husband and young wife (Schultz 1914:83–85). Other entertainments mentioned by Schultz and Andreev similarly betray outside connections, such as the *buzkaši* horsemanship game (Schultz 1914:86). In terms of epic, Nurjanov (1968:p.c.) sees a strong demarcation between Pamir peoples and mountain Tajiks. The former have never had the Guroğlu epic, which is basic to the latter; furthermore, the Pamir peoples have their own *dastān* (tale) tradition. It is based on extensive narrative passages frequently punctuated by songs.

Unfortunately, I have not recorded nor have had access to any archives of songs in the local languages of the Pamir peoples. There

seems to be a tendency for the songs to use Persian as a lingua franca and to meld with the general mountain Tajik repertoire, at least in the case of a Waxi performer I met in Faizabad. It was only with great difficulty that I coaxed a few words of his native tongue from him, and I was totally unable to elicit songs in Waxi: he played the Badaxšani dambura (a small Waxi model) and sang the types of quatrains generally heard among mountain Tajiks. Linguistics data from Morgenstierne (1938: glossary) confirm a strong Persian influence on musical terminology: e.g., *meila* for festival, *nagara* for drum in Parači. *Sazinge*, the Suġni word, for music, is close to Persian *sāz* as well. A quatrain in Sanglıći-Iškaši given by the same authority (1938:378) is in lines of 11, 12, and 13 syllables, has an *a a b a* rhyme scheme, and contains some Persian words, supporting further a supposition of considerable mountain Tajik influence in the Pamir peoples' music. To cite one more illustration from Morgenstierne (1938:179), he gives a tale in Yidğan-Munji that is prefaced by a stanza in Persian. This is reminiscent of a similar practice of a Uzbek singer from Andxoi, who introduced a segment of the Körögölü epic tale with a short Persian declamation (recorded on Anthology AST 4001). In both cases the primacy of Persian as the lingua franca is felt at the extreme west and east of the Afghan North. For Pamir peoples of Tajikistan, Nurjanov (1968: p.c.) notes that in recent years mountain Tajik influence has increased thanks to the mass media and improved transportation.

One interesting song type collected by Nurjanov is women's work songs, performed during agricultural labor. Nurjanov says that women show no reticence in singing out of doors or hesitation in having their songs recorded. If part of a general trend, this would indicate a substantial difference between Pamir music culture and the shared culture of northern Afghanistan. Doubtless there are a considerable number of other factors setting off these isolated peoples, for it is hard to imagine them maintaining their highly archaic languages over the course of so many centuries without also maintaining at least a minimal body of musical attitudes and repertoire idiomatic to their language and culture. We can only hope that research will be completed soon among these peoples, as on the Soviet side there already appears a tendency of the Pamir peoples to merge with the general Tajikistani Soviet culture. There are also unexpected acculturational factors such as the directed migration of the Yağnobis, an isolated Pamir-like mountain people who speak an archaic Iranian language and live in the Hissar Mountains. According to the *New York Times* (5/3/71), 4,000 Yağnobis have been resettled by the Soviet government in the Zafarobod cotton irrigation district in the Ferghana Valley region of Tajikistan.

## MOUNTAIN TAJIKS

In terms of attitudes, we simply do not have enough data to sufficiently delineate a separate mountain Tajik musical subculture. Lorraine Sakata's extensive fieldwork of late 1972 may produce the material necessary for such an endeavor. At present, we must rely largely on repertoire and instruments and some hearsay evidence.

Perhaps the clearest expression of mountain Tajik individuality is the widespread and popular genre called *felak* (lit. "starry firmament"; Steingass 1970:938). Felak seems to imply fate, the heavens here seen as the source of good or ill fortune, in the folk poetry of Badaxšan, as shown in the following lines from a song of the Afghan Darwaz region:

Emsāl či sāl-i nāsana kard felak.  
 Yārān o barādarān jodā saxt felak.  
 Guftam kerawam piše felak, geryā konam.

What a bad year the heavens made this year.  
 The heavens separated lovers and brothers.  
 Once I decided to go to the heavens and cry.

This poetry of desolation is common among the mountain Tajiks, adding a fatalistic tinge to the sadness of requited love bemoaned in Turkestani folk verses. The felak is a form dear to the backwoods population of Badaxšan and is sung in various ways (solo, with instrumental accompaniment) in mountain pastures and fields. Much Badaxšani instrumental music is modeled on the unaccompanied song and is thus given the name felak as well. Dansker (1967:255) has noted that the local flute is so associated with this genre that the natives say of it that "faqat čizha-i felaki navoxtan mumken ast" ("only felak things can be played on it"). As I have written elsewhere on the structure of the felak (Slobin 1970), here I would like only to summarize my impressions of the genre's development and spread. First, it seems to me remarkable that in an area basically marked by difficulty of transportation because of mountains, which produce a range of microecologies, a particular genre and its musical accompaniment (both music and instrument; see Chapters 3 and 4) should be so nearly uniform across the entire length and breadth of Badaxšan, from Darwaz to Kešm to the Waxan. Second, it is interesting that apparently in each subregion the felak has its proponents among various strata of society. Though, as noted above, data are far from complete, one has the impression speaking to Badaxšanis and noting the variety of performers that the felak is basic musical currency for everyone, and that there is a particularly high degree of amateurism. When I stood in the Faizabad bazaar tootling on some newly bought flutes to elicit

amateurs, it appeared that nearly everyone around could either play the flute or judge performance critically. I have been told that wealthy landowners throw picnics with general invitation, and great numbers participate in the music making recreation. As one young Badaxšani put it, "Everyone brings a dambura, since everyone can play it."

We have already discussed the Badaxšani dambura at length. The other principal instruments are the ubiquitous large tambourine, called *daf* here as in other areas of the Near East and Central Asia, and the *tulā*, a block flute, found only in Badaxšan. Significantly, the instrumentarium of the mountain Tajiks includes one element found even outside Afghanistan (*daf*), one relating only to nearby Uzbeks and Tajiks (dambura), and one of seemingly local provenience (*tula*), again demonstrating the shared vs. discrete aspects of all of the music of the North.

Stylistically, Badaxšani music is quite distinctive. Its rhythmic basis, often a 4+3 beat, is found among Paštuns but not in Turkestan, among either Tajiks or Uzbeks. Its scalar emphasis on extremely narrow melodic lines with considerable half-step motion is similarly un-Turkestani, but is also non-Paštun as well. Of particular interest is the Badaxšani voice quality, which is a combination of tenseness, nasality, and a guttural timbre unlike that used in Turkestani music. Also peculiar to Badaxšan is the presence of a considerable body of felaks sung in parlando-rubato style (rhythm associated with declamatory speech patterns rather than with fixed musical meter). Virtually all Uzbek-Tajik Turkestani music is in tempo giusto, or fixed rhythm, style. Again, the mountain Tajiks here seem closer to the Paštuns, whose up-country songs tend towards free rhythm. Perhaps it is not surprising that the nonurban Paštuns and mountain Tajiks display some musical affinities that set them apart from the oasis dwellers of Turkestan, though I would certainly reject an ecological-determinist cause for such an effect.

Perhaps the clearest link to old Turkic developments is the presence of the Körögölü epic tale, here titled "Guroğlı," in which Persian *gur* ("grave") is combined with Turkic *oğlu* ("son of") to form a folk etymology of the hero's name. Performances of "Guroğlı" by special singers appropriately titled *guroğligu* ("Guroğlı tellers") are quite close in sound quality to those given in an extremely and tense voice by some Uzbek epic reciters, perhaps most notably those of the Surxandarya area. The only solid data regarding contemporary "Guroğlı" recitation in Afghanistan comes from Rustaq, in Katağan just west of the Badaxšan border. According to a preliminary field report from P. and M. Centlivres (1972:p.c.), "the whole recitation is said to last three

evenings, being divided into seven *sāx* (parts). Both Tajiks and Qarluqs claim to possess this epos in their culture." It is noteworthy that the Qarluqs, a small pre-Uzbek Turkic group, claim "Guroğlı"; this indicates the type of acculturation to Tajik ways noted by Karmysheva (1964) for such splinter groups in southern Uzbekistan-Tajikistan. The case is particularly strong in the "Guroğlı" itself, as noted above, represents a Tajik borrowing of Uzbek material. It is significant that the Qarluqs nevertheless lean toward the Tajik rather than the equally accessible Uzbek version.

To summarize Badaxšan, there is great distinctiveness of the music subculture combined with a wide spread of certain of its aspects. The ġičak has been cited as a mountain Tajik export, and the Badaxšani dambura seems to have played a part in the development of the Turkestani lute of the same name. Similarly, Badaxšani repertoire has spread beyond the border area of Keşm, most notably to Katağan. For example, in Xanabad one can hear non-Badaxšani performers using aspects of Badaxšani melody and timbre in singing non-Badaxšani verses. Katağani style in general is much given to such striking elements of Badaxšani music as consistent playing on dambura and ġičak in parallel fourths or fifths by placing the finger across both strings, a practice eschewed by Uzbek Turkestani players in their repertoire. Thus, while the isolated Badaxšanis have maintained a clear identity of style at home, they have played their part in the formation of a mixed interethnic style in Katağan; this style in turn has been spread by non-Uzbek performers to Turkestan and eventually beyond (in the case of the ġičak) to many other areas of Afghanistan.

