



MUSICAL LIFE AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF NORTH-WEST AFGHANISTAN

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Abstract:

Musical life of NW Afghanistan is concentrated in towns. Public musical performances take place on a larger scale to celebrate the Liberation anniversary, the end of the Ramadan and to welcome the New Year. Besides that we encounter music in public in circuses, at weddings and in tea-shops where small popular instrumental groups play daily, accompanying a singer and sometimes children dancers.

The music is monodic. Its vocal component is placed above the instrumental. Men in tea-shops sing songs of friendship and love and rarely also Maqams and Ragas. The original music of the Turkmans, Uzbeks and Tajiks is free of quarter-tones and other intonation nuances in derived series, appearing mainly in compositions which the interpreters learn by listening to the radio and to film music. The original intonation goes out from major and minor triads and diatonic series of tones.

The producers of musical instruments live in towns and manufacture musical instruments by means of a simple technique. The following folk musical instruments are used in NW Afghanistan:

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| idiophonic instruments | — Chang, Tala, Sistrum |
| membranophonic instruments | — Doira, Zarbagali |
| aerophonic instruments | — Tula, Nay, Surnay |
| chordophonic instruments | — Dambura, Tambour, Dutor,
Setor, Rebab (plucked),
Ghijak, Saranda (bowed). |

Other Afghani workshops supply the market with dol, tabla and baya drums, and the stringed dilruba. Imported from India are the harmonium and the majority of brass instruments for brass bands which no longer play heterophony. During the last years bagpipes, dulcimers, military trumpets and long contra-bass trumpets disappeared from the original instrumentary.

By way of introduction a brief geographic and economic survey: The vilayets Maimana, Shibarghan and Mazari Sharif form the north-west area of Afghanistan (henceforth "NW area"). The homogenous terrain configuration and climate allowed for their related economic, political and cultural development. The southern frontier of the NW area touches the Herat, Ghor, Kabul and Bamian vilayets, the eastern border touches the Kathagan vilayet. The northern and north-west boundaries of the area form the state frontier with the Soviet Union (see appendix I.).

The south of the NW area is covered by the Hindukush mountain range. The western and northwest part of the region is a promontory of the Karaqum desert reaching out from the USSR. The desert gradually changes into a semi-desert and a steppe. The Amudarya river, which forms the state frontier in the north of the area, does not get its water from rivers on the Afghan side: all rivers flowing towards it from the mountains to the north of the NW area, are gradually swallowed up by the drought of the steppe and the desert. The bed of the river Amudarya, once called Oxos, used to be more to the south. The wide and complicated network of irrigating channels has not yet linked up with this river, so rich in water. A continental climate with maximum temperature of 50 °C in the shade and frosts of about - 20 °C, with few rains only during spring months, together with a poor soil are little favourable for vegetation in the mountains and out of reach of the irrigation network. Thin growth of shrubs around the Amudarya provide only protection: it holds up the movement of sand and creates conditions for humus formation, it consolidates the banks of rivers and artificial channels and acts as windbreakers in the proximity of some roads.

The inhabitants depend mainly on agriculture and animal husbandry. The wide-spread irrigating system made the NW area one of the foremost suppliers of grain and fur. Sheep graze

even on poor pastures in the semi-desert during spring months. The principal occupation of women is the weaving of carpets, the quality and beauty of which have gained them admiration in the whole world and secured them a stable export market.

In the last few years the importance of industry has been constantly growing. Factories for leather and cotton production are being founded, the research and extraction of oil and ground gas are being extended. Production in factories is up to world standards, production in agriculture and the manufacture of carpets, however, are still very primitive. As for mineral riches, salt is exploited for home consumption but geological research of the mountain area promises wide possibilities for the growth of industry.

Donkeys and horses serve as means of transport for people in the country and small towns, two-wheeled carts called "Gadins", bicycles, rarely also cars are used in larger towns. The most wide-spread means of transport is the camel caravan and on passable roads also trucks. The main road connecting Mazari Sharif with Shibarghan, Andkhui with Maimana and Mazari Sharif with ancient Balkh and the ports Kelif and Tirmiz on the Amudarya (important places of reshipment of goods from the USSR), is very often covered with sand, and in some places flooded during spring months. Only seldom is the road strewn with gravel. At present a new modern road is being built which will join the road network from Kabul and which will make up for the missing railway. The air-way between Mazari Sharif, Maimana and other Afghani towns is of great importance.

The majority of the population of the NW area are Tajiks, Uzbeks and Turkmans. In Maimana and Shibarghan Turkish languages predominate — Turkman, Uzbek and in Mazari Sharif — Dari (Persian). Business life, as well as cultural, religious and social activities are concentrated in towns where one can hear also Pashto spoken (in offices).

Musical Life:

Let us first note the cultural and social life where at one time music plays a prominent role, at another time it is only of second-rate importance.

The most remarkable event in Afghani cultural and social life is the celebration of the Liberation Anniversary and the end of Ramadan.

The Liberation Anniversary is a state holiday. The festivities last throughout a whole week in August and are principally concentrated in towns. The splendour of festive costumes, the decorative arrangement of roads and sport grounds are supplemented by rich musical performances. On the town square military parades take place, accompanied by military brass bands, fire-brigade bands play in front of the residences of the representatives of the town. School children and youth organizations (e.g. scouts) parade on sport grounds and stadiums, and everywhere there are big crowds of people watching. Then festive addresses, dances and games follow. Musical groups and solo singers provide the intermezzos.

The most attractive sight are the dances. Small girls and boys dance children's dances, men perform the popular "hair dance", nodding their heads with long hair. All dances are rhythmically accompanied by drum beats, most frequently by the dol with two sticks (see photo 11), followed sometimes by the surnay. The children's dances are accompanied either by the dol or the small dolak (see photo 15). The dol also accompanies the dancers when they march. They either follow the musicians in a line or they form a circle around them. The dance sometimes lasts one or two hours without interruption. Dances performed by soldiers with their arms are also very interesting.

The celebration of the end of Ramadan is an important religious feast. After a month's fast, very strictly kept, the ceremony begins in the mosques. The greatest attendance usually is in the Mosque in Mazari Sharif which dates back to the 15th century and is known for its legendary miracles and fulfilling of wishes. On the day of Ramadan the square of the mosque is flooded by several thousand men in festive clothes. The military and fire brigade bands stand together with military units in front of the mosque and play the National Anthem, flourishes, marches and songs. The climax is the religious ceremony which all those present accompany by touching prayers. The rest of the day, after the religious ceremony is over, is devoted to public and private celebrations with music, dancing and fights.

The New Year is another religious holiday connected with similar customs as the celebrations of Ramadan.

In the last years cinemas, installed in every bigger town of the NW area, have become the latest social fashion. Mostly Indian, Pakistani, Soviet and American films are on the programme. In that way the audience becomes acquainted with European music, which is completely strange to them, and with the familiar music in Indian and Soviet films (from the Asian republics).

Once or twice a year the towns are visited by a circus exhibiting acrobatic performances, drilling of animals and comical intermezzos, which are the only substitute for the theatre. Before the circus performance its musicians play the surnay, dol or other membranophonic instruments: the doira, the small and large drum (see photo 7). Circuses usually also have their chamber instrumental groups with singers, e.g. the Herat Circus which came to Akchah with following cast: a singer with an Indian harmonium, a Herat dutor, a rebab, a tabla and a baya. The circus bands play during acrobatic performances and during intervals.

The latest outstanding cultural event was the first tourné of the Kabul radio in North Afghanistan, which took place in summer 1964. According to the words of the director of the musical department of Radio Kabul, Mr. Chial, this was indeed the first time in 40 years of its existence that the instrumental group played outside Kabul. The musical group with its singers performed in Mazari Sharif, Balkh, Shibarghan and Akchah. The importance of the tourné was enormous. The group played excellently and many people tried in vain to get into the auditorium, which was constantly sold out. The performances were held in open-air places. The group played mainly songs which had been composed by Kabul composers and which spread far and wide within a few days, although the natives are mostly analphabets.

Ordinary people usually spend their free time on workdays and most of it during their holidays in tea-shops, where instrumental groups play daily, accompanying a singer, sometimes also a dancer. In tea-shops people often play dice, watch fights of quails and cocks with sharpened beaks and claws. Only men

are admitted into tea-shops. It is interesting that, while school children and young people have already taken up different kinds of sports, e.g. volley ball, sprinting, fighting, adults are interested only in one kind of sport: buskashi. These are wonderful but rough riding duels over a dead animal. Women don't do any sport at all, they dance folk dances in private, however. The most popular amusements remain: fights in the open, i.e. camel fights, dog fights and exceptionally also wrestling. Sometimes dol drums play during these amusements and with their sound they stimulate the fighting atmosphere of the audience and the fighters.

Wedding processions are occasional musical shows. On such occasions women play the doira, men the dol and surnay.

Strange to say, there are not any wandering musicians in the NW area, who would sing lyrical or epical songs. We can, however, meet men, wandering from one place to another, earning their living with a dancing monkey. They accompany its dances with songs from their part of the country, usually Nengarhar. We can also meet men taming snakes and playing the pipe, or nomads who leave their tents for a while to exchange their bit of musical art for a piece of bread.

The private musical life of the higher social classes is rich: musical reproductions of their favourite music, music broadcasted by the wireless and all kinds of different regional groups, who can be invited according to wish, are at their disposal. If there is a more festive family occasion, musical groups from Kabul, usually musicians from Radio Kabul, come to play into private homes, too.

Ordinary people make their own music at home. Mothers sing lullabies for their babies, they sing folk songs with the bigger children, they teach them to play the doira and fathers endeavour to teach their children to make reed tulas and to beat small drums and to play plucked instruments.

Vocal music is considered more important than the instrumental. In schools singing is taught as a secondary subject during compulsory education. The Ministry of Education in Kabul prepares to introduce as an independent subject musical education joint to artistic and physical education, as soon as there are enough teachers. The only school of music in Kabul,

which also prepares future teachers of music, represents the basis for the development of musical education. For the time being, however, the main problem lies in the country, where, although there is three years' compulsory education, many children do not attend school for various reasons. In girls' schools teachers devote more time to singing than in boys' schools. The education of girls is directed toward their home life and the upbringing of children. Pupils in girls' schools do not only sing a lot, but they also learn dances, which they accompany by singing and beating doira drums.

Adults like to sing while they work. They sing while weaving carpets, while working in the fields or elsewhere. In tea shops there are soloists who sing to their own accompaniment.

Sometimes the leader of the group appears as soloist, beginning with the prelude on an instrument, the other musicians gradually join in, when they recognise the composition, and finally the singer comes. Between songs or even strophes there is always an interlude played by instrumentalists and after the song is ended a finale is played, again by musical instruments. Sometimes two solo singers take turns, but never does one hear two singers sing at the same time, or perhaps a whole musical group. Neither do the listeners join in, although they react immediately to the contents of the text of the vocal composition (less to the musical expression) by shaking their heads, sometimes by clicking their tongues, applauding or shouting.

At school or public celebrations children's choirs sing *una voce* songs very touchingly, without conductor (one of the good singers is responsible for exact entry). So we can hear them e.g. at the celebration of the Liberation Anniversary and the New Year's festivities, when they sing in front of the houses of prominent persons of the village or the town.

