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MUS311

The Censorship of Music in Afghanistan

Google Earth Link:

<https://earth.google.com/earth/d/1BVlKmDeoAHUoGk4D66EDz6xKkXdgZQkO?usp=sharing>

Music LInks:

1)*Za Musafar da bal Watan Raghalai Yuma*: <https://youtu.be/jmOu9hxf5RM>

2)*Rabab:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGtrnOU4fqw>

3)*Oh Yar:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0GCEDaLPTg>

4)*Qad Bala* : <https://open.spotify.com/artist/6dFCDv9rDQWDMq4YRjFivn>

5)Sufi Qawwali Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ih9Jt1TR6gA>

THEME DESCRIPTION: Music Censorship in Afghanistan

Music censorship intensified after the Islamic Taliban took control of Kabul in 1996. The Taliban’s strict interpretation of Islamic law led to a severe attack on music. Music was considered evil and immoral. The only musical activity permitted was religious music and Taliban chants. The five music and locations of this project are presented in chronological order to highlight the impact war has had on Afghan music and culture. On December 24, 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, under the pretext of upholding the Soviet-Afghan Friendship Treaty of 1978. Music has been caught in the middle of the crossfire. The content of the music was strictly regulated; the communist wanted to utilize music for propaganda. Many refugees escaped the country and immigrated to Pakistan, and those musicians brought with them their culture and music. The tour will end with a brief introduction to Sufism. People were able to find a good balance between music and religion. The five locations and music embody the life of Afghan musicians during wartime and the historical context of music censorship in Afghanistan.

1) National Museum of Afghanistan, Kabul, Afghanistan

* Kabul is the capital of Afghanistan. The museum was once considered to be one of the world's finest. With the start of the civil war in 1992, the museum was looted numerous times and destroyed by rockets, resulting in a loss of 70% of the 100,000 objects on display. It is a place of history, where ruins and exhibitions documented people’s lives and memories.
* In 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Music got caught in the middle of the crossfire. Even though music was allowed during Communist time but only subjected to its own propaganda. The Mujahideen defended the Russian throughout the 1980s. The life of Afghan musicians during wartime was difficult; they faced objections, restrictions, and life-threatening consequences.

1)*Za Musafar da bal Watan Raghalai Yuma*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jmOu9hxf5RM>

# *Za Musafar da bal Watan Raghalai Yuma*

* Naghma Shaperai
* It is one of her best songs recorded in Radio Television Afghanistan.
* During war times, NAGHMA was singing on the television and was threatened to pick a side: whether to sing for the communists or Mujahideen. Her life was endangered because of the performance. People shot her during concerts and threatened her to stop performing.

2) Khalil plaza, Peshawar, Pakistan

* Khalil Plaza is a modern apartment block in Peshawar that also serves as an informal conservatory for the training of young musicians.
* The wartime conflicts in Afghanistan sent a new wave of refugees out of the country. The majority of them settled in Peshawar. The city became the main center of Afghan music since the war. Afghan refugees work together to preserve their music and culture.

2)*Rabab:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGtrnOU4fqw>

# *Rabab*

* Amir Jan
* Amir Jan is an Afghan Refugee. He immigrated to Pakistan during the 1980s. Amir devoted himself to Rubab music and worked with professional musicians to revive their cultural heritage.
* Rubab is a lute-like musical instrument originating from Afghanistan. It is one of the musical instruments prohibited as a result of war and music censorship. As their culture and music were being destroyed, people started to record folk music from every province of Afghanistan for future generations.

3) Kharabat, Afghanistan

* Kharabat was the cradle of Afghan music because most of the musicians came from here. It has been destroyed since the war in 1992. It is a historic area that lies in the shadow of the Bala Hissar on the western edge of the city.
* Starting from the Rabbani period (the civil war in 1992) music was heavily censored. The musical spirit was being destroyed. Musicians can only perform songs in praise of the Mujahideen and songs with texts drawn from Sufi poetry of the region.

3)*Oh Yar*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0GCEDaLPTg>

# *Oh Yar*

* Mohammad Hussain Sarāhang
* One of the most famous songs of ustad Sarahang.
* Mohammad Hussain Sarahang was born in 1924 in the Kharabat area of Kabul. He tried to marry traditional Afgan folk music with classical music.

4) Radio Afghanistan

* Under the Taliban’s invasion, music censorship in Afghanistan intensified. Radio Afghanistan was renamed Radio Shariat. Broadcasts and types of genres were strictly regulated.
* The Taliban invaded Afghanistan and seized Kabul in 1996. Their extreme interpretation of Islam resulted in a severe attack on Afghan cultural heritage. Film and TV were completely banned. The Taliban wanted the country to forget its past and history and wanted to change the Afghan into their ideal society. Music was perceived as a distraction from religion. The only form of music that was permitted was religious recitation and chants in praise of the Taliban.

4)*Qad Bala* : <https://open.spotify.com/artist/6dFCDv9rDQWDMq4YRjFivn>

* *Qad Bala*
* Aziz Ghaznawi
* This is one of the songs of Aziz.
* Aziz Ghaznawi was obliged to sing for the Taliban during the time. He has to decide whether to betray his principles or flee the country.

5) Shrine of Hazrat Ali, Balkh Province, Afghanistan

* A holy shrine is a place where Islam and music can get along. Sufi would gather together for musical nights and prayers.
* Music censorship in Afghan remains a topic of controversy. There are Islamic clerics who have no objection to music and perceive music as a form of worship. On the contrary, some Islamic clerics still perceive music and art as evil and immoral.

5)Sufi Qawwali Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ih9Jt1TR6gA>

# Passing Down The Spirit

# *The Ahmad Sham Sufi Qawwali Group From Kabul Afghanistan*

* Sufism is a mystical branch of Islam. Their belief emphasizes tolerance and spirituality.
* They use music in worship. Their music features shifting rhythmic patterns that enter a trance-link state to reach oneness with God.