### THE URBAN ENCLAVE

Thus far I have tended to present the music culture and subcultures of the North more or less as a unit and without making an urban-rural distinction. This is partly due to a general reluctance in the recent literature on Near Eastern cities to stress such a dichotomy: "The fact that formerly popular conceptions of a sharp rural-urban dichotomy have come under heavy attack from a number of related social science disciplines has become a commonplace"; the current trend is towards seeing "cities not as isolated organisms but as constituents in a wide ecosystem" (Adams 1969:191, 192). Perhaps the most extreme case of such urban analysis has been English's (1966) study of Kerman, Iran. As will be noted in the discussion below, I think that it is wise to go along with this scholarly trend for the present in the case of northern Afghanistan. Even a casual observer of the region will note the vital role of urban-rural interaction to the life of the towns. In the one

oasis for which data are available (*Tašqurğan*), there is a strikingly high ratio of urban to rural population (35,000:50,000; Centlivres 1970:26)

The towns of the North fall into an intermediate position in their role as centers, if one visualizes a continuum from the temporary open-air markets of Morocco (Mikesell 1958), which lack all urban focus, to the Near Eastern city, either in classical Islamic times, with its highly complex internal structuring, or today, with the massive population and intensive technology characteristic of the modern metropolis. Northern towns incorporate elements from both extremes of the urban spectrum, functioning as simple gathering places for nearby trade and as fairly complicated but limited bundles of permanent settlement having religious-cum-administrative significance.

The purpose of the present section is to describe the urban (town) musical scene in some detail so as to more closely identify aspects of the music culture with their immediate setting, and to indicate the extent to which town life relates to musical life, since so many authors (e.g., Adams 1967:188) have cited the well-known premise that Near Eastern culture has always been intimately tied to an urban way of life.

Before approaching the details of music within towns, we must first confront the question of a possible urban-rural differentiation. I must again first cite the extreme poverty of data relating to such theoretical questions for Afghanistan. We are fortunate, however, to have the valuable study of *Tašqurğan* by P. Centlivres, which includes among many other useful discussions an introduction to the relationships between a given northern Afghan town and its hinterland. Outside of that book, I can draw only on the older travelers' literature, disconnected references in recent publications, and my own observations. None of the accessible data except for those of Centlivres include statistical support, the results of exhaustive interviews or questionnaires, or even reliable census information. It is clear that we are in the infancy of understanding Afghan urban life beyond *Tašqurğan* and Kabul (for Kabul, see Jung 1971; Hahn 1964-65:177). The theorizing found below must be taken as speculative attempts toward analyzing the towns of the North.

Centlivres has well summarized the problem of defining "town" in northern Afghanistan (1970:31). He sees the literature on Near Eastern urban life as stressing one or two of three possible crucial elements for an urban center: the market, the Friday mosque, and the administrative headquarters. As Centlivres points out (1970:32), for the North, all three components tend to be combined:

On peut alors songer à définir la ville centre-asiatique par le réunion en un lieu d'un bazar, d'un centre religieux et d'un centre politique ou administratif. . . . La taille de la ville, son rôle, le territoire qu'elle domine, son réseau de communications, tous ces éléments nous ramènent au bazar à qui ils sont associés; c'est dans cette perspective que le paysan, lorsqu'il part pour le bazar à l'aube du jour de marche, prend place dans le mouvement général des citadins et ruraux vers le coeur de la ville où les activités économique, politique, religieuse ou sociale sont pour lui indissociables.

I find this concept of the town as indissociable nexus of economic, religious, and administrative life persuasive for the North, though it does not necessarily hold even for other areas of Afghanistan (nor does its author intend it to). For the peasants of outlying villages, the town is simply "the center" to which they turn regularly on a weekly basis to conduct all affairs that are not related to their immediate daily routines and family contacts. Also useful is the remark by Centlivres that the villager judges the town by a combination of factors (size, situation, environs, administrative power, available goods, etc.), among which distance is perhaps not the key element. In this aspect we must differ from a cardinal assumption of central-place theory (to which the study of Afghan towns belongs), which states that "consumers who must visit the market place on a regular basis want a location that permits them to conduct their business with a minimum of effort, and if a choice of location is available will always prefer the one which involves least effort" (Berry 1967:3). For members of the rather closed economy of northern Afghanistan, a day's walk to a more distant market to save a penny a pound on some vital commodity is a realistic choice that belies the customer's supposed interest in "a minimum of effort." There simply is no other way to save the pennies involved.

The nearly unexplored world of the northern towns must be seen at least tentatively as a complex of interrelated urban conglomerations, each offering a special blend of attractions to the villager or nomad. What I will present next is a schematization of the differential pull of various northern towns to get at the nature of urban life in the region. Music will be singled out for special description as a component of the urban complex in order to show how a single element such as public entertainment fits into a more general matrix: the special relationship of towns to their own inhabitants and to the outlying rural folk. As the towns of the North are undergoing continual metamorphoses due to recent change, the description offered here must stand only as an approximation of a situation perceived at one point in time — basically 1968 with updating from 1971-72.

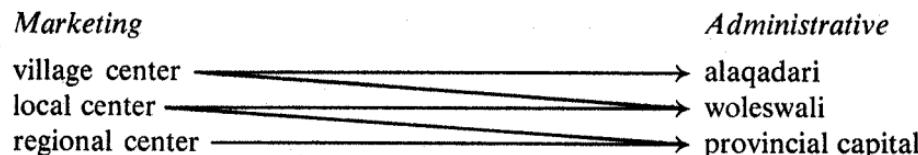
In beginning a survey of northern towns, it is useful to visualize two urban hierarchies, a system observed by Skinner (1964) for rural China. One is the marketing hierarchy, which encompasses a series of urban markets of varying importance, while the other involves an administrative ranking, according to which towns are placed in order of governmental importance. As in the case for China, in the northern Afghan case "the two hierarchies occasionally meet at the same level in the same cities, although this is not a necessity" (Berry 1967:95). Let us examine the two continua of urban importance. The marketing hierarchy can tentatively be presented in the following framework:

### Marketing Hierarchy

- A. Village center
- B. Local center
  - 1. Standard oasis
  - 2. Interregional border town
  - 3. Subregional center
- C. Regional center
- D. National center (Kabul only)

The Afghan administrative hierarchy consists of three basic types of communities, ranging from least to greatest importance: *alaqadari*; *woleswali* (fourth to first degree, according to population); and provincial capital (which need not be the largest in population).

The congruence and lack thereof between the two hierarchies can be indicated by the following diagram:



It can be seen that: (1) markets I have classed as village centers can be located in either an alaqadari (e.g., Aliabad, Kunduz province) or a woleswali (Mungiček, a fourth degree woleswali in Jozjan province); (2) local centers can be situated in either a woleswali (Aqča, a first degree woleswali in Jozjan province) or a provincial capital (Taluqan, Taxor province); and (3) regional centers (Mazar-i Šarif, Balx province) are always also provincial capitals. The findings indicate that woleswali-sized towns form the main body of market centers and can be seen as the backbone of ordinary marketing activities.

However, our survey of town styles is not yet complete. We must add a kind of urban center that is nontraditional and thus extra-hierarchical, fitting neither into the marketing continuum nor into a

single administrative slot. This is the industrial and communications hub, a type of town intimately linked to recent technological and political developments. The clearest examples of this trend are Kunduz and Pul-i Xumri, both in Katağan. Neither features a market of the traditional type that fits into our hierarchy. Administratively, Kunduz figures as a provincial capital, whereas Pul-i Xumri is a first degree wholeswali. We shall detail the special cases of these towns below; let us return now to defining the traditional town types given above, first with a general outline of each type and then with specific case studies, including musical life.

*Village center* is a term I employ for small marketing centers that exist primarily to fulfill immediate needs on the off days of the larger local center bazaars. Here we enter the domain of scheduled markets with synchronized periodicity, but on a much more modest scale than observed for Morocco by Mikesell or for China by Skinner. There exists no elaborate day-by-day periodicity in northern Afghanistan whereby markets of roughly equal size stagger their market days to serve local clienteles, nor is there extensive synchronization between lower- and higher-order markets in the hierarchy. The village center represents limited response to local marketing conditions, and as far as I know it relates only to one given nearby a larger center as a satellite. To extend the astronomical analogy, the Friday market in Mungiček represents the reflected glow of the great Aqča bazaar, but it is only a single moon like Earth's, not part of a complex set of satellites near a metropolis, like the many moons near great Jupiter. Unfortunately, the distribution of such village centers is not well documented, since there has been no thorough survey of marketing functions of northern communities, so the case rests only on observation of towns such as Mungiček, or Almar (an alaqadari) near Maimana.

As can be seen by its three subdivisions, the *local center* is a set of town types unified by a similar position in the hierarchy. I have labeled type 1 "standard oasis" to indicate it is the majority case, as opposed to the less common varieties under type 2 and type 3. Classic northern local centers that could be called standard oases are the Turkestani steppe towns of Aqča and Andxoi. Each has a bazaar twice a week and draws on a large number of surrounding villages for clientele. These towns act as major intermediaries between rural populations and the outside world, putting peasants (and, seasonally, nomads) in contact with the regional center (the wholesaler) and, ultimately, with the national market in Kabul, with its extensive import-export functions. The feeder region may extend at least as far as the 20 miles noted by Mikesell (1958) for the Moroccan *sug*, and perhaps up to 30 miles,

a considerable distance for traffic that is largely nonmotorized. As I have noted elsewhere (Slobin 1969:451), "the infusion of activity on market days is the lifeblood of the town." Customers flock to some two thousand shops in the central bazaar, which is built to handle heavy traffic. On off days, the market is largely deserted, underscoring the tidal nature of the commerce. The custom of periodic market days in a local market center is an old one in Turkestan, as witnessed by Burnes's remarks of 1835:

The custom of having market days is uncommon in India and Cabool, but of universal use in Toorkistan; it perhaps gives a stimulus to trade, and is most convenient; since all the people of the country, for miles around, assemble on the occasion. Every person seems to think it incumbent upon him to be present. The different articles are arranged in separate parts of the bazaar with as much regularity as in Bokhara itself. (1835:8)

The interregional border town functions like the standard oasis, but may have added distinguishing features. The prime example of such a town is Taşqurğan. Situated between the major regions of Turkestan and Katağan, Taşqurğan acts both as broker for the zones involved and as producer of consumer goods exported to all neighboring areas.