The themes of songs performed are various. The majority of songs deal with friendship and love. Sometimes one can hear long epic songs, sung in the past perhaps by songsters, who at present are not allowed to vagrate freely. Wandering is allowed only to large groups of nomads, passing from areas in Pakistan to the NW area. In private occasional songs are sung, such as wedding songs, funeral recitals, lullabies, various nursery

rhymes, prayers and magic formulae; their tunes based only on several tones are recited with festive emphasis.

Religious hymns are sung by Islam priests who have had a long and thorough education. We can hear them in mosques as well as on the occasion of various celebrations in private homes of wealthy people — a family event, the draw of private lottery etc.

The technique of singing and its expression are faithful and comprehensible and full of sentimental excitement. The singer sets in strongly and sings at full register. Singers in tea-shops, who do not take care of their voices, tire very soon and their voice loses its original timbre and colour and gets a sick, rustling tone. The singing performed is of even tone, without vibration and is therefore more exacting in its expression. It is supplemented by many fioritures as acciaccatura, mordent, turn, appoggiatura and good singers even add trill of a second to a fifth. A singer, if accompanying himself on a harmonium, takes every opportunity he can to free his left hand for cheironomy and dancing movements. He must first ensure adequate air intake for his instrument.

In folk music of the NW area we meet only song- and variation forms (in authentic music). Folk music, however, has been penetrated for centuries by Indian music with its artificially constructed Ragas, and Arabian music with its Maqams. Good singers imitate songs heard on the Kabul radio, Indian music art from Indian films and Delhi and Karachi broadcasting stations and also Arabian music broadcasted from Teheran, Dushambe, Tashkent and Kabul. Although the singers attain a considerable perfection in interpreting foreign compositions, it is possible to remark on their repertory that their intonating basis depends on a major or minor triad and on diatonic series of seven tones. The words Raga and Maqam have several meanings in the NW area:

a law in the general sense

a series of tones — a scale with characteristic heights of grades

a composition based on the intonation of the respective Raga or Maqam.

The most widespread opinion here is that a Maqam is the melody to words by ancient Persian poets.

As for the Raga it is presumed in the opinion of musicians here that it means an improvisation with a slow opening and a powerful, dynamic and agogic gradation. The words do not make any sense for the text sung in the Sargam style, using the syllables Sa, ri, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni, sa, which are abbreviations for the words Shadaja, Rishabna, Gandhara, Madhyama, Panchama, Dhaivata, Nishada (magic names of the suras). The singers add syllables to please themselves, e.g. ta, ma, te, so that in the end there arises a loose improvisation, lacking the original rules of ancient Indian music, not observing e.g. the time when a Raga may be sung etc. In bookshops and libraries (private ones) in the NW area it is possible to read in some books (e.g. Sadiqulláh Rishtin: Dadguna sandara, Kabul 1338 — acc. to Islam era) about rules concerning the use of Raga and Maqam. The majority of musicians, however, cannot read and in no case can they read music. Their great advantage is an excellent memory and a persistent effort combined with ambition.

Instrumental music mainly supports the expression of the text in vocal music. Either it accompanies vocal music or it performs vocal airs. There are very few solely instrumental compositions, mostly they are meant to accompany dances. That is why we find only the following forms: song-, variation-, improvisation- and dance forms in individual tribes. The principal representatives of authentic music traditions in the tribes are small chamber ensemble where the singer also plays one of the instruments, usually a melodic one. Among melodic instruments belong aerophonic instruments (the harmonium), chordophonic plucked instruments (dambura, tambour, dutor, setor, rebab). Rhythm is determined by membranophonic instruments (zarbagali, chamber dol, tabla and baya) and idiophonic instruments (tala and sistrum).

The Indian harmonium (see photo 7) is small, in most cases extending over three octaves with one key board and several registers. The musician drives the air into the instrument with his left hand by means of absorbent bellows. The Indian harmonium is imported from India first to Kabul and after having

been used there for several years it is bought by musicians from Mazari Sharif. At present they are somewhat out of tune, so that only the way of playing it gives us an idea of its original tuning, which was evidently natural. The musicians play the same song always in the same key. And since popular composition have not many differences in key system they play, sometimes for an hour, in one key.

European wind instruments have penetrated more and more into the NW area. The ocarina, enjoying now the same popularity as the tula, appears on the market of towns and villages. It has a similar timbre as the tula, the same key and moreover an easy resonance which, together with a reliable outfit, make the instrument very attractive.

In 1960 — 1964 brass instruments, manufactured in Europe or in Indian wind instrument factories have gradually replaced the older instruments, previously used by military and fire brigade bands: bagpipe, surnay, the original military brass instruments — long contra-bass trumpets and simple drums. Nowadays we meet only bands playing cornets, trumpets, horns, English horns, contrabass horns, trombones, tubes, big and small drums and triangle. These changes are due to the modernization of the army and the whole cultural life. Musicians in the new bands learn to play the new instruments quickly. They all play una voce songs by heart and learn them by listening.

The brass band in Mazari Sharif played in 1963 at the celebrations of the end of the Ramadan with the following instruments: three cornets, one trumpet, two bagpipes, a small and a large drum and a triangle. The brass instruments had trade marks of firms in Czechoslovakia, England, and India (see photo 8). One year later, however, at the same celebration this band played new instruments imported from India in the following cast: cornets, contrabass horns, trombone, large and small drum (see photo 9). The fire brigade band in Shibarghan plays now in the following cast: two cornets, one trumpet, three contrabass horns, big and small drum, cymbals. Their instruments were also bought from an Indian firm by the representatives of the town. The military band in Mazari Sharif has been playing several years already in the following cast: 6 cornets, 6 trumpets, 6 contrabass horns, large and small drums, cymbals.

Brass orchestras play only on festive occasions. They play more often when marching, less for listening, never in a closed auditorium. Their simple interpretation is monodic, unisono or in parallel octaves, accompanied by loudly sounding drums without muffling device. At marches the leader begins to play when signalled by the conductor. If the conductor also plays he begins the tune himself and he sometimes draws the attention to the beginning by the baton in his left hand. Then, within a few seconds, the whole band joins in. The same procedure is repeated with the next composition or kind of variation. For marches short flourishes are usually played, which are being repeated again and again, or short sharp marching compositions of song form with a known text. On the occasion of festive ceremonies the band plays the National Anthem, famous war songs, or music of folk songs and folk dances (for rhythm of brass music see appendix II., ex. 5). When the band stands, the leader, if he also plays, conducts with the baton in his left hand (see photo 8 and 9). Conductors of military bands conduct precisely studied compositions. When the soldier-musicians play standing, they stand still or they kick with their right foot at regular intervals. (Military band — see photo 10.)

In the musical practice of military bands the tendency to depart from heterophony to a poor *una voce* performance of compositions is remarkable where even fioritures are precisely memorized so that the valuable improvisations are disappearing. Moreover one can hear quite clearly each mistake in inexact intonation, entry or rhythm. That is why the effort to refashion the native bands to the style of the best European bands, admired on the screen and in military parades of well prepared military bands in Kabul, has not turned out satisfactory. While listening we miss either the European melody and harmony of style or the original and beautiful Afghani heterophony of original, fine instruments. It seems, though, that there is no way back now and the prevailing tendency is to play native melodies in an European, absolutely foreign style.

Before we come to the systematic description of popular music instruments in the NW area, let us say a word about the producers of these instruments. Professional makers of musical instruments live in towns. They manufacture the instruments

according to demand, or they even buy damaged instruments from foreign producers, repair and sell them. There exists some sort of anonymity of production. The instrument makers cannot read or write and so they do not sign their products. In spite of that, though, it is possible to identify the majority of instruments made by the more outstanding craftsmen. All more expensive instruments are decorated by carvings and bone inlays which are characteristic for each craftsman. Characteristic are also ornaments in the sound holes in the upper desk of the instrument, or in the resonance membranes, sometimes even the number of sympathetic strings on chordophonic instruments, the placement of tuning pegs, the shape of the bone bridge and other details.

It is interesting that instrument makers who have repaired a foreign piece, use their own characteristic ornaments, so that sometimes it is difficult to recognize who manufactured the instrument. This fact shows us that the craftsmen do not form their type of ornaments in order to have their instrument recognized and to give the interpreter an instrument that would represent them, although it does not mean, however, that they do not carry their work with care and conscientiously and that they do not enjoy their own workmanship. On the contrary! The producers are very persistent and wish to produce the best possible instruments, they make courageous experiments with shape and size of the instrument and also with the quality of the chosen material. By means of primitive tools they achieve unbelievably accurate and fine parts of the instrument and its ornaments, which they take great care to accomplish especially with expensive instruments. If an instrument-maker comes to terms of the price of an instrument he is just working on, he interrupts immediately all further adjustments which he would have thought necessary otherwise. When he works on an instrument without order, or its price has not been fixed yet, then he finishes his work to the final touch.

The reason for this attitude can be found in his dependence on small earnings and hence his desire to save time.

The instrument makers have their workshops in the bazaar in the street of craftsmen to whom they also belong in respect to guilds. Their homes are usually elsewhere, in another

part of the town. They prefer to work on their own, only rarely two of them join to one workshop, but even then they try to keep their independence, producing instruments in their own style each, only dividing orders and repairs. Occasionally, when demands are higher, they employ a labourer, sometimes two, in order to manage the work quickly and so keep their customers. The workshops have no light and so they can work in day time.

The material needed for instrument manufacture is brought by tradesmen on donkeys or by camel caravans. They bring chiefly strong mulberry wood for the production of resonators for all musical instruments, the wood of fruit trees (apple-, pear- and nut-trees) for those parts of the instrument which are not connected with the sound, e.g. the neck of the *dambura* and *dutor*, stringing pegs etc. The manufacturers buy twigs from bushes and tree branches for bows, black horse hair (only rarely white) for the stringing of bows, camel bone for ornamental inlays and for the production of frets, horn to make bridges for string instruments and sometimes also for ornaments, sheep and goat skins to cover membranophonic instruments and parts of the resonator of the *saranda* and the *rebab*. As for metal they need steel wires for strings. They need reed and bambus for the manufacture of the *tula* and the *nay*. Some producers also make strings from guts and have to buy sheep's guts. Lately, gut strings have been replaced by nylon ones which can be bought on the market as cheap fishing equipment. Some instrument makers produce also glue and colophony, which they stick to the upper part of the instrument before it stiffens.

The tools used for the manufacture of instruments are very few and very primitive: there is a chisel and a wooden hammer for the excavation of wooden resonators, a sharp hoe and a knife are used to make the smaller parts of wood and bone. A sharp, heavy hoe with a handle about 50 cm. long, takes the place of the European hatchet. The instrument maker uses it to carve even the finest ornaments from camel bone. A rough stone, a piece of glass, rarely a file serve to smooth the uneven surface of the wooden and bone parts of the instrument. Drills of modern shape, now appearing on the market, or perhaps perfect drilling machines are not used yet for drilling holes, the work is still done in the old way: a sharp steel rod is fixed in the loop of a bow

like implement which is made to rotate. By this movement, resembling the movement of a bow, the steel rod drills alternatively in both directions (see photo 27).

Owing to the fact that in the whole of Afghanistan there are no factories for the production of musical instruments, it is easy to recognize instruments made in Afghanistan from those manufactured abroad, where factories already exist.

The following instruments are imported to the NW area: the Indian harmonium, the American ocarina, and brass band instruments: cornets, trumpets, bass-horns, trombones, large and small drums, cymbals and triangle. These instruments are imported from Europe, USA, India, Pakistan and the Soviet Union. The following instruments come from India via Kabul to the NW area: the dilruba, saranda, tabla and baya, from the Soviet Union come the dutor and setor, i.e. the instruments produced in the old manner in Afghanistan. Imported instruments are of series production, recognized easily by their protective varnish and other trade marks.

If we take closer notice of shape and material of instruments used in the NW area, we find that tabla, baya and rebab, saranda and dilruba do not belong to the original folk instruments of the NW area. They are instruments from the Indian musical sphere, which geographically reaches out in the north over Pakistan to the Hindukush mountain range. Due to the political incorporation of the NW area, Indian music has spread over here. Musical instruments of the Indian area differ from the native ones of the original tribes in the following features:

String instruments are fitted with sympathetic strings (rebab, saranda, dilruba).

The upper desk of the resonator is replaced by skin (the same instruments as above).

Drums are adapted to a more difficult technique of play and expression (tabla and baya).

The only exception is the tambour, a wide-spread and very popular instrument of the native tribes in the NW area. It is probable that it was an instrument maker in Mazari Sharif, coming from Ghazni, a place of Indian sphere of music, who began to add sympathetic strings to the tambour.

There exist also interesting instruments made for children and children's toys which are meant to evoke interest in musical tones.

Some instruments are manufactured in small sizes so that children can play them. These are, among membranophonic instruments, the small form of the doira, zarbagali and dol, called dolak in the diminutive; among chordophonic instruments — the small form of the dambura and tambour. All aerophonic and idiophonic instruments can be used by children, because they are small in size (tula, nay, surnay, chang, tala, sistrum). One may really see children play the latter in tea shops, circuses and in private homes.

Among children's toys the most favourite are those making some sound. They are shown in app. XIII — the drum, rattle, pipe in the body of little animals made of clay.

Folk musical instruments:

In the NW area the following musical instruments are manufactured:

idiophonic — tala, chang, sistrum

membranophonic — doira, zarbagali

aerophonic — tula, nay, surnay

chordophonic (plucked) — dambura, tambour, dutor, setor, rebab

chordophonic stringed — ghijak, saranda

The neighbouring vilayets enrich the instrumentory with dol, tabla, baya, drums and the dilruba bow, manufactured also in the workshops of Afghani folk instrument makers. During the last 10 years the popular dulcimer called "santur"¹⁾ has disappeared as well as the long bass trumpets, military brass trumpets, bagpipes called "mashk"²⁾ and the pair of military "nokora" drums.³⁾ It is possible to meet a dulcimer or a bass trumpet here or there at some village in a private house but we will not see them any more in tea-shops or at celebrations, where otherwise all normally used instruments are represented.

The idiophonic instrument called tala⁴⁾ has the task to keep rhythm in small groups playing in tea-shops. The instrument is made of bronze. The diameter of the two separate cymbals is 5 to 6 cm. The center of the plates has a hole where a piece of lace or

a leather strap is pulled through, thus connecting the two plates and allowing them to separate to a distance of cca 10 cm. The plates are roughly ground and their key differs usually by half a tone, most frequently a^{'''} — b^{'''} flat.

Chang⁵⁾ is another idiophonic instrument. It is a modest one for private use of children as well as adults. The chang player holds with one hand the handle of a threetoothed fork, which is 10 — 12 cm. long and with a finger of his other hand he moves the elastic middle strip, which at its end winds into a small spiral. The chang is an instrument without resonator. The sound of the instrument is increased only by the mouth cavity of the player who holds the instrument with his teeth at the edge of the fork and changes the timbre by moving his hand near the mouth and by the movement of his lips. The resonance of the instrument ranges around 3 seconds. In the NW area the chang is tuned between c₁ — g₁.

The instrument is manufactured by smiths and other craftsmen working with metal. That is why there are so many of these instruments on the market. There is no difference in its shape in the whole area.

Sistrum.⁶⁾ The current sistrum is a bunch of sheet metal rings, about 2 cm. in diameter, connected with string; dancing damburists or dancing children put them on their arms. The little stones and lead shots which are inside the sistrum give a provoking and rattling sound which is short and sharp and therefore suitable for the rhythmic component of the music. The sistrum is wide-spread throughout the whole NW area.

Membranophonic instruments:

The names of membranophonic instruments are very inaccurate among the native population. The zarbagali instrument is often called tabla and sometimes even dol. The pair of drums, tabla and baya, is called by the common name tabla and all membranophonic instruments fitted on both sides with membranes are called dols. Only doira has a precisely defined designation. By comparison of the form, size and use of all drums and their designation in literature we can divide the drums of the NW area in the following way: doira, zarbagali and the dol drum group

(dol with one stick, dol with two sticks, chamber dol and dolak), the tabla and baya drum pair.

*Doira*⁷⁾ is the simplest Afghani drum and therefore also the wide-spread one. The skeleton on the doira is formed by a small narrow wooden prism wound into a circle. On its edge there is a skin, stretched while damp, and fixed with little nails which are removed when the skin is dry and firmly attached. The skin is usually painted with coloured ornaments, different from the doira of the southern vilayets of Afghanistan where colours are simple and the majority of instruments is not coloured at all. The sizes of the doira vary. Large doiras have a diameter of 50 to 60 cm. and are sometimes fitted with rattling tin strips, fixed with nails to the wooden frame of the instrument.

It is very simple to play the doira. The musician holds the instrument as high as his head or chest with one hand and with the other hand he strikes it, mostly only with his finger-tips. Experienced musicians play even complicated rhythmic passages on the doira, supplementing the strokes of the right hand on the membrane by lightly tapping with the fingers of the hand which holds the instrument. With the same hand they stretch the membrane by alternative pressing and achieve thus intonation changes of sound.

As the instrument has a small resonator, its sound intensity is relatively small, the resonance short. That is why the instrument is used only rarely in orchestras. The doira is the only instrument for women and it is used also in collective children's dances. At weddings women carry the doira in processions.⁸⁾ Manufacturers offer doiras of various sizes in big heaps in town markets. Producers of musical instruments who manufacture dutors, rebabs and other more complicated instruments leave the production of the simple doira to toy producers.

*Zarbagali*⁹⁾ is the instrument of the tea shops. This drum is essentially a clay vessel for water the bottom of which is replaced by skin, fixed with a string to the body of the instrument. The zarbagalis of the NW area do not differ in shape from each other. The skin is always fixed in the same way, the body of the vessel of the Mazari Sharif zarbagali is usually a little elongated. An exception in shape is the zarbagali from the surroundings of

Akchah.¹⁰) The zarbagali from vilayets where there is enough wood, are made of wood.

The size of the instrument varies. Small instruments are intended for children, the large ones for players in tea-shops. The large instruments reach a size of 40 — 50 cm., the width of the opening covered by skin is 20 — 30 cm. In contrast to Kabul instruments, the zarbagalis of NW area are never trimmed with protective polish. The instruments are manufactured by potters who cut off the bottom of some vessels before putting them into the oven. The musicians who are interested to buy choose their piece at the potter's and cover it with the skin themselves at home.

Musicians playing the zarbagali in tea shops sit on a carpet and grip the instrument under their left arm and support it with their left foot. For beating they use both hands, playing with their finger-tips, palms of their hands, nails — they use a wide palette of intensity and colour of beats. It is achieved by changing the place of touching the membrane in the direction from the edge towards the middle, by changing the direction of the beat, furthermore the height of sound of the beat is changed by pressing the membrane and finally it is customary to obtain effect by covering the neck of the vessel with the palm. Some musicians achieve an effect which may be compared even to a perfect performance of a tabla or baya player. The long rhythmic passages, richly invented while playing, are inexpressible in European notation.

*Dol with one stick*¹¹) is the largest Afghani drum. Its wooden or metal cylindrical construction is 40 to 70 cm. wide. Both skins of the drum are usually fitted with a metal ring, which fastens either skin, and spans the frame of the drum near the edge and is fixed to the opposite ring by means of ropes, so that both membranes stretch when the rope is tightened. The dol has no silencer and therefore produces a strong sound and a long resonance which drowns the other instruments. A wooden stick, covered at the end with leather or cloth, belongs to the drum.

The musicians carry the instrument strapped to their body by a belt over the shoulder. Sometimes the drum is put on a pedestal or drawn on a cart by a donkey. The drummer plays simple

and regular beats. Until lately the dol with one stick was imported to the NW area from Ghazni, but in the last years large modern drums, manufactured in musical instrument factories in India or Europe have made their appearance in brass bands.

*Dol with two sticks.*¹²⁾ It differs from the dol with one stick by an elongated shape of the corpus, which is barrel-shaped. The corpus is of hard wood, its length is 60 to 100 cm., the width of the membranes is 40 — 50 cm. The membrane, intended for lower tones, usually has a larger diameter. The stretching system is similar to that of the preceding dol. The outside of the drum is decorated by a few circle-like grooves. The stick for higher tones, called "zil" is a thin rod, for the lower tones called "bam", a bent wooden stick, about 30 cm. long, is used.

The musicians carry the instrument on a leather belt round their neck, the side with the higher tone is usually turned upwards. One does not play the dol with two sticks in tea-shops or in closed places at all but only in the open: the dol accompanies, either alone, or with the surnay, dances,¹³⁾ wedding processions and festive games. Only exceptionally would the same dance be accompanied by two instruments at the same time (dols). The difference of height at both sides of the drum makes complicated rhythmic groupings possible in which the line of higher tones is usually more differential than the lower one. Both lines are quite independent.

The dol with two sticks has come to the NW area of Afghanistan from Ghazni. It is evenly spread in the whole NW area, without regard to tribe appurtenance.

*Chamber dol.*¹⁴⁾ The basic shape of the chamber dol is identic with that of the dol with two sticks, but it is considerably smaller and somewhat more elongated: the length of the body is cca 60 cm., the diameter of the membranes 20 — 30 cm.

This drum is used only in closed places. The drum is placed horizontally on the drummer's knees and he plays with his fingers without sticks, only exceptionally with wooden tips fastened to his fingers. Each hand plays on one membrane by means of a similar technique as on the zarbagali, and in exceptional cases, to achieve special effect, the drummer plays with both hands on one membrane. The tuning of the drum is effected by

a thorough arrangement of the stretching frame by means of a river pebble, available all the time — it is stuck under the tightening rope. The membranes are tuned in to the key note of the other instruments of the group. The sound of this drum is very soft and offers great dynamic possibilities. It has also been brought to the NW area from Ghazni.

*The dolak*¹⁵⁾ is a smallest form of the dol. It resembles the preceding drum but usually it has no tightening arrangement. Its membranes are directly fixed to the edges of the wooden frame of the instrument. The length of the drum ranges around 30 cm. and the diameter of the membranes comes to about 20 cm. The corpus of the drum has usually a colourful decoration of folk ornaments.

The dolak is most frequently only a children's instrument. Sometimes it replaces the chamber dol, especially in less assuming ensembles where also children take part. As a rule, the dolak plays its part as accompanying instrument of children's "atans". The dolak is manufactured in the whole of Afghanistan as well as in the NW area. The drums of the NW area are not painted.