Finally, subregional centers also function like the standard oasis but edge towards regional centers in importance by gathering products from a number of smaller local markets. Maimana is a good example of this kind of town. Though clearly subordinate to the regional center of Turkestan (Mazar-i Šarif), Maimana draws in goods and activities from such nearby bazaars as Qaisar and Belčerāğ, then transmits commercial flow to Mazar. For its own subregion of Turkestan, Maimana acts as a center, but must eventually funnel its mercantile wealth to the regional marketing headquarters.

Turning to the *regional center*, we have already mentioned its command of the total trading energy of its constituent local centers. Mazar is the major middleman between Kabul and the North, and in every parameter of size and commercial flow stands in a category apart from the smaller oasis and subregional towns. Mazar and its Badaxšani counterpart, Faizabad, fit the description of "central market" described for China by Skinner: "The central market receives imported items and distributes them to its market area via the lower-order centers, and it collects local products and exports them to other central markets and higher-order centers . . . central markets . . . are the highest order and are located at strategic points on the transport network, providing important wholesaling functions" (Berry 1967:94). With the proviso

that only Kabul is a "higher-order center" than the regional market (or central market, in Skinner's terms), Skinner's outline fits the northern Afghan situation. Also similar is the appearance of "permanent shops in addition to . . . periodic markets, and . . . smaller business centers at each of the four gates of the city" (Berry 1967:94).

Before turning to closer examination of the market types just surveyed, a brief commentary on administrative importance is in order. As noted above, while alaqadaris and woeswalis are assigned according to population, provincial capitals receive their designation for other reasons. This is primarily a political matter. Up until quite recently (1964), the North consisted of only three provinces: Mazar-i Šarif (comprising all of the present Fariab, Jozjan, Balx, and Samangan provinces), Katağan (including the present Bağlan, Kunduz, and Taxor provinces), and Badaxšan, actually only a minor province (*hukumat-i alā*) then. Apparently as a result of interest in breaking up such huge concentrations of governors' authority, the new provinces were created, necessitating the assignment of provincial capital status to towns previously lower in the hierarchy. Rather in the manner of early American legislatures designating less important (often obscure) towns as state capitals (e.g., Springfield instead of Chicago in Illinois), Afghan officials overlooked prominent towns in two provinces and bestowed administrative blessings on communities of lesser magnitude in both population and marketing power. The chief beneficiaries of this policy were Samangan in Samangan province, clearly less important than Tašqurğan, and Šibergan in Jozjan Province, inferior to both Aqča and Saripul (and perhaps even Sangčerak) in traditional importance. Šibergan's subordinate marketing status relative to Saripul was noted by Ferrier (1860:381), who pointed out that the latter town's control of the local river always left the former town at a disadvantage. Thus, these towns became local centers with a particular status belying their position in the marketing hierarchy; we shall have occasion to discuss this peculiar position below. It should also be noted that downgrading of administrative status can debilitate a community. Dupree (1966: 16) cites the example of Aq Kupruk (Balx province), which lost its status as woeswali site to Šolgan in 1961; the result was the economic downfall of the former town and a great growth of population for the latter.

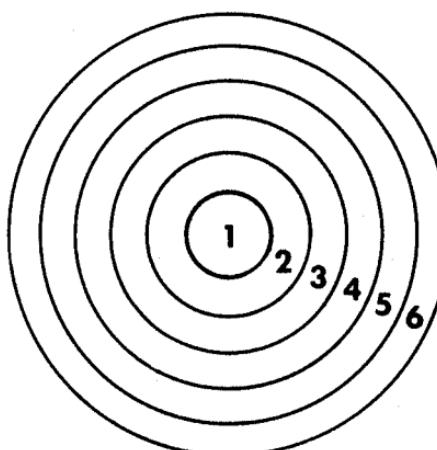
Let us turn now to a detailed look at the major types of towns, using selected examples. One must bear in mind that: (1) all the towns in question are quite old, many of them having been sites of trade in earliest recorded times; (2) up to recent times (1880s) the towns of Turkestan were semiautonomous city-states, each with a dif-

ferent history and special set of circumstances; and (3) the closed northern border with only a tiny number of designated (generally nontraditional) ports for transfer of goods, is an even more recent development (dating from about 1940). These three factors ensure that any general schematization will quickly spring leaks if stretched to describe more than a restricted situation. Like any generalization, the typing of towns suggested here is meant primarily as a temporary tool for future economic and cultural geographers of the North rather than as the last word in urban classifications. We shall begin with the local center viewing the satellite village market as an adaptive mechanism related to the more central market town in its vicinity.

### The Local Market Center

This type of town is the backbone of Afghan domestic commerce. The concentric-circle model given by Centlivres for Tašqurğan (Figure 2.5) is a useful starting point for analyzing this type of town.

In Figure 2.5, the *Tim* is the cupola-like central covered bazaar of Tašqurğan; the *madrasa* is the Islamic school. Tašqurğan is useful as an example because it is the last town in the North to retain so classic a town structure, with its eighteenth century architecture preserved. Tašqurğan is archaic and unique in many ways, e.g., in its custom of closing off the bazaar each night and maintaining two different, named types of watchmen (those on roofs and those in courtyards) to guard the central market. Most of the other towns of the North have changed from this earlier model to the more commonly found recent pattern of a totally uncovered bazaar constructed along the lines of a well-organized main shopping street; it is located away from the traditional



1. covered bazaar (*Tim*), madrasa, baths, municipality
2. uncovered bazaar, livestock market
3. zone of contiguous habitations
4. zone of discontinuous habitations and gardens
5. suburbs, villages recently annexed to the town
6. zone of villages and grain cultivation

Fig. 2.5. Model of the Tašqurğan oasis (from Centlivres 1970:31)



*Fig. 2.6. The Tašqurğan bazaar*

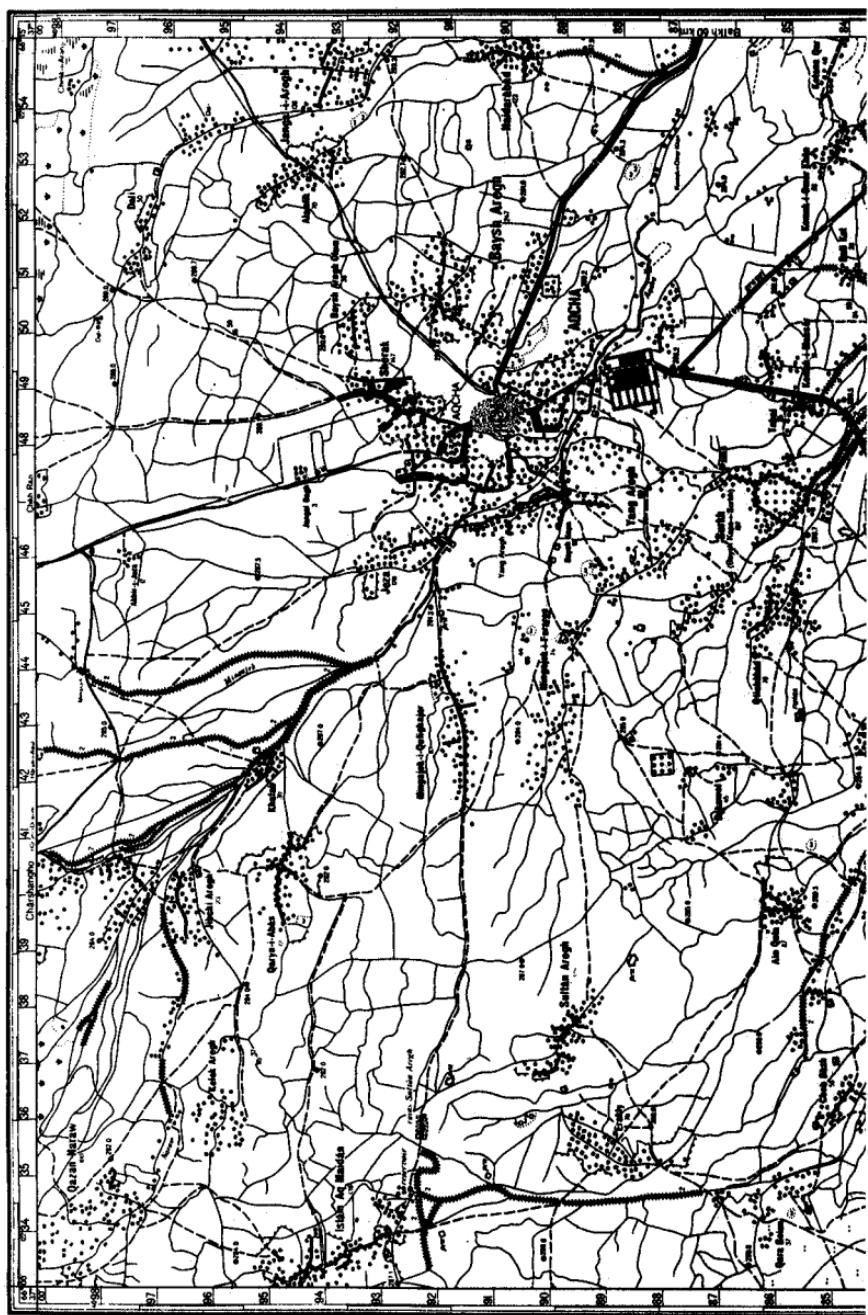
town center near the citadel and usually culminates at a large cross-roads where the two main roads cut through the town. Generally a *śār-i now*, or "new city," is built apart from the older center to include a hotel, which doubles as municipal headquarters, and the offices and homes of the local officials.

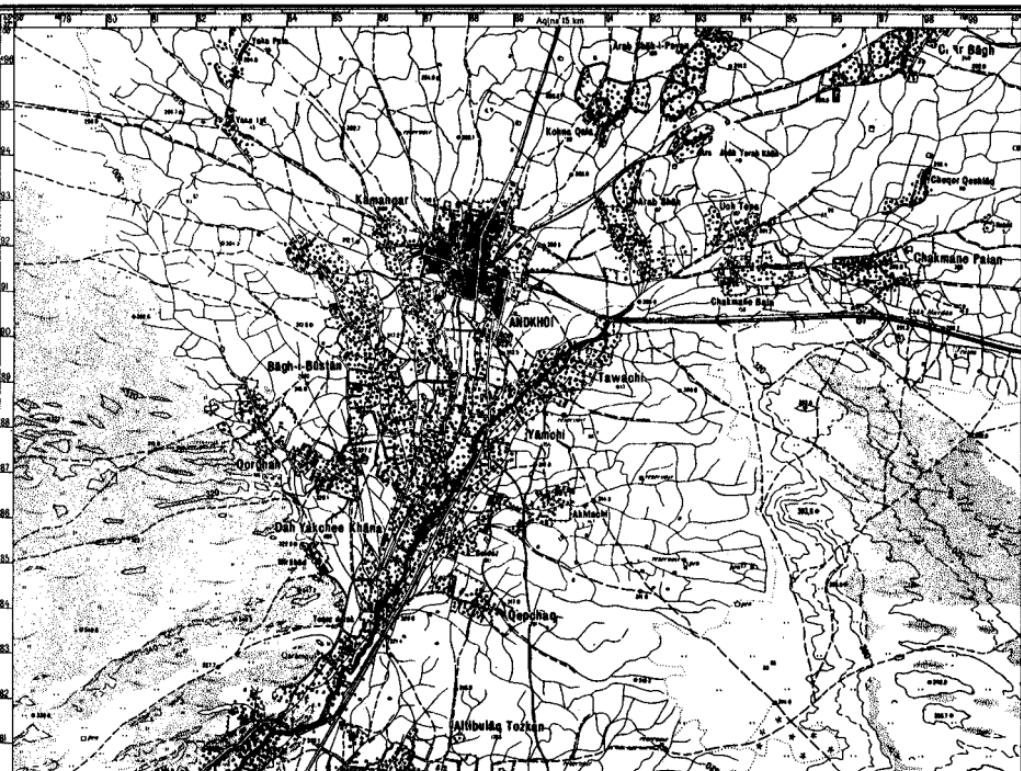
Let us look at the map of Aqča (Map 2.1), the local market town of the "standard oasis" type that we shall examine at length, to see how its layout both reflects and differs from the model given by Centlivres (Figure 2.5).

In the map, the grid just north of the juncture of two main roads near the heavy lettering AQCHA is the new bazaar, which supplanted Aqča's covered market somewhere in the 1950s. The oval gray blob just above with the smaller AQCHA label is the old town citadel, consisting of ruins from the days of the town's independent status as Turkestani city-state. As Centlivres indicates in his model for Tašqurğan, the density of town population radiates from the older center concentrically, from contiguous to noncontiguous zones of housing, becoming at last individual, highly scattered villages separated by spaces of dusty steppe zone along the traces of dried watercourses.

The extent to which the water source may determine the demography of an oasis is clearly indicated in the map of Andxoi, another important local market center of the steppe, one that is even more water-poor than Aqča and considerably drier than Tašqurğan, our original model. In Map 2.2 it is clear that the population hugs the

Map 2.1. Aqča and Vicinity





Map 2.2. Andxoi and Vicinity

trickle of water that comes up from Maimana (145 kilometers distant) every fifteen days. Near the center of the map is the new bazaar, in black. Satellite Turkmen villages can be seen primarily to the east, where the water is more plentiful. To the west, northwest, and southeast, however, there are practically no habitations in the vast desert tracts (actually the southernmost extension of the Kara Kum Desert, which stretches far beyond the Soviet border, some 20 kilometers off). Thus, while the traditional model is still operative for Taşqurğan, it can be seen that geographic circumstances and recent administratively inspired remodeling have had their effect on the individual configurations of local market centers across the North.

What towns of this type share in the ebb and flow of market-day activity, based on the centrality of the town in its oasis setting. The relative prosperity of each town, reflected in the abundance and wealth of shopkeepers and artisans, fluctuates in relation to several factors: (1) the effect of weather on local crops (and thus on the availability of pasturage and the health of livestock), which strained towns almost to the breaking point in the drought period 1970–72; (2) the outside

demand for the local products, which since about 1940 has meant transshipment of such goods to Kabul for export; and (3) the internal demand both for goods from within the local agricultural production area and for those traditionally manufactured by local town artisans, such as jewelry, iron goods, and items of carpentry. While these factors may vary considerably from year to year, the town remains an indispensable forum for exchange of goods and services even in the worst times, and has probably always done so since urbanization first emerged in the region under discussion.

There is no need to detail the economic organization of such towns, since Centlivres has provided ample evidence for Tašqurğan. It should be noted, however, that the proliferation of artisans evident in his analysis probably relates to the special role that town has taken on, which we shall return to below. It should be mentioned that the location of trades and the ethnic ingredient of market personnel varies widely from town to town; thus the data for Tašqurğan must be taken as valid only for that community. In his brief study of Saripul in 1968, Centlivres (1968:p.c.) found that many of the occupational roles had settled at different levels in the urban marketing hierarchy, and that their ethnic composition was unlike that of Tašqurğan.

An outstanding feature of local market centers is the careful ordering of its activity. As noted by Burnes above, the bazaar area is divided precisely by craft and type of goods. Each craft has its own guild structure, presided over by an elected head (*kalontar*). The rural customer knows exactly where to find the ironmongers, imported fabric sellers, tea-and-sweets merchants, or the large *mundai* area for sale of staple commodities (grain, rice, produce). In short, the bazaar can supply every need of the villager or nomad, and will furnish him with a modest amount of capital by purchasing whatever he can produce that is marketable, from eggs to homemade caps to valuable Turkmen ("Bokhara") carpets. Entertainment is seen as a staple commodity of the bazaar, catering to the customers' hunger for glamour and diversion. In the present-day town the movie theater has become the principal attraction; indeed it has become the status symbol and mark of identification of the urban center. The vast majority of films are of Indian origin and portray love and war, with songs and dance scenes in Hindi — a language none of the viewers can understand (and subtitles are useless for a population that is 95 percent illiterate). Seeing a life totally divorced from Afghan village existence — with kings and princesses or upper-class modern urbanites, dancing girls openly performing sensuous motions, epic

battle scenes and fast car chases — gives intense enjoyment to town and country folk alike.

The obverse side of the coin is the local, highly traditional entertainment of the town teahouse (*samowad*), described in Chapter 1. It is the antithesis of the glamorous imported film. Here local performers of village origin blend newer tunes (often from the films themselves) with long-standing favorites as part of an older pattern of diversion, or *sa'at-tiri*. In the all-male world of the bazaar, the teahouse is the ideal place for men to rest, drink endless cups of liquid refreshment (black tea in winter, green in summer), and gossip with friends, while occasionally listening to the music of the small band. Sometimes the teahouse is equipped with *karambul* boards (a billiards-like game played with small flat discs), but most gambling with dice, cards, and sheep bones takes place on the streets. Many teahouses avoid the expense of live music and strategically deploy a radio and loudspeaker; more rarely one finds the ancient gramophone with a repertoire of scratchy Indian Victor records of antique film songs.

In Aqča, if live music is to be heard, chances are that Aq Pišak, the finest musician of the oasis and one of the leading performers of the North, will be leading the band. We shall focus on Aq Pišak's career and repertoire to gain an understanding of how the musical life of Aqča reflects the particular pattern of that town's general activity as a local market center.

Aq Pišak is a Turkmen, from the village of Čakeč near Aqča. He belongs to the Čekiji subgroup of the Ersari tribe. He was approximately forty years of age in 1968 and had been playing the *dambura* for over twenty years. His career follows the model of the successful *šowqi* outlined in Chapter 1. Beginning life as a shepherd, the musician played the *dambura* for private enjoyment. He also amused friends with his animal imitations, for which he probably earned his epithet of Aq Pišak, "white cat"; by now his original name has been forgotten. As he played for celebrations and earned money, he began to acquire a reputation as an outstanding entertainer. Eventually he graduated from *garibi-šowqi* to full-time musician. He has never traveled beyond Šiberğan to the south and Mazar to the east, rarely has a chance to listen carefully to the radio, and doesn't often have the twelve cents necessary to enter the cinema. He has a wife and several children.

Aq Pišak's public personality seems shaped by his career. He is treated as a clown: mention his name and people smile. He wears the old-fashioned tall fur Turkmen cap no longer worn by local villagers, which gives him a comic appearance, and knows how to make his audi-

ence roar with laughter at imitations of sheep, cats and well-known people. "Offstage" he is grave and quiet, with the look of a sad clown. Though a Turkmen, Aq Pišak performs only the Uzbek-Tajik teahouse repertoire, the musical lingua franca of the North, thus strengthening the cross-ethnic aspect of Aqča's musical life. He cannot play any of the purely Turkmen instruments; however, he was very pleased to introduce me to a fine Turkmen musician (Axmad-baxši), and after long acquaintance finally consented to sing an excerpt from the Turkmen version of the Körögölü tale. Aq Pišak would confirm Surxi's comment that Turkmens play Uzbek-Tajik music simply as a pragmatic matter: one can earn a living that way.

Aq Pišak's band varies with the available talent, but always includes the bare minimum of two Uzbek singers who alternate verses in the improvised quatrain songs that make up the bulk of the repertoire. The damburači plays from about 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. on market days, and was paid the equivalent of sixty cents per day in 1968 by the teahouse owner. In addition to his role as urban music maker, Aq Pišak serves as village entertainer for domestic festivities. The latter role, though seasonal, nets him a larger income than the former. During the winter, when a bai throws a party (often for a circumcision), he may go to great lengths to entertain guests, even to including a buzkaši horsemanship match. At such occasions, according to Aq Pišak, each čapandoz (buzkaši rider) will contribute money for the entertainment, and a first-rate musician may also be awarded a silken čapan (cloak) by the host in reward for his long night's work. As far as I can tell, Aq Pišak plays the same repertoire with the same band for many of the same people at village festivities and in the Aqča teahouse; it is the occasion that determines the different pay scales.