*The tabla*¹⁶⁾ is the most perfect Afghani drum, appearing only sporadically in the NW area, mainly in large towns.

The tabla has only one membrane, specially arranged to ensure a rich musical expression. In the middle of the membrane there is a layer of congealed black paste, some mm. thick, which makes a short and higher tone possible. The rest of the leather membrane sounds clear and long. The protective stripe of skin, protecting the edge of the tabla membrane, is supplemented by a stretching ring, formed by plaited leather straps. On the bottom part of the instrument there is a supporting ring. Between this and the stretching ring there is a lacing which is stretched by means of small wooden chocks, inserted between the lacing and the corpus of the instrument. The chocks are about 5 cm. long and 2,5 cm. thick. By moving them along the widening body of the tabla downwards, the membrane of the tabla is being stretched. The height of the instrument ranges around 30 cm., the width of the membrane amounts to c. 16 cm. Musicians call the tabla and baya pair of drums only tabla or they call the

zarbagali also tabla, as for example in Andkhui. The tabla is an excellent chamber instrument and therefore it accompanies all kinds of instruments and also singers. Good tablaists master a great number of rhythms on their instrument.¹⁷⁾ The tabla is manufactured in South Afghanistan and in Kabul. Lately, tablas manufactured in Indian factories have been brought to the NW area.

*The baya*¹⁶⁾ resembles the tabla in size and placement of the membrane. Its membrane, however, has a larger diameter, and it is fixed in a similar way as that of the chamber dol. The corpus of the baya is kettle-shaped, made of copper galvanized sheet. The lacing between the stretching ring above and the supporting one below is not stretched by means of chocks as it does on the tabla, but again with a river pebble, straightening the stretching ring, the same as with the chamber dol.

The middle of the membrane of the baya is moistened before playing with a mixture of boiled rice and ashes in order to achieve by beating in the center a short resonance and a higher tone, the same as on the tabla. Bayas imported from India are mostly factory-made; they have a black ring already stuck in the membrane, similar to that on the tabla. The ring is fixed either in the center or nearer to the edge. The corpus of these instruments is usually also wooden.

Aerophonic instruments:

Aerophonic instruments in the NW area are represented by the tula, the nay and surnay.

Tula — this name is given by the Afghans to a cross flute, a beak flute and a reed pipe.

*Flute.*¹⁸⁾ In the NW area the flute differs greatly in size (lengths 20 — 60 cm.), its shape, however, remains the same: a cylindrical body with holes for 7 tones of the Sarigama scale (6 finger holes for 6 tones of the scale and by uncovering them for the seventh). To play one or two octaves higher it is necessary to blow over. The free opening on the side of the instrument where the hole for the intake of air is situated is sometimes plugged with raw cotton. The material used for cross flutes is wood or metal. Some cross flutes are varnished in black and

decorated with silver beating. These instruments are brought from other vilayets.

The cross flute is an instrument for private music making. It is small in size and so some men carry it about everywhere, even to work, and take every opportunity to play popular tunes and variations on well-known folk songs. They also play while walking. The cross flutes used by shepherds in the steppes and semi-deserts have a low and carrying tone. The cross flute asserts itself rarely in combination with the dol, because of its feeble and little penetrating tone.

The cross flute is spread throughout the whole NW area and in all Afghanistan. Metal cross flutes are made by craftsmen working with metal in all villages and towns. Wooden instruments are usually made by ordinary people themselves, the best instruments with an exact intonation come from experienced instrument makers.

Beak flute.¹⁹⁾ In size, material and shape this flute resembles the preceding one, but it occurs relatively seldom. A more complicated system in air intake (than in the cross flute) makes its production more difficult and is responsible for its rare occurrence, although it is easier to play than the cross flute. This flute is usually imported from Kabul.

*Reed pipe*²⁰⁾ is the simplest wind instrument. Its size is about 10 to 20 cm. It has 3 — 6 holes and is fitted with a hollow shifting chock which is cut on its surface in the tangential direction, prolonged longitudinally, producing thus a tone of similar timbre as have the other tulas and the European ocarina. Ordinary people, even children, make this tula themselves.

*The nay*²¹⁾ is a flute into which the air is blown across the cylindrical edge of the corpus of the instrument. It is made of reed in the most various sizes and provided on one side with four finger holes, on the other with an octave hole for the thumb. The surface of the nay is decorated by rich ornaments, carved into the wall of the instrument by a knife and coloured red and brown. The nay is used by men of Turkman tribes for the same occasions as the tulas are used. This tula therefore occurs only in the Maimana vilayet, rarely in Shibarghan. Besides the Turkmans, no one knows to play the nay. The instrument is of ancient origin, it was known already in ancient Egypt.

*The surnay*²²⁾ is an instrument about 50 cm. long, of cylindrical shape, widened at the bottom. It is made of one piece of mulberry wood. 7 holes without valves are tuned to the Sarigama scale. At the back there is the eighth — the octave hole. The double strip of reed is wider than in the oboe and is removable. The strip is fixed on a brass tubule, about 11 cm. long, which on one side is about 7 mm. thick, gets gradually thinner, and in the place where the strip is fixed, it reaches a diameter of 3 — 4 mm. The brass tubule is retractable into the corpus of the instrument and to make it perfectly tight it is usually wound by string.

The musician pushes the whole strip (about 4 cm.) in a vertical position into his mouth, as far as the ring gasket, and blows the current of air into the instrument by steady intensity. The rich melodic line begins with a sharp entry and stops with the same sudden interruption. The tongue has no function in forming the tone, no staccato is used. As a long melody in legato has become the ideal of surnayists, many of them have learnt the so called "lasting breath", where the surnayists breathe at regular intervals, without once interrupting the legato by a single entry — though they might play for an hour. The tunes played range mostly within a one- and two-lined octave.

The surnay most frequently plays together with the *dol* with two sticks, accompanying dances and festive processions. For its strong sound it is popular in the open and in spacious circus tents. Whereas in near India there are several instruments similar to the surnay (*mukavina*, *s'ruti*, *nagasara*) in the whole of Afghanistan there remained one type of shape, considerably differing from the Chinese "sona" and the Rumanian "surla" and others.

Chordophonic instruments:

Plucked *dambura*, tambour, *dutor*, *setor*, *rebab*
bow instruments — *ghijak*, *saranda*, *dilruba*

Dambura.²³⁾ The resonator of the *dambura* has approximately the shape of a helmet, on the top it is closed by a resonance plate. In the plate there are small (2 — 4 mm) holes, with resonance function, drilled in symmetrically by each producer in

his own characteristic way. An opening in the bottom part of the case, usually plugged by a piece of wood, serves for cleaning the resonator. The neck is glued on to the resonator and on its upper end there are two pegs for the strings. The upper fret is formed by several coils of sheep string round the neck of the instrument. By several coils both strings are pressed to the neck and thus they remain at a constant distance from each other. By means of other coils both strings of the dambura are lifted above the fingerboard part of the neck, so that they can oscillate freely. A simple wooden prism takes the place of a bridge, placed at about one third of the lower part of the instrument.

The ornaments²⁴) on the body of the instrument have the shape of annules which are either carved into the walls of the instrument or painted, or carved into camel bone and then set in. On the neck of the instrument there are as a rule oblong strips — also from camel bone. Only rarely is the dambura so carefully and artistically decorated as other plucked instruments.

The material used for the instrument is mulberry wood. The neck, however, is sometimes made of apple-tree or pear-tree wood or of that of other fruit-trees. The strings — till lately made only of sheep guts — are being more and more frequently replaced by nylon strings.

The length of the instrument varies greatly, from 60 to 100 cm. The smaller instruments are intended for young people and for home music making, the larger ones for groups playing in tea shops.

The strings of the instrument are tuned in fourths. The musician holds the instrument like European musicians the guitar and strums with his right hand. The players in tea-shops have a sistrum — several hollow tin rings, with metal balls inside. The dambura is a solo as well as an accompanying instrument and because of its simple construction and easy technique of play it has become one of the most widely used instruments of the Uzbeks, Turkmans and Tajiks in the NW area. The damburists use, when playing a tune, only one string, which they accompany with the pedal of the second string. Experienced damburists, mainly in Maimana, deviate into related keys in instrumental compositions by moving the forefinger of the left hand, which

changes the tone of the pedal. The resulting sound of the dambura is composed of the tune played on one string, of the pedal on the second string, of the rhythmic sound of the sistrum and the sound resulting from the fingers boating on the upper desk of the dambura. The tune of the instrument is sometimes completely lost in the other rhythmic sounds of the instrument. Damburists in tea shops often also sing and are usually leaders of the band. The most frequent combination of the dambura is with the bow-ghijak and the plucked tambour as melodic instruments and the zarbagali, the dol, the tala as rhythmic instruments.

The dambura is mainly the instrument of North Afghanistan, the instrument of the Turkmans, Uzbeks and Tajiks. The towns of the NW area where workshops for the manufacture of damburas may be found are: Maimana, Shibarghan, Haibak, Tashkurghan and Mazari Sharif.

*Tambour.*²⁵⁾ The lower part of the resonator of the tambour resembles that of the dambura, but the neck of the instrument has a resonance function too: it is hollow, connected with the main resonator and considerably wider than that of the dambura. The whole instrument is made of mulberry wood. The resonator is provided with resonance holes and a cleaning one like the dambura. Some tambours have the bottom part replaced by gourd.²⁶⁾ In the lower part of the neck, which is shaped like a trough, at the side, there are pegs to fasten the 7 to 14 sympathetic strings, tuned in to the Sarigama scale. The shortest high strings, however, are tuned in to the most various, sometimes even incidental intervals. Owing to the bad quality of the strings and their high tension it is impossible to keep the wanted height for a longer time. The tambourists as a rule do not care too much for an exact tuning of all sympathetic strings, which serve also when they are a little out of key. Six main strings are strung to the upper part of the neck in the lateral wall as well as in the upper desk of neck, which is a little rounded and links up on the same level with the upper desk of the lower part of the resonator. On the upper desk of the neck a horn fret is fixed, the other frets are made of guts or nylon. The principal and sympathetic strings are made of steel wire. The long main wire, tuned to the lowest tone, is strengthened by the connection of two

strings wound together. The main strings are tuned from the left: d-d-d-A-d-d or d-d-A-A-d-d. The sympathetic strings, fixed on tuning pegs which are placed at optional respective distances, pass on to the bone projections on the upper part of the neck. These cylindrical projections are about 4 mm. high. The strings are placed in their grooves. The sympathetic and main strings meet fan-like in the grooves of the horn bridge and are passed over a large horn fret at the end of the resonator and are strung together to a bone pin.

The few decorations are distributed over the whole body of the instrument. On the upper and lower sides of the neck there are usually bone ornaments in the shape of crosses with a star in the middle, on the upper part of the resonator there is a fine ornament resembling small resonance holes and then there are several long notches in the lower part of the resonator. The decorations are, in comparison with the dambura, considerably sober.