Aq Pišak's repertoire is made up of three distinct components. One is the purely local Aqčai Uzbek dance tunes, to be analyzed in Chapter 3. The second includes items from the remaining northern repertoire, picked up from traveling musicians, while the third consists of music from two outside sources: Radio Afghanistan and Indian films.

Aqča and its native son Aq Pišak offer an exceptionally clear example of local talent and the local market center. Variants of this model abound; a major local market center such as Xanabad, though rich in talent, features no live teahouse music because of governmental proscription; on the other hand, for special reasons outlined below, the native musicians of Tašqurğan seek employment in other towns. What is important for the present discussion is the extent to which in Aqča one can sense a clear interrelationship between the musical life

and the socioeconomic position of the town, which at least in theory holds for many other towns of similar position in the marketing hierarchy. Just as Aqča provides villagers with stock goods available all across the North, so it gives them a brand of music that connects them to listeners of the entire larger area. From time to time, new wares are introduced, as are new songs. At the same time, the town gives country folk a chance to see familiar faces, friends and kinsmen who come in from other villages for shopping and gossiping. It also provides an opportunity for customers to be entertained with the kind of live music associated with home festivities, and it is important to note that the music is played by fellow villagers rather than outsiders. The local market center, a place largely familiar but simultaneously an important link with the outside world, has a musical life that is in many ways homespun, but it also features a considerable degree of innovation based on external stimuli.

The resistance of this pattern to change is fairly high, even surviving technological inroads if they pose no direct threat. In 1969 I was not sanguine about the survival of local market center music because of the extension of paved roads through Turkestan (Slobin 1969:42). A return visit to Aqča in 1971 did not support this doleful hypothesis. Curiously enough, the reason that bringing a highway from Mazar to Šiberğan via Aqča did not basically affect the town was the excessive modernity of the traffic engineering solution devised by Russian planners. The Soviet advisors applied the latest approach to urban road placement, creating bypasses of important northern towns (Samangan, Taşqurğan, Aqča) rather than bringing the road straight through the heart of the urban center as did older highways in Europe and America. This "interstate highway" approach left these towns high and dry. The crucial motorized freight and passenger traffic of the North is channeled directly to far-separated destinations rather than filtered through a series of market towns. The preliminary result in Aqča has been a marked decline of the bazaar, coinciding with a tentative relocation of shops closer to the roadway, some three miles down a "business spur" road. One can estimate that some five to ten years will elapse before the bypassed towns of the North can adapt to the too-advanced road technology thrust upon them; in the meantime, the older patterns of town life will remain, perhaps even in more impacted and isolated form. We shall see below how the more traditional method of highway placement resulted in important benefits to other northern towns (Kunduz, Pul-i Vumri) in earlier years.

Before leaving the local market center, we must pay a brief visit to the satellite market centers (designated "village centers" in our hierarchy) often associated with these towns. Čarşangay, seat of the

Mungiček wolesswali, about six kilometers northeast of Aqča, is a good example of such a market. The area is at the center of the Turkmen silk-weaving trade, an important local cottage industry. Around 1960 the subgovernor of Mungiček, recognizing the great volume of business passing through the village on the way to Aqča twice a week, decided to build a small bazaar in Čaršangay to provide a further trade outlet for surrounding villagers. Suitably, the bazaar day was set for only once a week, on Wednesdays, an off day for Aqča. This administratively instigated change answered a need for adequate channeling of existing mercantile activity — the same need that is filled by the scheduling of satellite markets of other major towns, such as Aliabad for Kunduz and Almar for Maimana.

Musically, the Čaršangay bazaar closely mirrors Aqča in featuring a Turkmen *damburači* and Uzbek singers. Their repertoire, like that of Aq Pišak's band, is strictly in the samowad tradition, even more markedly "out of place" than in Aqča in the sense that the listeners are almost all Turkmens used to hearing Turkmen music at home.

Let us examine briefly the other two main types of local market center: the interregional border town and the subregional center. The latter presents less divergence from the Aqča pattern outlined above. A brief survey of Maimana, for instance, seems to show a greater breadth of trading possibilities — largely because its situation in verdant foothills is more favored than Aqča's or Andxoi's steppe location — but no major differences in basic configuration. The greater importance of Maimana seems reflected musically only in its role as instrument producer, a trait I associate mainly with major urban centers like Mazar and Kabul or special traditional sites of instrument export (Tašqurğan and Samangan). Maimana is far enough from the area of origin of most Turkestani instruments and boasts enough amateurs to produce its own supply of *damburas*. It is worth noting that they are not used anywhere except in the immediate Maimana area. Even in Širin Tagow, the first sizable town on the road north towards Andxoi, I saw a Samangan rather than a Maimana instrument hanging in the local teahouse.

Turning to the interregional market town, we come to the case of Tašqurğan. This community was long famous as a crossroads town. Writing in the 1880s, Yate described the town as follows:

Tashkurghan is the great trade-mart of Afghan Turkistan, and about its most important place. Here the caravans from India on the one hand, and Bokhara on the other, all break bulk and from here the merchandise is distributed all over the country. Nothing is obtainable at Mazar even, except through Tashkurghan. (1888:315)

In addition to serving as port for international trade and as regional market center, Tašqurğan was traditionally the border town between Katağan and Turkestan. It is only this latter role that remains, for the town's more glamorous trade status was stripped away by the sealing of the Soviet border and the designation of ports farther east and west as the only approved international trade points.

As a result, Tašqurğan fell back on its established internal market as a means of survival, stressing domestic export by relying on the large body of skilled artisans built up in former times. Tašqurğani goods, particularly the characteristic red, green, and black painted carpentry objects, are found at least as far southwest as Saripul in Turkestan, as far east as Taluqan in Katağan, and as far south as Kabul. The painted wooden cradles, slingshots, and significantly for the present study, *gīčak* (fiddle) components are found all across the North, spread primarily by itinerant Tašqurğani merchants who may well settle down in towns such as Aqča as tradesmen. Such colonies of Tašqurğanis can be found in many towns, including Kabul. Out-migration is not new for Tašqurğanis; Ferrier (1860:399) reported meeting Tašqurğanis as far away as Herat and Meshed (Iran). In the agricultural sector, Tašqurğan turns its celebrated gardens into profit by exporting large quantities of figs, almonds, and pomegranates. No other town of the North depends so extensively on export for a living as does Tašqurğan, though the town keeps up its full status as major local market center at the same time, drawing customers from as far off as the foothills west of Samangan.

Is it surprising, then, to find that many of the most famous and successful musicians of the North come from Tašqurğan? Baba Qeran and Bangeča Tašqurğani, perhaps the two best-known northern performers, are natives of the town, as are Šarif and Hakim, major musicians of the Mazar area. The composer of the well-known song "Bulbulak-i sangşekan" (he is now known as "Bulbul," thanks to his song) is a Tašqurğani, as is Abdullah Buz-baz, itinerant master of the musical marionette (see Slobin 1975). Another well-known traveling *damburači*, Abdul Nazar, has retired to his home town, Tašqurğan. No other town can boast such a concentration of talent, and the reason probably lies in the pivotal geographical position of Tašqurğan, where the styles of Turkestan and Katağan (and consequently of Badaxšan) meet. Musicians growing up in Tašqurğan have the benefit of a varied repertoire from the start. Indeed, much of the music that forms the basic Uzbek-Tajik repertoire was spread by, and probably originated with men, such as Baba Qeran, now an octogenarian.

The town itself hosts little live entertainment. Occasionally

Bangeča, resting between tours, or Baba Qeran, whiling away his retirement years, will play a bit, much to the delight of Tašqurğanis, but little regular performance is available to the public. Of some importance, however, is the existence of local poets; Quramali Xuram, for example, supplies Bangeča with song texts. This tradition of urban poetry, in the ġazal form, is an important hallmark of town culture, marking one of the few areas in which urban and rural styles clearly diverge. It is perhaps again Tašqurğan's central position that affects its musical life. Located midway between two powerful large centers, Mazar and Kunduz, and having its talent siphoned off to serve other regions, Tašqurğan must needs lack its own vital live music performance.

In summary, Tašqurğan's emphasis is on outward activity, expansion of its own commerce, and exportation of artisans, including musicians, and objects, including musical instruments. At the same time, the town, as so amply demonstrated by Centlivres, is a repository of traditional northern structures and customs; likewise, Tašqurğan remains a storehouse of traditional northern musics, which it exports by means of talented performers to enrich the repertoire of urban music all across the North.

Perhaps only one other town can be considered analogous to Tašqurğan in functioning as a local market center with strong inter-regional overtones. That town is Keşm, less well known and by nature less flamboyant than Tašqurğan. It is an important meeting place for the two eastern areas of the North, Katağan and Badaxşan. Just east of Kalafğan, the last local market center of Katağan, lies a small pass sometimes called the Kutil-i gunjeşqan ("Sparrows' Pass"), which is generally thought of as the gateway to Badaxşan. Just beyond this natural dividing point lies Keşm, a large oasis of green in a rough brown rocky landscape. Past Keşm stretches the long desolate Kokča River valley, with Faizabad lying farther up. In this central if somewhat isolated position, Keşm is neither here nor there regionally. Some Keşmis may say "yes" when asked if their town lies in Badaxşan, but others may say "no," pointing upstream towards Faizabad. The latter view may remain from the days in the nineteenth century when Faizabad, according to many travelers' accounts, was itself called Badaxşan. Inhabitants of Katağan and of Faizabad are equally vague in ascribing a particular reference name to Keşm.

Musically this ambiguous status of Keşm reflected in the town's repertoire of instruments and pieces. Both Turkestani and Badaxşani types of damburas are in use, and styles of the regions on both sides can be heard.

Keşm is well known in Faizabad as the home of a particular

subregional Badaxšani style, while to the rest of the North Kešm is best known as an exporter of music. This role is exemplified by two performers, Baz Gul Badaxši and Drai Kešmi. Baz Gul is one of the best-known northern musicians, having attained national fame when one of his Kešmi songs was played on Radio Afghanistan. He has followed up his success with tours that have taken him as far as Saripul in Turkestan. Drai Kešmi is not so famous, but a tape of his performance is treasured by a teahouse owner in Xanabad, for example, who plays it regularly for his customers. Thus, while Kešm is a pivot community quite different in nature from Tašqurğan, it is interesting to note that its interregional positioning also seems reflected in its musical life.

### **The Regional Market Center**

The regional market center is a kind of super-bazaar for a larger geographical unit. Into it flow the peoples and goods of an entire district composed of several local market centers and perhaps several provinces. Regional centers can also serve as rallying places for special religious or patriotic events that bring together large segments of the population, perhaps even attracting people from the far ends of Afghanistan. Such centers thus put an entire section of the country into contact with Kabul, the national capital, and with the rest of the world.

In the North, there are only two clearly definable regional market centers. One is Mazar-i Šarif, capital of Balx province and unofficial center of Turkestan, and the other is Faizabad, provincial capital and center of Badaxšan. The two are markedly different in almost every detail, but similar in their basic function as regional focal points and in the type of musical life they support.

Mazar-i Šarif, usually referred to as just Mazar, attained its present position of prominence only within the last century. Writing in 1835, Alexander Burnes (1835:200) described Mazar as a small village, which "contains about 500 houses." At that time, Balx, some 12 kilometers from Mazar, was the center of Turkestan, as it had been for countless centuries, dating back to the time when the whole region was called Bactria by the Greeks. However, the "mother of cities," as Balx was known, had so declined in population and importance by the mid-nineteenth century, largely because of the abnormally high incidence of malaria, that the regime of Sher Ali Khan decided in 1866 to make Mazar-i Šarif the new administrative center (Dupree 1967:48).

Mazar had one main drawing card: the alleged grave of Ali,

son-in-law of the prophet Muhammad, which is still the main religious attraction of all Afghanistan. Each year at Nowruz, the New Year's Day of the Persian solar calendar, which falls on March 21 (the first day of spring), thousands of pilgrims make their way to Mazar for the ritual of the raising of the *janda*, the standard of Ali. In 1968, authorities estimated the crowd at approximately 50,000, with pious Muslims coming from as far away as Pakistan. A source in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicated that many more Pakistanis would make the trip if unlimited entry were allowed.

This striking religious occurrence has its roots in the twelfth century, when "a man by the name of Mohammad came upon ancient evidence that Hazrat Ali had in reality been buried in a village near Balkh. . . . This information was immediately communicated to Sultan Sanjar, who commanded that a shrine be built over the grave. His order was carried out in 1136" (Dupree 1967:50). An impressive blue-tiled shrine dating from 1481, beautifully restored by the Afghan government in recent years, stands at the center of Mazar-i Sharif on the site of the original shrine. It is the finest architectural complex standing in Afghan Turkestan.

Thus Mazar assumed the mantle of Balx, which today is an unimportant local market center with extensive stretches of ruined masonry. Mazar, on the other hand, is the nearest thing to a city, in the Western (or even the classical Near Eastern) sense, in northern Afghanistan. The population of the town itself is often judged to be near the 100,000 mark, and Mazar forms the northern point of the diamond-shaped distribution of the four major cities of Afghanistan: Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, and Mazar. Flights leave Kabul for Mazar daily, and there are regular air connections with Herat and Kunduz as well. Paved highway reached Mazar from Kabul in 1969.

At Nowruz time the pilgrimage makes one aware of Mazar as a national center, yet the city has a special character all year long. Products from every town and region of Turkestan reach Mazar, and it is from Mazar, with its extensive warehouse capacity and a chamber of commerce, that goods are distributed to all of Turkestan. Oranges from Pakistan and Jalalabad reach Qaisar, at the far western end of Turkestan, from Mazar, and carpets of the famous "Mowri" variety, produced near Qaisar, find their way back to Mazar. The carpet bazaar of Mazar features every type of Turkestani rug, and the modern-goods shops stock items such as Western toilet paper that are unobtainable anywhere else in Turkestan. Even shopkeepers in towns such as Samangan and Taşqurğan, further down the road to Kabul, watch trucks going

by to Mazar with goods, and must wait for merchandise to be brought back for sale after unloading in Mazar (with a resulting increase in price).

Though Mazar does serve as a local market center for an extensive belt of satellite towns, one is not readily aware of the bazaar-day traffic, since it accounts for a relatively unimportant share of the total commercial activity of the town. However, Mazar's position as the center of a fairly rich agricultural area is an important reason for its high permanent population figure. The fact that much of the local fruit crop is exported to other regions of Afghanistan lends Mazar additional weight as a commercial center. For example, Mazar ships large quantities of melons to Kabul, whereas those of Andxoi and Aqča are never seen outside their local areas.

This unique status of Mazar-i Šarif is reflected in a special kind of musical life enjoyed by the townspeople. In its role as area center, Mazar offers the utmost in regional entertainment at suitable times. Just as the local market center provides music for its regular customers, so Mazar furnishes extensive recreational facilities when it attracts the bulk of its visitors: namely at Nowruz time. For the combined New Year's and pilgrimage tourist crowd Mazar goes out of its way to set up a special entertainment quarter, a kind of tent city called Čārbāğ, quite near the focal point of town, the shrine and mosque of Ali. For the traditional forty days of New Year's, starting March 21, there is continuous entertainment into the night at Čārbāğ. Musicians, dancers, storytellers, magicians, gypsies, holy men of every description — all flock to Mazar to see the miracles at the raising of the janda and to find ready customers. It is the only time of the year when musical instruments — mainly tambourines, flutes, and toy drums for children (see Chapter 4) — are sold on the streets of Mazar. Medicine men and amulet writers appear all round the great central square, and though they fade away after a week or ten days, the musical entertainment continues for the full forty days. Famous musicians such as Bangeča Tašqurğani are lured to Mazar by the prospect of steady work. Bangeča earned from \$1.50 to \$2.00 a day for performing during Nowruz in 1968 — a figure that compares quite favorably with Aq Pišák's sixty cents for a day's playing in an Aqča teahouse — and says his wages have risen considerably since. In addition, the crowds are numerous and enthusiastic, and may throw the musician more money. Paštun dancing boys from the Kabul-Logar region appear, adding an especially festive touch to the occasion. Temporary kitchens supplying huge cauldrons of rice palow or fried fish do a thriving business as well.

When the holiday merriment tapers off, enough permanent enter-

tainment is left for the citizens of Mazar. The town is so large, compared to local market centers, that it can support a variety of performers catering to different audiences in various quarters of town. The 500 Kazakhs of Mazar, refugees of 1932 from the Alma-Ata region of Kazakhstan, have their own musicians and musical traditions, and have maintained these intact up to the present. Émigré Uzbeks who long for the tones of the Uzbek dutar invite Ğafur Xan to come from Andxoi to perform. Thus the importance of Mazar can also be judged by the fact that it imports entertainment from any preferred region of the constituent area.

Mazar supports a large number of semiemployed professional musicians, far more than can be supported in a local market center. They split into two fairly distinct camps, thus offering customers a choice of programming not available in, say, Aqča. The more traditional group of performers sticks to the local repertoire, such as can be found in the local market teahouse, while an equally large, if not larger, set of musicians plays only the music of Kabul. It does not appear that either of the groups is paid more or works more steadily than the other; both average perhaps \$4.50 to \$5.00 per night. The Kabul-oriented group, on the whole, seems younger and more purely local in origin; two of the main members of the traditional set are Hakim and Šarif, older Tajik Taşqurğanis who have settled in Mazar where work is fairly steady, whereas the Kabul-style musicians tend to be middle-class Mazar Paštuns and Tajiks who are struck by the chic of radio music. There are also "refugees" from Kabul itself who find it easier to make a living in the North — Lali, for example, whose brother Majid has remained in the Radio Afghanistan orchestra back in the capital. Lali and the young Mazar players use only Kabul-based instruments (tanbur, harmonium, robab).

One final type of musician should be noted. This is the entrepreneur-performer, who does not rely on music for his sole means of support. The prime example is Sekundar, a flutist and tanburist, who also owns a bathhouse adjacent to the teahouse where musicians tend to gather. Considering that the bath costs five afghanis (six cents) and that hundreds of customers traipse through weekly, Sekundar must be fairly prosperous without musical income. Abdul Mazari, another local player and a friend of Sekundar's, once owned a shop (in 1968), though apparently he no longer does. This special type of performer can be spotted by at least one outward sign: they all tend to wear the karakul hat of officialdom and the aspiring middle class, rather than the ordinary turban of poorer musicians and the majority of the local populace.

Another sign of Mazar's importance as a musical center is its

ability to support two full-time instrument makers. Ağa Mohmad and his apprentice Said Maidin have a small shop in a poor section of Mazar, near the Darwāz-i Taşqurğan ("Taşqurğan Gate"). Ağa Mohmad learned his trade from his father and represents the third generation of instrument makers in his family. He has worked forty-five years in the trade. He makes primarily robabs, tanburs, and damburas, and will make anything else (such as an Indian *sarinda*) if commissioned, and if he can get a model to work from. Mazar is the only town outside Kabul where one can have just about any instrument made. Ağa Mohmad's technique is the same for every type of instrument. He always uses mulberry wood, and always hews the body of the instrument from a single block (for details of instrument construction, see Chapter 4). He categorizes the different types of instruments mainly in terms of the length of time needed and the price charged. The scale runs from the dambura (ten days, up to \$3.40) to the robab (one month, up to \$40.00). As far as Ağa Mohmad and older musicians of Mazar remember, Mazar always had the kinds of music it does today. The incursion of Kabul style is not a new phenomenon. Old Hakim, the tanbur player, says that even fifty years ago "whatever was in Kabul was here too."