Although there are tambours of the most various length, we can divide them according to their size²⁷) into "kalon" tambour and "ghurd" tambour. Kalon tambour (large) exceeds a length of even 130 cm. and has a beautiful, carrying, though fine sound. In the NW area it is the most wide-spread, perfect string instrument, more in demand than the dambura. The tambour ghurd (small) measures about 60 cm. and is an instrument for children and for unassuming homes. The tambour as a solo instrument is played by beating the forefinger over the strings, as group instrument it is played by means of a ring²⁸) slipped on the forefinger of the right hand. An arpeggio beat over the strings is accompanied, as with the dambura, by a rustling effect of the ring rubbing the upper part of the desk; but a more powerful and richer tone, which is so characteristic for the tambour, is the beat into the sympathetic strings. So a mixture of a great number of tones of glistening timbre arises, above which the tune played on the two principal strings tuned unisono sounds. The principal melody is not very strong because the strings are thin and inadequately tightened.

Tambours manufactured lately are provided with a growing number of frets so that in some even a division into semitones along the whole length of the fingerboard part of the neck arises.

Small tambours, and those meant for folk musicians, which play only traditional songs of the nearest neighbourhood, have no more than seven frets that is the number of tones in the diatonic scale. The number of frets on the instrument increases with the growing popularity of imitating Indian compositions and those of the wide Arabic-Persian area, where the variety in modes necessarily calls for differential fret structures.

The tambour is a solo instrument as well as an accompanying one. Very popular in tea shops of Andkhui is the combination of the tambour with the dambura, the zarbagali and the tala, in Mazari Sharif they prefer to combine it with the ghijak, dilruba, harmonium, zarbagali and the tala. The tambour is not only spread throughout the NW area, but also in the whole of Afghanistan and the surrounding states. This is proof for the universality of this instrument for the most varied interpretations. Though tambours are produced in the whole NW area, the best and most numerous ones are manufactured by an instrument maker in Mazari Sharif.

*The dutor*²⁹⁾ is a two-stringed instrument, with strings tuned in fourths as the dambura. It is very much like the dambura. Its slim neck is not hollow as the dambura's but still thinner. The resonator occurs in two forms. The instrument maker in Mazari Sharif produces dutors with two metal strings and a resonator the lower part of which is made of a single piece of mulberry wood. The instrument maker in Kuna Qal'a manufactures dutors with two textile strings (it is usually one string, fixed on both sides on pegs and strung over a small narrow bridge, caught in the lower part of the instrument on a pin) and a considerably more powerful resonator, consisting of several parts.³⁰⁾ Both forms have a customary length of 1,1 m. The strings are tuned to fourths.

From the South-West part of the country — from Herat — comes quite exceptionally into the NW area the Herat form of the dutor with its principal strings in metal, tuned from the left a-a-A-d-a and with resonance strings as were described in the tambour. The Herat dutor is a perfect masterpiece, identical in shape with dutors of the NW area and used even in Radio Kabul. The dutor is played with the finger on two strings, the Herat dutor either with the finger or a ring similar to that used for the tam-

bour. While the Herat dutor does not differ much from the tambour in sound (similar tuning and number of strings), the dutor from the NW area with its textile strings represents a rarity of sound, considerably different from the sound of all other Afghan stringed instruments.

*The setor*³¹⁾ is a three-stringed plucked instrument with metal strings, tuned to d-a-d or f-c-f. The instrument is about 80 cm. long, the neck is similar to that of the dutor, and the resonator resembles that of the tambour. The material used for the instrument is the mulberry tree, the upper fret is of camel bone, the bridge is of any sort of hard wood.

The setor is an accompanying as well as a solo instrument. Sometimes the rubbing ring is used to strengthen the performance, the same as with the tambour. The setor occurs only in a small area of the northern part of the Maimana vilayet. The instruments appearing in the neighbourhood of Andkhui are products of the expert Djoumak from Kuna Qal'a.

*The rebab*³²⁾ is a plucked instrument of powerful sound, appearing in the NW area since the last years. In its shape it does not resemble any chordophonic instrument of the NW area. As the rebab is played only in the first position, the resonator is prolonged as far as possible towards the richly carved head. On the short and hollow neck there are four frets from gut string. The case of the instrument has two parts. The lower part together with the bottom part of the hollow neck is made from a single piece of wood, the upper lid of the resonance case and neck are also from one piece of wood. The upper part of the case in the space under the bridge is covered by a membrane with several round resonance holes. Very interesting are the notches in the middle of the resonator, which show that originally a bow has been used for playing. The rebab is wide-spread in the NW area and most popular in northern India where they occasionally play it with a bow, further in Pakistan and in South and Central Afghanistan. On the lateral side of the resonator, between the neck and the cutting there are about 10 — 15 tuning pegs for sympathetic strings. The bridge is fixed about 2 cm. from the bottom edge of the instrument.

The sympathetic strings are tuned to the Sarigama scale. The principal strings are of guts, or nylon. Their tuning from the left:

d-a-d¹-d¹ or d-d-g-c¹. The principal strings are fixed to the head which is glued to the neck of the instrument. Metal sympathetic strings are fixed and led on in the same way as mentioned for the tambour. An exception is the stringing over the bridge, the adjacent strings pass through holes in the center of the bridge column over the lower fret which is made of strong leather. To facilitate exchanging them the principal strings are fixed to one bone pin and the sympathetic strings to the other.

The size of the rebab ranges around 100 cm. This is the size of a large concert rebab. There are also smaller ones, however, manufactured according to customers' wishes. Rebabs, coming to the NW area of Afghanistan from Kabul, have always a pair of strings near each other, 4 to 6 pairs of strings in total. They are carefully elaborated and beautifully decorated with mother-of-pearl, as well as with carvings. Rebabs of the NW area have decorative inlays of camel bone. The upper lid on all rebabs is decorated with a number of round holes with resonance function, arranged into characteristic figures. The rich carvings and bone ornaments are concentrated on the head and the lower part of the neck. The tuning pegs, too, are carved and inlaid.

A plectrum of triangle shape is used to play the rebab in the first position. The sound of the instrument has a strong, full tone and a long resonance, thanks to the large resonator and the sympathetic strings of the instrument. The different tones which the musician eludes by plucking the strings remind the dulcimer by the timbre of their tone. Musicians playing the rebab are much honoured in the NW area, and are usually also good singers, and able to play several instruments. The rebab seems to have penetrated into the NW area instead of the vanished dulcimer. For the time being the only instrument maker manufacturing rebabs is in Mazari Sharif.

*The ghijak*³³) is the most used bow instrument of the NW area. In villages and smaller towns there is no other bow instrument but the ghijak. In the southern part occasionally appears the saranda, in Mazari Sharif also the dilruba. The ghijak is the instrument of the Turkmans, Uzbeks and Tajiks, the same as the dambura.

The instrument is formed by a resonator of mulberry wood in various shapes, fixed on a stick, about 60 — 80 cm. long, of

any sort of wood. On the upper end of the stick there are two pegs for the strings and at the bottom end a supporting point, serving at the same time to attach the other end of the strings. The wooden stick is the supporting skeleton of the instrument. The tuning of the strings is to fourths as the dambura and the dutor, the left string sounding like a pedal is tuned lower. Two independent strings are sometimes replaced by only one attached at both ends by stringing pegs and slipped under the resonator in the middle, as it sometimes happens in the dambura.

The instrument is not decorated, neither with carvings nor with inlays. The majority of ghijaks, played on in the NW area, is bought among toys on the market and its resonator is replaced by an oil can, opened on one side and with reverberation holes on the other, made by driving in nails. It has become the fashion lately to make ghijaks from a cheap and easily accessible skeleton of the instrument, bought from a craftsman in Tashkurghan. He manufactures them in large numbers as semi-finished articles, and these are fitted with manycoloured tin resonators or wooden ones. And so the ghijak is the only instrument of the NW area that is painted with colours.

The bow of the ghijak³⁵) has a shape like a crossbow. The bent rod is stretched by means of a bunch of horsehair. If the musician wishes to stretch the bow, he uses his right hand for pressure on the horse-hair directly while playing. The ghijak is played duo voce: The first string performs the tune with rich fioritures (trills, acciaccaturas, turns, glissandos etc.) and the second string sounds as a pedal. The resulting sound resembles in its structure that of the bagpipe. Popular is the legato play, the same as with wind instruments. The musicians play in different positions, the fingers are firmly pressed on the string, on top at the neck. The tone of the ghijak is sharp, metallic rough, according to the quality of the strings and the resonator. If the musician wishes to roughen the bow, he uses the colophony stuck to the upper part of the resonator.

The ghijak is a solo instrument as well as an accompanying one. Ordinary people buy it for home music making. In tea shops the ghijak is usually the instrument played by the leader of the band and singer in one person, who supports his singing suitably

by a flowery melody of his instrument but mainly he introduces a new song and interludes.

Ghijaks are manufactured in Maimana, Andkhui, Shibarghan, Mazari Sharif, Haibak, Tashkurghan.

*The saranda*⁵⁴⁾ is a more perfected bow instrument than the ghijak. It is fitted with 3 main strings, d-a-d like the setor, and by a various number of sympathetic strings tuned to the Sarigama scale. If the instrument has only 2 — 4 sympathetic strings, they are placed next to the principal ones on the bridge and attached to the tuning pegs of the head, not on the lateral wall of the hollow neck.

In shape the saranda does not resemble any of the instruments described so far. The resonator is egg-shaped, on the upper side half covered by skin and half opened. The hollow short neck, the upper desk of which vaults over the opening in the upper part of the resonator, is made of a single piece of mulberry wood with the lower part of the resonator. Glued to the neck is the head which is decorated by carvings. In the middle of the resonator the sides of the instrument become narrower, so that it is possible to play the bow in different positions. The principal strings are of guts, the sympathetic strings are of metal. The latter are placed along the whole width of the neck below the main strings. The bow is similar to that of the ghijak.

The technique of placing the fingers is quite different from playing the ghijak; the fingers are placed with the nails from the side on the strings, so that the string is firmly interrupted, but so as not to disturb, at the same time, the vibration of the sympathetic strings placed below. So it is easy to play glissandos but it is very difficult to change fingers in quick fioritures etc. The technique of playing the saranda is very difficult and resembles the way of playing the sorangi — a more accomplished string instrument, wide-spread in the south of the country and in Kabul.

*The dilruba*⁵⁵⁾ is the most complicated string instrument in construction, in the NW area, as well as in all Afghanistan. It is the instrument of the whole Indian region.

The dilruba consists of two main parts: the resonator itself and the hollow neck. The resonator has the shape of a trough,

narrowing in the middle, so that it reminds the outcuts of the other bow instruments, and the upper resonance desk is replaced by a membrane. The membrane has round or triangle-shaped resonance holes. At the bottom, the trough has a wide projection to which the strings are attached. The whole resonator is made from a single piece of wood. There is a hole in the upper part of the resonator and glued to it is the hollow neck which ends in the head, where the principal strings are attached. The hollow neck is of similar construction as that of the already described tambour. In addition it is fitted with a clam at the side, crewed to the lateral wall of the neck, where the tuning pegs are placed for the sympathetic strings, 14 to 19 in number, tuned in to the Sarigama scale. The four principal strings, are tuned to: a-d-d-a. The main strings are placed in the grooves of the upper wooden fret, which is about 3 cm. high, and is placed in the upper part of the instrument between the head and the neck, then they pass through the cuttings of the upper part of the bone bridge (the sympathetic strings pass below the main ones in small holes) and are attached to a broad projection on the bottom of the instrument. The frets on the neck of the dilruba have an important function: as steel or copper wires (cca 4 cm. in diameter) they stretch over the sympathetic strings and make an undisturbed sounding possible, when the main string is firmly pressed. The arched frets are fixed to the neck by gut or silon. The edges of the resonance membrane and the place under the bridge are usually strengthened by leather stripes, which also serve as decoration. The hollow neck and the head are usually varnished in black. There are fine carving ornaments on the surface of the resonance case. The length of the instrument ranges from 80 — 115 cm.