Thus Mazar, in both economic and musical terms, is a major collecting point for the products of a large service area and is the major link with Kabul for Turkestan. It is large enough and varied enough to provide a whole range of services for its inhabitants, and offers its size and facilities to the larger area for the biggest yearly event, the Nowruz pilgrimage, much as Chicago used to earn its name of Convention City.

Faizabad functions for Badaxšan much as Mazar does for Turkestan, but on a much more modest scale. This is partly due to the town's smaller population, which probably does not exceed 25,000, but is due equally to the nature of its location and its hinterland. Badaxšan is a mountainous, inhospitable, and poor area, largely cut off from the rest of Afghanistan. The major truck route from Kabul ends at Faizabad, and there is little up-to-date internal transportation. Faizabad can boast no great national event like the Nowruz pilgrimage of Mazar, and scheduled flights to the town run at about 25 percent efficiency. As can be seen on Map 2.3, Faizabad lies on the bend of the Kokča River, completely hemmed in by the Hindu Kush, with peaks of up to 2,500 meters in the immediate vicinity. Access to Faizabad is provided by the circuitous road that hugs the cliffside along the Kokca and is easily washed out in flood season. There are few towns away from the main road, and villagers in the hinterland reach Faizabad with great difficulty.

Map 2.3. Faizabad and Vicinity



In short, it is hard to imagine a greater contrast than is offered by the settings of Faizabad and of steppe towns like Aqča and Mazar-i Šarif.

Despite the differences, however, basic similarities enable the observer to recognize Faizabad and Mazar as sister cities. Faizabad is not only spiritually, but economically, geographically, and administratively the center of Badaxšan. Although peasants and shepherds of the far reaches of the province may never personally reach Faizabad, they know of it from friends who spend time in the capital as recruits in the army, or from merchants who get down to the city to replenish their stock.

Once a year Faizabad, like Mazar, serves as host to its entire client area. This occurs at the time of Ješen, a period in late August set aside by the government as a time for celebrating national independence (actual Independence Day occurs in May). During Ješen, the best performers of Badaxšan flock to Faizabad, and the public at large takes over the town in a manner reminiscent of Mazar crowds at Nowruz, though on a much smaller scale. It is the one time in the year when Badaxšanis from different regions meet for entertainment and business en masse, and Faizabad is ready for this friendly invasion. The provincial officials clear a large space near the center of town as a parade ground and exhibition area, and the word goes out to subgovernors to collar all the available talent in their regions for entertainment.

Like Mazar, Faizabad has its own urban musician-shopkeepers, who perform a type of music not heard in the local market centers. Akbar is Faizabad's counterpart of Abdul of Mazar. He runs a typical *banjāra*, or mixed-goods shop, on the main street, and is widely known as a musician and comedian who is on tap for festivities. Akbar and his good friend Kākā ("Uncle"), a talented damburači from Katağan, play at Ješen on contract for a sizable sum of money. Their repertoire includes some folk music but mainly stresses songs to texts of urban poets. Town poets write in the *gazal* form, a traditional literary style of the Persian world, instead of in the folk čarbaiti or quatrain genre. In many towns, amateur poets write specifically for musicians, casting their verse in forms easy to sing to the standard tunes that float around the North for years under different titles.

As there are fewer sizable local market centers in Badaxšan than Turkestan, there is an even sharper disparity between the music of Faizabad and its hinterland than between that of Mazar and, say, Aqča. In Faizabad, one either hears the urban songs of Akbar or the up-country shepherd tunes called felak (see Chapter 3); there is no intermediate "buffer" style like the teahouse music of Turkestan. There is also a much more limited selection of professional and public music in Faizabad on an ordinary bazaar day. The only people likely to

be strumming a *dambura* in a teahouse are backwoods visitors or occasional town amateurs, rather than organized professional groups. There are said to be instrument makers in the suburbs, but most people feel that instruments coming from backwoods regions like Šuğnan or Darwaz are superior to those made in the Faizabad area.

Faizabad is clearly the regional market center of Badaxšan and a focus for cultural activity of the entire area, and yet because of the nature of the region it serves it is neither so active nor so magnetic a center as Mazar-i Šarif, and because of its geographical position it will never be so important or so large a city. However, because of its close connections with the countryside, Faizabad will long remain a storehouse of traditional Badaxšani culture.

Before leaving the regional market center, let us briefly examine Samangan and Šiberğan, two towns in which the marketing and administrative hierarchies fail to coincide. As mentioned earlier, these communities had governmental importance thrust upon them in the reorganization of provinces completed in 1964, when they were made provincial capitals.

Samangan is not the center of any major market or traditional craft (the nearby *dambura* production being the sole exception). I met a man from the Čārkent area (in the foothills west of Samangan) who bypassed Samangan to shop in Taşqurğan, then half a day's ride farther on, because the prices were better there. He and others belittle the role of Samangan in the local area's economy and thinking. Yet the town boasts a newly built bazaar, the governor's headquarters, and the provincial military garrison. Until the Soviet planners bypassed the town in 1970, the paved road was making Samangan an important truck stop; now one must make a special effort to get to the town. Though located in a fertile agricultural area, Samangan holds no valuable economic cards like the carpets and karakul skins of Andxoi and Aqča.

The music of Samangan reflects its ambiguous status. As a minor local center, it neither produces nor exports entertainment. In fact, it is so poor in musical resources that the only available public music in 1968 came from outside, in this case from army recruits. On Fridays (their day off) draftees sometimes form bands to supplement their meager pay (less than one dollar per month). Since market days are of little importance to the life of the community, no special musical arrangements are made. Instead, the government provides blanket musical coverage for Samangan to parallel the administrative status it has introduced. This comes in the form of loudspeakers placed at intervals along the one-street bazaar, broadcasting Radio Afghanistan from early morning to late in the evening. The radio is such a dominant



*Fig. 2.7. Samangan soldiers on their day off, performing as musicians to supplement their pay (instruments include zirbagali, dambura, and zang).*

factor that only teahouses at the far end of the bazaar, past the last loudspeaker, support live music—a striking illustration of the predominance of modern conventions over traditional patterns in the town's life. It is interesting to note that despite the presence of the public amplification system, some shopkeepers still keep expensive radios going in their shops to demonstrate their wealth.

Šiberğan, like Samangan, has entered a period of change in recent years. Lying between the powerful towns of Aqča to the north and Saripul to the south, Šiberğan has never had much drawing power as a market center. Its designation as provincial capital has brought the town some added prominence, in the form of a movie theater and two or three shops with some modern goods for sale. An interesting additional feature of Šiberğan's situation that differentiates it from Samangan is the stationing of a considerable body of Russian technicians in the town to work on the natural gas pipeline to the Soviet Union. In the late 1960s, 180 specialists and their families were living in a separate enclave, representing a large increase in the number of consumers. A tall television tower—a striking sight in a Turkestan town—was built for the Russians to receive transmissions from across the border, and its presence underlines the isolation of the Russian community. The complete lack of social contact between the local populace and the Russian workers has kept a potentially dynamic situation from having any effect on the basic structure of the town, even while it underscores the nontraditional nature of Šiberğan today.

Šiberğan's role has been strengthened, however, by another group of Russians, in this case the highway builders who completed the Mazar-Šiberğan road in 1971. Though I have not revisited the town, it seems clear from conversations that Šiberğan's commercial importance has increased thanks to the paved road, which allows goods to be brought in directly from Mazar. Perhaps the town will now become a type of subregional wholesaling center, since Aqča remains bypassed and the other main nearby towns, Saripul and Sangčerak, are still cut off from paving. Eventually Šiberğan's place in the marketing hierarchy may match its administrative status, again through direct intervention by the government in the form of the highway.

### **The Industrial and Communications Center**

Last in our survey of urban enclaves is the type of town that could be considered "the wave of the future" if Afghanistan eventually moves towards further modernization of the North. These are towns born or resuscitated in recent years, designed with an eye to modern technological needs and populated with a mixture of elements not found in other areas of the country. Basically we are dealing here with Katağan, and specifically with three of its principal towns — Kunduz, Pul-i Xumri, and Bağlan.

Kunduz is an old settled area. Especially during the early nineteenth century it was the center of a far-reaching principality, then ruled by the Uzbek chieftain Murad Beg, whose dominions stretched from the Waxan to Balx and who exacted a yearly slave tribute from the Hazarajat, as mentioned earlier. Even at the time (in the 1830s) Kunduz, though center of such an important kingdom, was never properly equipped as a capital. Captain Wood's disparaging remarks about the town can be recalled (1872:138): "Kunduz, the capital of Murad Beg, is one of the most wretched in his dominions. Five or six hundred mud hovels contain its fixed population . . . nothing, in short, can be imagined less resembling a metropolis." The reason for this sad state of affairs was the same that brought down the ancient city of Balx: malarial swamplands around the town. According to Dr. Čošwand of the Afghan Institute of Health, the malaria rate in the Kunduz area was as high as 95 percent in the early 1930s, and while the disease has largely been checked, Kunduz province still registers more malaria patients than any other region each year.