The bow of the dilruba³⁶⁾ is carefully elaborated, decorated on both ends and provided with a nut without stretching arrangement. The rod is mildly bent to an arch and on its upper end in a hole or a ring horse-hair is attached and evenly spread out. The bow is c. 60 cm. long.

The dilruba is similarly played as the ghijak — by firmly pressing the fingers on the strings. This finger technique gives little chance for fine nuances in intonation and depends on the placement of the frets, which are arranged in semitones and are

easily displaced so that it is often necessary to control and adjust them. The dilruba players use therefore also light soft pressure on the strings, which passes into natural flageolets in high positions. The soft touch of the string, however, does not allow such an amplitude of sound as the strong pressure does, but the string sounds strongly enough and its sound is supported by the consonance of the sympathetic strings. The dilrubists hold the bow in a similar way as the European contrabassists. As the bowings are concerned, only legato and détaché are used. The legato bow-stroke agrees with the preference for fioritures. The musicians do not perform vibrato on their instruments.

The dilruba did not occur in the NW area until lately. It is played only in Mazari Sharif. The instrument is manufactured on customers' order even by instrument makers in Mazari Sharif, but for the time being dilrubas brought from Kabul are preferred, because they have a good tradition. The Kabul instruments²⁷⁾ have a row of sympathetic strings fixed to the head.

Register of instruments:

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Mukavina	181	Zarbagali	175

Notes

- 1) See photo 12.
- 2) See photo 8.
- 3) See appendix VI, fig. 2.
- 4) See appendix V, fig. 4. The instrument resembles the tala and yalra, described in the book by C. R. Day: *The Music and Musical Instruments of Southern India*, London 1891, pages 143—144. It has never any ornaments, however. Besides the proof of occurrence of this instrument in present Turkey, there is an interesting proof in ancient Greece that this instrument had been used already in ancient Egypt (Curt Sachs: *Die Musikinstrumente des alten Ägyptens*, Berlin 1921, p. 21). The instrument appears in different sizes.
In 1963 I witnessed a musical performance in a tea shop in Shibarghan, lasting several hours, with the following instruments: zarbagali, two pairs of talas and dambura. The damburist did not know how to play, he only pretended to play with movements and mimicry. So there was only a monotonous rhythm which fully satisfied the attentive audience for several hours.
See app. II for example of tala and zarbagali rhythm.
- 5) See app. V, fig. 1. The instrument is known in Czechoslovakia under the name "drumle", in Roumania it is called "drimba". The drimba has not got the handle "a" and the head of the fork "b" is widened. I have not observed the change in the height for tone in the NW area of Afghanistan as it is described by Tiberiu Alexandru in his book *Instrumentele muzicale ale popolurui Romîn*, Bucuresti 1959 on page 28 — 29.
- 6) See app. V, fig. 2 — drawing and example of notes in app. II (20 — 27).
- 7) See photo 13. For rhythm of the doira see app. II ex. 1 — 3.
- 8) See photo 1. Women in wedding processions in towns and villages walk, deeply veiled, among the hailing and dancing procession and play simple rhythms on the doira, accompanied sometimes also by a dol or a surnay. If it is a longer way, the wedding guests ride on a two-wheeled gadin pulled by a horse, whose rattles usually drown the sound of the doira.

Most impressive are the sounds of the doira in wedding processions on caravan paths between oases in the desert. The wedding guests ride on donkeys and camels sometimes for several days. Men ride donkeys and women with children are transported in special saddle-like wooden constructions on the backs of the camels.

- 9) See photo 2 and app. VI, fig. 1 and 3.
- 10) See app. VI, fig. 3. The zarbagali is spread also on the Balkan with the Moslim Serbs — under the name “dalbuka” (compare Kazimierz Moszynski: *Kultura ludowa Slowian*, Krakov 1939, p. 1304, fig. 372). Whereas the body of the instrument in the zarbagali is narrowed in the place where the skin is stretched, it is widened in the dalbuka, so that the skin might be well stretched and carefully fixed. The dry Afghan climate, of course, contrary to the humid conditions on the Balkan, helps itself to straighten the skin of the drum.
- 11) See photo 7 — 10.
- 12) See photo 3, 7, 11, 14. Note examples in app. III and IV.
- 13) See photo 11.
- 14) See photo 5.
- 15) See photo 15.
- 16) See photo 16.
- 17) See app. 2, ex. 13 — 19.
Note: some pairs of tabla and baya are placed on circular stabilizing pedestals in India, but never in the NW area.
- 18) See photo 18 and app. V, fig. 6.
- 19) See app. V, fig. 7.
- 20) See app. VII, fig. 5.
- 21) See app. VII, fig. 1.
- 22) See app. V, fig. VIII and photo 3 and 7.
- 23) See photo 2 and app. VII — VIII.
- 24) See app. VII, fig. 2 — 3, app. VIII.
- 25) See photo 2, 19, 20, 21.
- 26) See photo 19 and 21, the instrument in center on photo 20.
- 27) See photo 20, the instrument on the right.
- 28) App. V, fig. 3.

- 29) App. X, app. XI, fig. 1.
- 30) App. XI, fig. 1.
- 31) Photo 22, app. IX.
- 32) Photo 4, 23, app. XI, fig. 2 and 3.
- 33) See photo 6 and app. XII, fig. 4.
- 34) See photo 25 and app. XII, fig. 2.
- 35) Photo 26 and app. XII, fig. 3.
- 36) App. XII, fig. 5 and 7.
- 37) Photo 26.

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I



I. Topographic draft of the NW area of Afghanistan

Topographic draft of the NW area of Afghanistan.

The borders of the USSR are marked by a strong interrupted line, in the north they fuse with the marking of the Amudarya stream.

The borders of the vilayets are dotted lines.

Towns are marked with a black dot.

The network is designated by a thin full line.

II

II. Survey of rhythms of various instruments

- 1/ Doira drum at a wedding in Andkhui (December 1962).
- 2/ and 3/ Doira at a private dance (Andkhui 1963).
- 4/ Rhythm of the dol during the night of Ramadan (Andkhui 1963).
- 5/ The rhythm of percussion instruments of a fire brigade brass band, during celebration of the end of Ramadan, above — triangle, center — small drum, below — large drum (Mazari Sharif 1963). 6/ Small and large drums of a musical group of a circus from Herat (also on photo 7). 7/ — 9/ The Zarbagali rhythm accompanying the group of musicians in a tea-shop (Andkhui, March 1963).
- 10/ — 12/ Zarbagali and tala (2nd line) in a tea-shop in Shibarghan (May 1963).
- 13/ Tabla and baya accompanying instrumental groups during celebrations of the Liberation Anniversary in Mazari Sharif (Aug. 1963).

III

III. Dance rhythms of the dol with two sticks

1/ Children's round dance. 2/ and 3/ Children's march. 4/ Girls' dance with vases. 5/ — 7/ Children's "atan". 8/ — 9/ Men's hair dance.

14/ Rhythm "dodra" in a private home in Mazari Sharif (Aug. 1964).

15/ Rhythm "tintol". 16/ Rhythm "bairami". 17/ Rhythm "pori".

18/ Rhythm "bayok".

19/ Rhythm "oso" (15/ — 19/ recorded also in private homes in Mazari-Sharif, Aug. 1964) — tabla and baya.

20/ Rhythm of plates tala and sistra on the hands of a damburist (Mazari Sharif 1963).

22/ — 27/ Sistrum on the hand of a damburist, accompanying a singer (Andkhui, April 1963).

IV

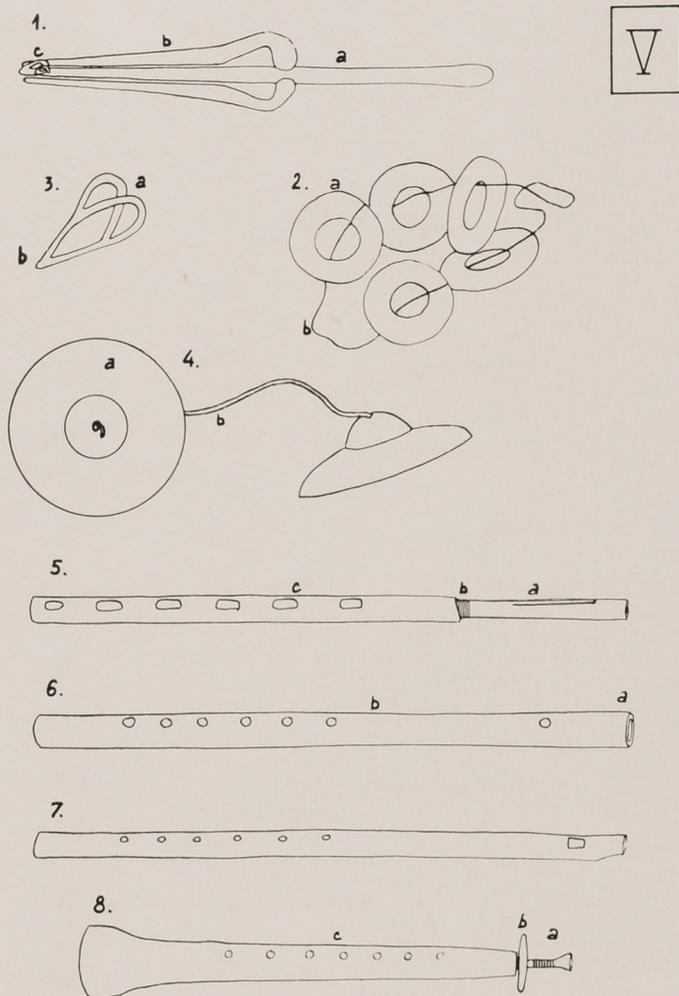
1.

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2.

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IV. Dance rhythms of a dol with two sticks
 1/ - 2/ Men's hair dance.
 (Rhythms mentioned in app. III. and IV. were recorded during celebrations
 of the Liberation Anniversary in Mazari Sharif, Aug. 1963).



V. Schematic drawings of the instruments — chang, tala, sistrum, tula, surnay — and plectra

Schema of musical instruments and sistra.

1/ Chang ("a" — elastic steel band ending in projection "c", "b" — two arms to be taken hold off by the player's teeth).

2/ Sistrum ("a" — hollow tin rings filled with little stones and attached to string "b").

3/ Plectrum ("a" — opening for fixing on forefinger, "b" — plucked picks).

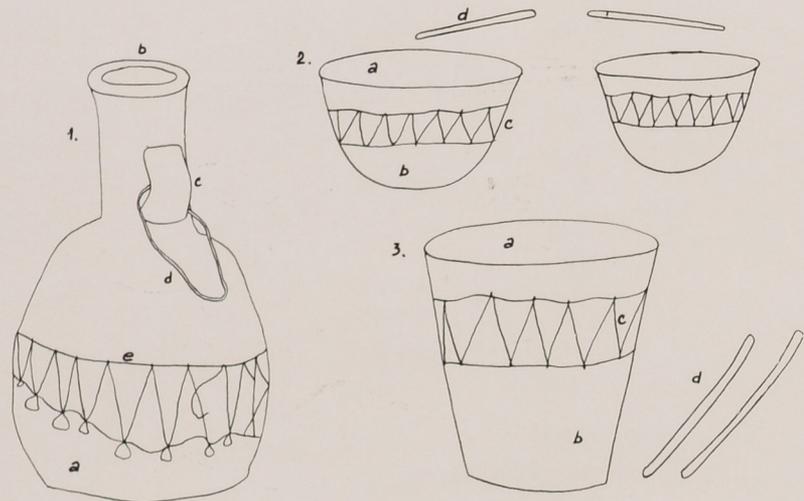
4/ Tala ("a" — brass plate with a connecting strip "b").

5/ Reed pipe ("a" — insertable stalk with carved strip, sealed by string "b". The reed tube is provided by holes).

6/ Cross flute (opening "a" sometimes covered with raw cotton. The corpus of the instrument "b" is provided with 6 finger holes). 7/ Beak flute.

8/ Surnay ("a" — double reed plate with circular support for the lips, inserted into corpus "c" with seven finger holes on top and one for the thumb at the bottom).

VI



VI. Zarbagali and nokora

1/ Zarbagali from Andkhui ("a" — membrane stretched over the bottom of the vessel, fastened by a string "e", "b" — neck of vessel, "c" — handle with string "d").

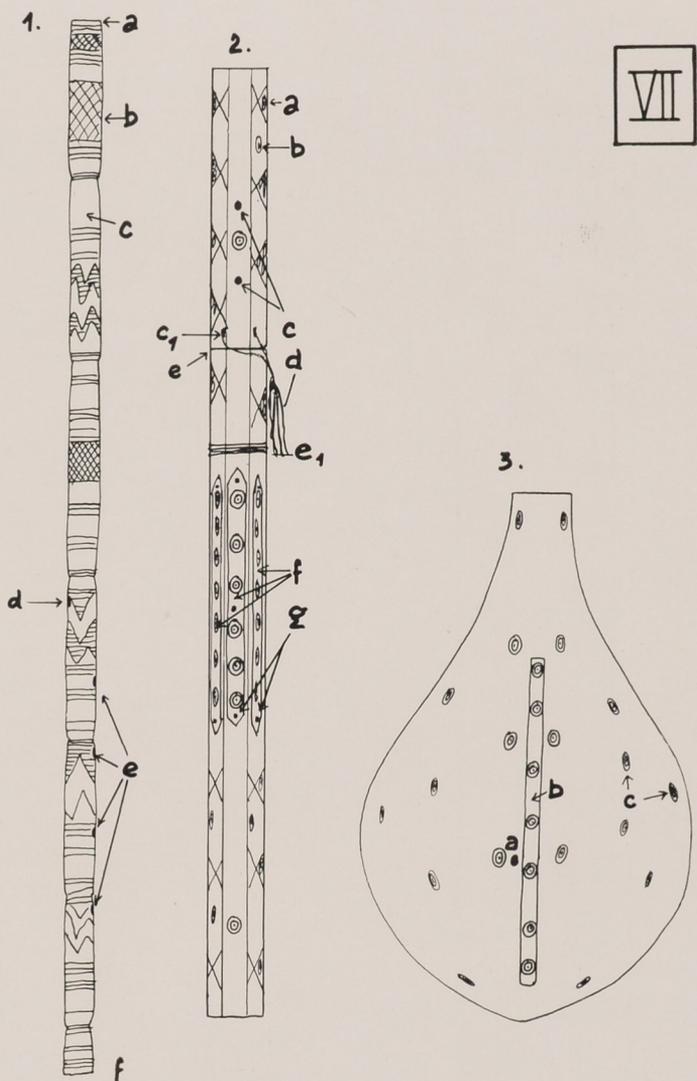
2/ Nokora from Mazari Sharif ("a" — skin on steel kettle "b", fastened by string, or leather strap "c", "d" — wooden sticks).

3/ Zarbagali from Akchah ("a" — skin on earthen cylindrical vessel "b", fixed by string "c", "d" — wooden sticks).

VII. Nay and dambura

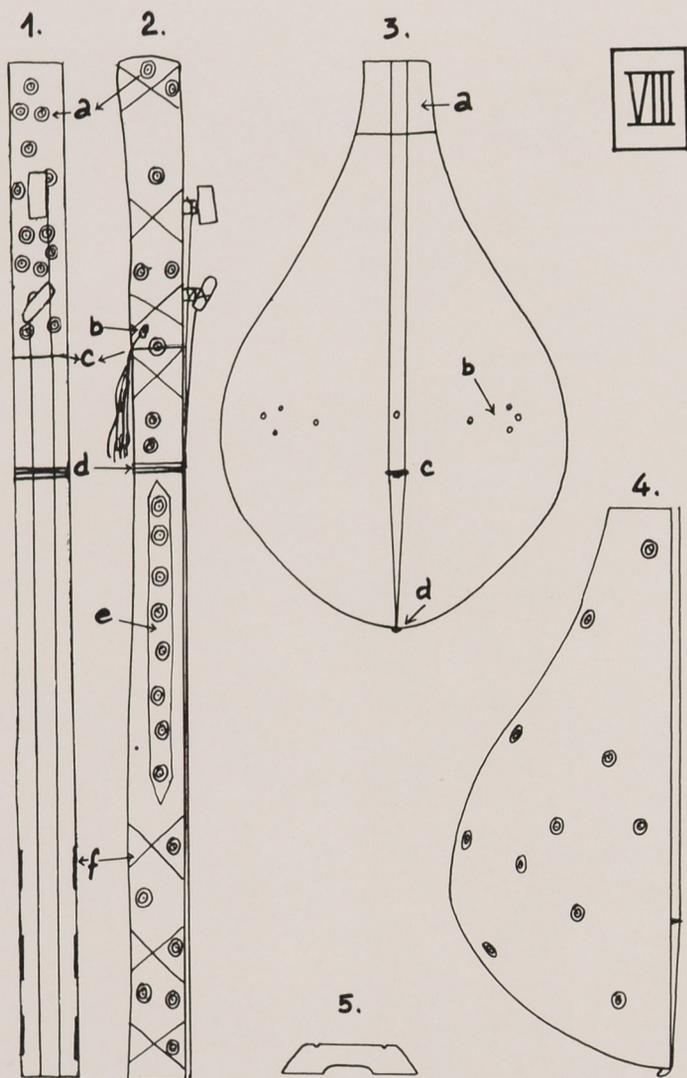
1/ Nay from Maimana ("a" — blowing hole, "b" — decorations carved with a knife and painted, "c" — body of instrument from a single piece of wood, "d" — hole for thumb, "e" — four finger holes, "f" — opening similar to "a").

2/ Neck of dambura from Haibak, back view ("a" — triangle-shaped bone plates with carved concentric circles, "b" — bone rings with carvings painted



black, fixed to the wall of neck, "c" — narrowed ends of holes for stringing pegs, "c¹" — opening for fringe, "d" — decorative fringe, "e" — wire for firmly tightening the strings to the neck, "e¹" — string wound round the neck with the function of a fret, "f" — horn frets with carved circles, "g" — nails fixing plates to wall of neck).

3/ Back side of resonator of a dambura ("a" — opening for cleaning of instrument, "b" — ornamental plate, "c" — ornamental bone rings).



VII

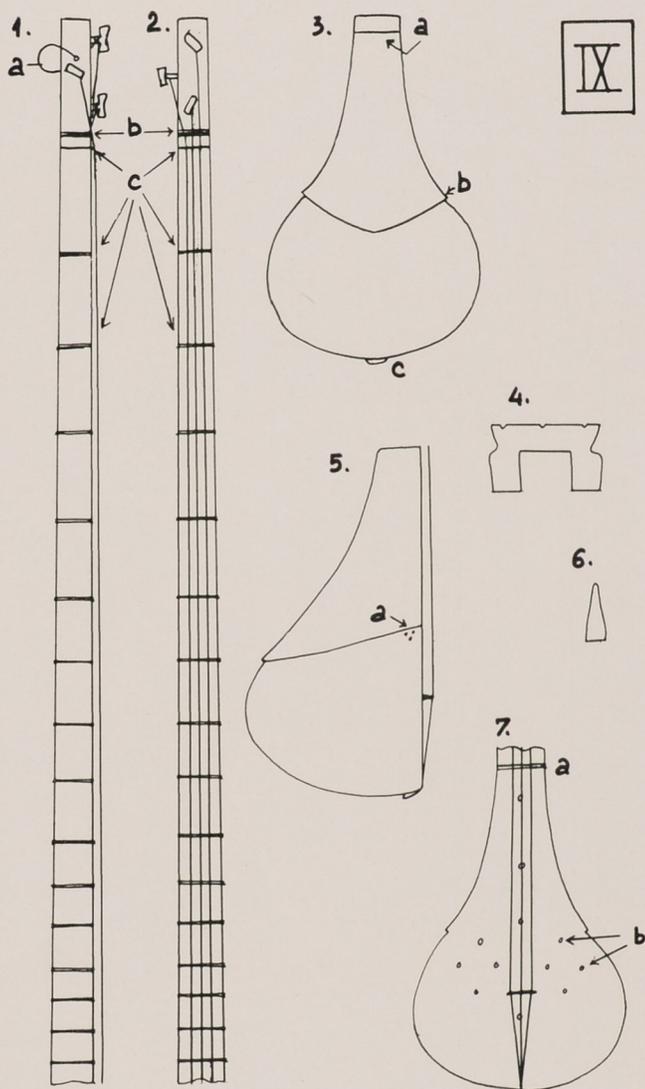
VIII. Front and lateral view on dambura

1/ and 2/ Neck of instrument ("a, e, f" — ornaments, "b" — hole for fringe, pressing wire for strings — "c", fret — "d").

3/ Upper desk of dambura ("a" — superposed resonance desk, "b" — resonance openings, "c" — nut, "d" — pin).