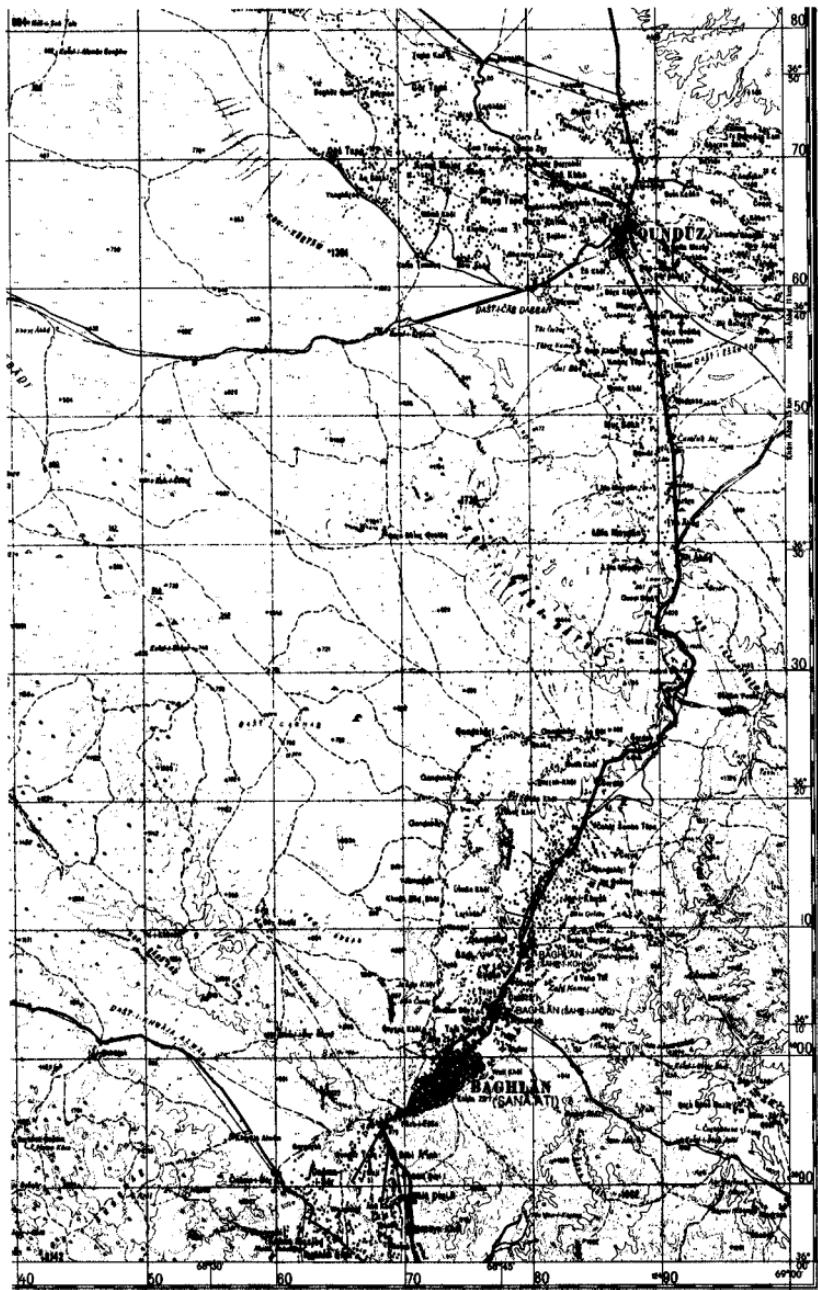
With the completion of the antimalaria campaign and the establishment in 1925 of the Spinzar Company (cotton, textiles, and by-products such as edible oil), Kunduz rapidly changed from a tumbledown, sleepy village to a major center of Afghan industrial activity. In a country

that is still 95 percent agrarian, development of a new industrial center is an achievement of great importance, and Kunduz does have great significance for Afghanistan. With the arrival of the road from Kabul to the Soviet border via the Salang Pass and Kunduz in 1964, the importance of Kunduz was solidly established by its threefold role as home of the Spinzar Company, clearinghouse for trade with the Soviet Union, and major transportation-communications hub of Katağan. In addition, the role of the local market in supplying Kunduz with produce for export must not be minimized. Kunduz is the center of Afghanistan's major rice-producing region, and Kunduz melons compete with fruits from Mazar in the Kabul marketplace. To these functions of the town must be added its important role as provincial capital. Taken together, these many facets of its economic-administrative position make Kunduz a town of major national significance, and that importance is enhanced by the fact that it is a modern, capitalist role that has been assumed by the town.

Looking at Map 2.4, one can easily see the reasons for the prosperity of Kunduz. The great north-south axis of the paved road, which links Kunduz to Kabul through Bağlan to the south and knives across the desert north to the Soviet border, and the rather wide zone of well-watered, fertile land that surrounds Kunduz stand out clearly from the adjacent arid zones.

Also clearly visible on Map 2.4 is the development of Bağlan. Farthest north is the site of old Bağlan, a thriving town in Kushan times (second to fifth centuries A.D.), marked BAGHLAN (ŞAHR-I-KOHNA) on the map. Just to the south is the new administrative center and capital of Bağlan province, BAGHLAN (ŞAHR-I-JADID). Here a model new bazaar has been built, and the governor's office is perched on a mound "which produced many stone sculptures . . . typical of the Kushan period" (N. Dupree 1971:256). Still farther south (in heaviest type) is BAGLAN (SANA'ATI), clearly visible as a strong gridiron of new structures; it is the commercial center related to the large local sugar factory.

The ethnic complexion of this part of Katağan strongly reflects its recent past. In Kunduz and Pul-i Xumri a variety of ethnic groups of diverse geographic origin have settled down in company towns. While keeping a certain degree of ethnic distinctiveness, the town population has assimilated to a way of life that is somewhat strange to all the groups involved. We noted earlier the adjustment northern Paštuns have made to Katağan. In addition, a large body of Soviet émigrés (perhaps the largest in Afghanistan), including many Uzbeks, some Tajiks, Kazakhs, and others, has settled in the Kunduz area. Kunduz cries out for sociological study of interethnic relations; it is



Map 2.4 Kunduz and Bağlan Areas

certainly too early now to make generalizations about the evolving social structure. It is apparent that the presence of a large industrial concern (the Spinzar Company), with its emphasis on modern technology, along with the quasi-modern governmental apparatus and the import-export activities of the vital Soviet trade, creates an unusually high concentration of nationally oriented rather than locally centered activity, and that the Kunduzis are exposed to the wide outside world to a far greater extent than are any other northern townspeople. A native of Kunduz can take a taxi or a plane (at low domestic rates) to Kabul, which is less than a six-hour drive and only a one-hour flight away. By contrast, until 1964 it took travelers two weeks or longer at times to travel between Kunduz and Kabul.

The effect of all this progressive activity on the musical life of the town has been drastic. Kunduz, though surrounded by a densely populated hinterland containing a wide variety of ethnic groups, no longer keeps up live performance of traditional music. In this region, radios are so popular because of affluence, and bazaar days are of such slight significance, that there is no longer any real need for the teahouse music of the local market center. Kunduz, like Mazar, views Kabul music as a necessary cultural acquisition, but unlike Mazar the town prefers to invite musicians from Kabul itself rather than to support local musicians who have learned the capital's style. For Ješen of 1968, for example, Kunduz brought up a large contingent of Kabul musicians, while Mazar was content to rely on local talent. Folk musicians from the Kunduz area went to Taluqan, the capital of the province, which lies between Kunduz and Badaxšan.

Part of the lack of live music in Kunduz is administratively inspired. It seems that Katağani officials take their job as guardians of public morality more seriously than do their Turkestani counterparts, for in Xanabad, hardly an industrial-communications hub, townsfolk complained of governmental interference in musical performance as much as did Kunduzis. However, the latter indicated direct involvement of Spinzar management in the musical crackdown, and censorship seems more long-lasting and effective in Kunduz than in Xanabad. One has the impression that a clean and quiet company town is the aim of Spinzar and local officials alike; in no other community does one see such eager dredging of sidewalk ditches and cleaning of streets.

One can find a certain amount of performance in traditional regional styles in Kunduz, but only with great effort and for brief periods. During my first visit in 1967, for example, I was fortunate enough to record Karim Badaxši, a fine traditional musician of the Darwaz area of Badaxšan who was at the time unemployed in Kunduz. By the time of my second visit in 1968, Karim had left for parts

unknown. Other wandering players pass through Kunduz, probably in the hopes of finding a welcome among their countrymen, as Karim did among his fellow Badaxšanis, but it is hard to find any who have settled and still keep up their musical activity.

Kunduz might be termed a kind of Afghan California, where people have drifted in from all parts of the country for jobs and new land, and have developed a generalized dialect and way of life, while keeping roots in the old homeland and maintaining some local traditions. If Afghanistan has further development along the lines of effective, patient modernization, it will probably occur in the northern area of the country, and will produce more towns like Kunduz.

Pul-i Xumri, some 100 kilometers further down the road to Kabul (see Map I), is perhaps even more of a forward-looking community. Unlike Kunduz, it does not have even a past of any interest, is not an administrative center, and has fewer connections with the agrarian base. It is a town created by Afghan-Russian city planning, with a textile plant, a large hydroelectric station, a cement factory (built with Czech aid), and a huge silo for grain storage. There are quarters for company workers, and until 1971 there was another area marked off for Russian advisers on the Turkestan road project. Pul-i Xumri is probably the most important truckstop in the country, since the great majority of Afghan trucking goes over the Salang Pass and forks off at Pul-i Xumri towards either Mazar or Kunduz. It is a mere four hours' ride to Kabul, and taxis are numerous. It is in Pul-i Xumri more than any other place in Afghanistan that one is aware of the power of paved roads to create new patterns of population distribution and new, potent economic factors that can lead to social change. It need scarcely be added that there seems to be no local music at Pul-i Xumri whatsoever; when necessary, as at Ješen time, musicians are hired to come up from Kabul.

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In surveying the types of towns in the North, I have tried to show: (1) that the urban enclave is the product of particular geographic and economic settings in which individual ethnic strands are less important than basic socioeconomic functions; (2) that a considerable variety of urban communities still function in northern Afghanistan, thanks to a complex interrelationship of marketing and administrative hierarchies and despite recent technological trends and improvements in transportation; and (3) that in any one trait of town life, such as entertainment, consistencies of behavior will be found that are compatible with the specific structure and function of a given community in the general northern setting.