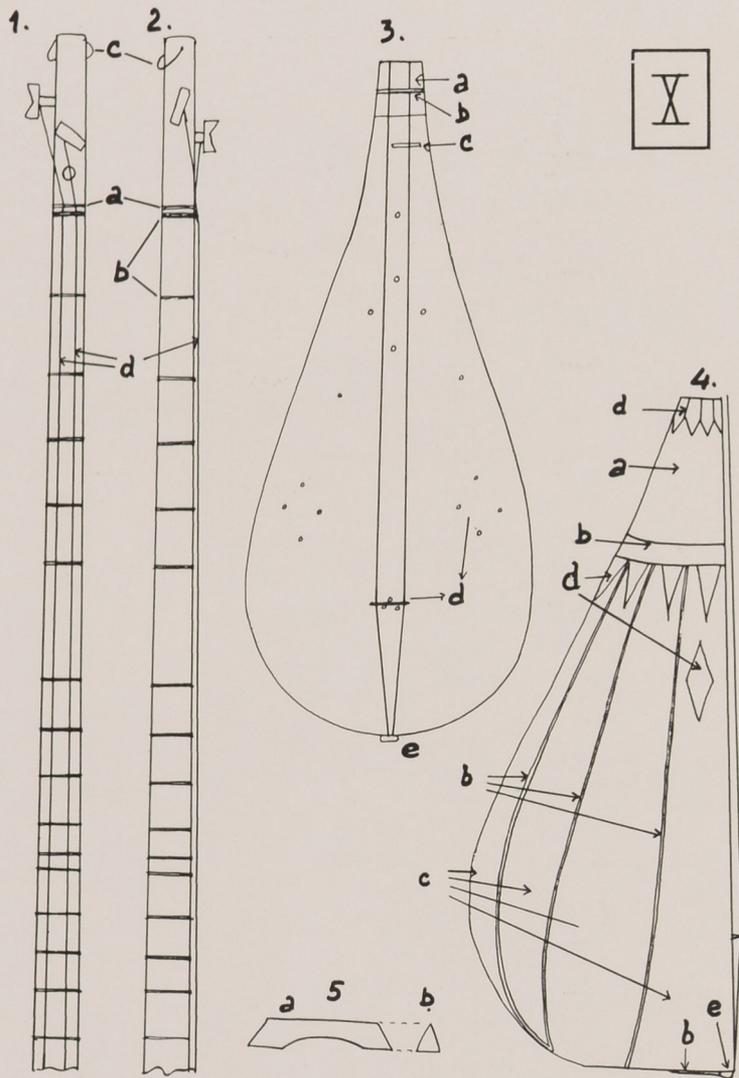
4/ Resonator of dambura from lateral view.

5/ Nut of dambura.



IX. Details of plucked instrument setor

- 1/ and 2/ Neck of instrument ["a" — loop for hanging up, "b" — pressing string, or wire for tightening of strings to neck, "c" — fret from gut string].
 3/ Back view on resonance case of setor from Kuna Qal'a ["a" — fret from gut string, "b" — ornamental projection on lower part of case, made from one piece of wood, "c" — pin].
 4/ Nut of setor.
 5/ Lateral view on resonator ["a" — resonance holes].
 6/ Lateral view on nut of setor.
 7/ Front view on resonator of setor ["a" — fret, "b" — resonance holes].

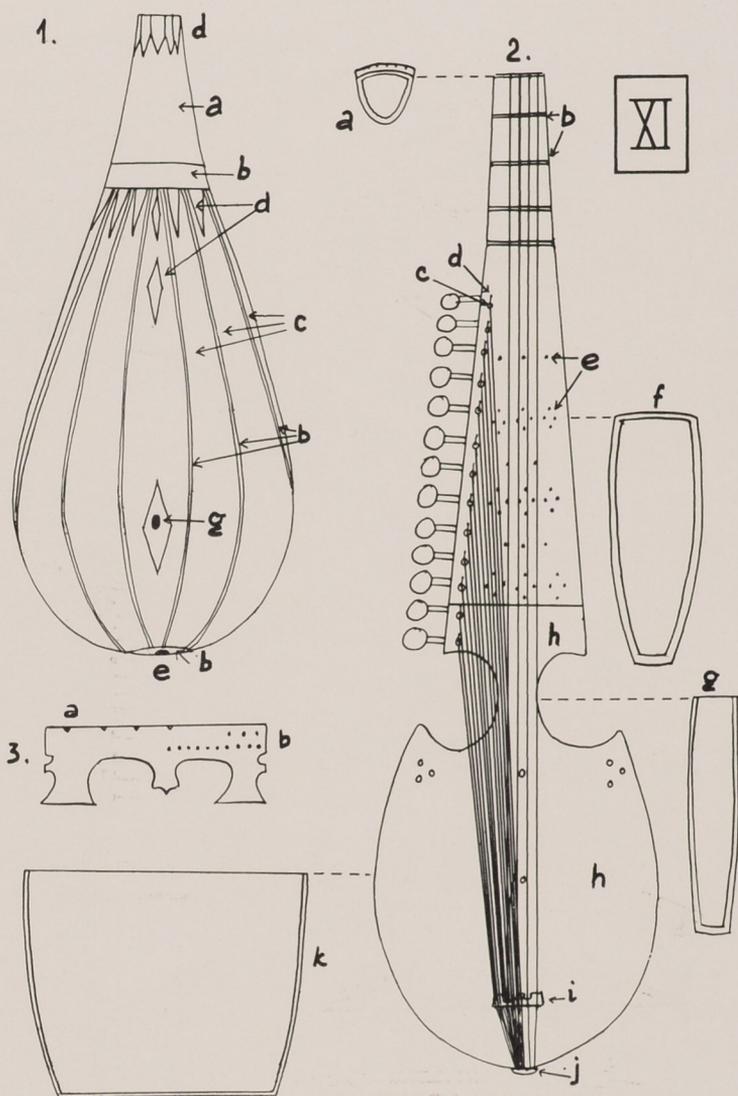


X. Details of dutor.

Details of dutor from Andkhui.

1/ and 2/ Front and lateral views on neck of dutor ["a" — silon loops, stretching the strings firmly to the neck, "b" — frets from silon fibre, "c" — loop for hanging up the instrument, "d" — strings of dutor from textile fibre].
 3/ Front view on resonance case of dutor ["a" — covering of upper part of neck, "b" — fret of silon fibre, "c" — fret from a wooden plate, glued to resonance desk, "d" — resonance holes, "e" — pin].

4/ Lateral view on resonator of dutor ["a" and "c" — independent parts of lower side of case, "b" — reinforcing wooden plates, "d" — ornamental plates from wood, "e" — pin].

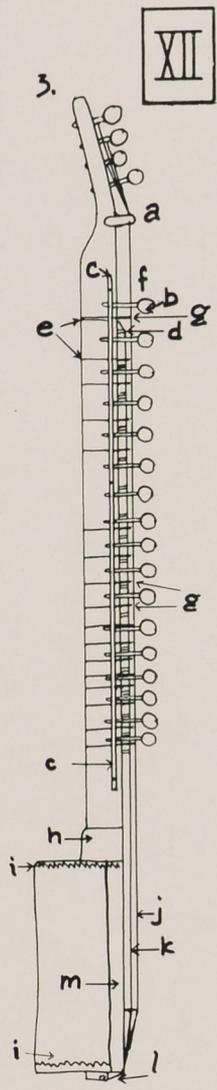
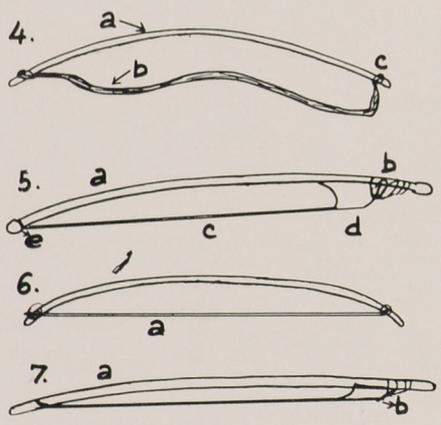
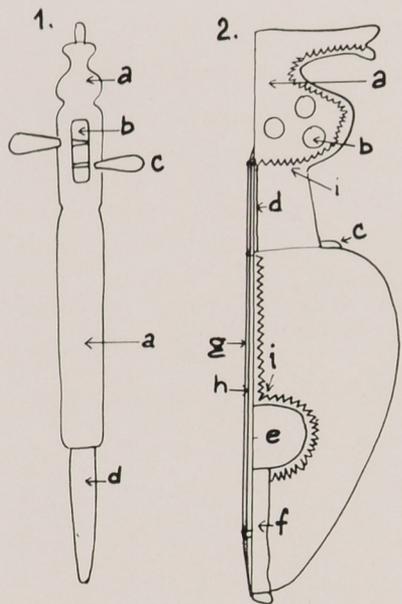


XI. Back view on dutor and details of rebab

1/ Back view on dutor (designations the same as for lateral view on resonator of dutor, "g" — cleaning hole).

2/ Resonator of rebab ("a" — section in place of glued neck with bone fret for strings, fixed above, "b" — fret from gut strings, "c" — bone projection, lifting string above resonance desk of neck, "d" — opening where string enters resonator to be attached to tuning peg, "e" — resonance holes, "f" — section of resonator in marked place, "g" — section of resonator in place of maximum narrowing, "h" — membrane with circular resonance holes, "i" — bone bridge, "j" — bone pin, "k" — section of resonator in place of maximum widening).

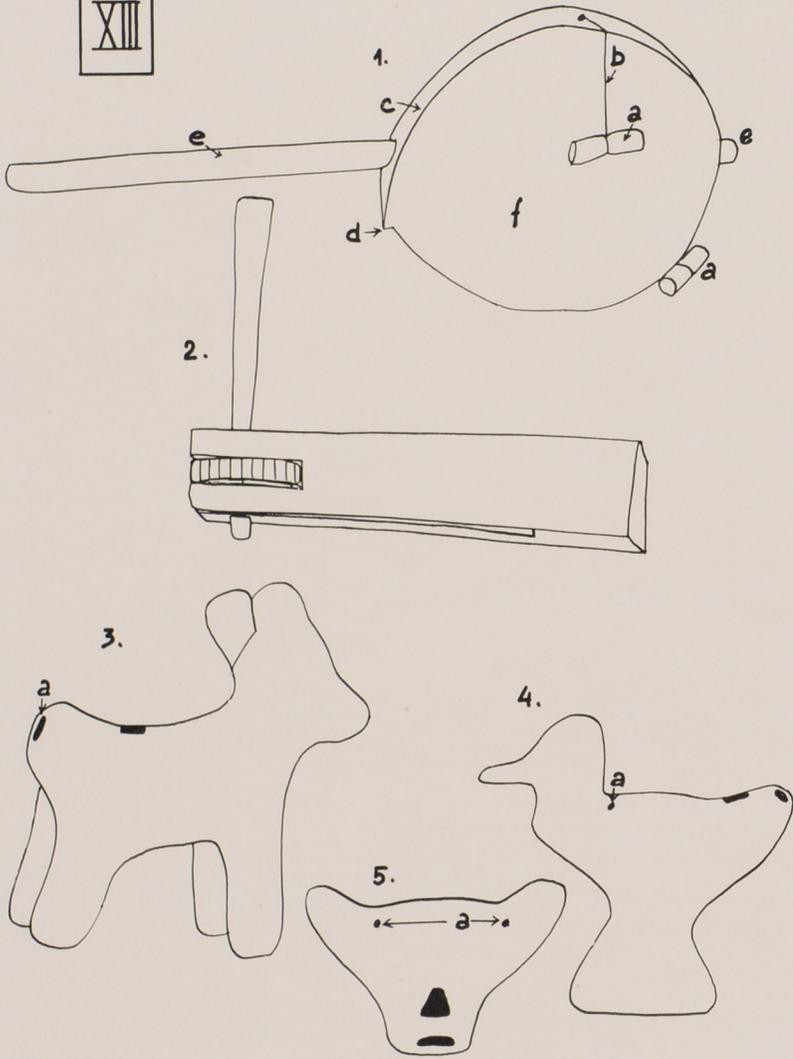
3/ Nut of rebab (grooves for main strings — "a" and with small holes "b" for resonance strings).



XII. Skeleton of the ghijak, lateral view of the saranda and the dilruba, various shapes of bows

- 1/ Framework of ghijak from Tashkurghan ("a" — many-coloured part, carefully elaborated, "b" — groove for attaching strings, "c" — stringing pegs, "d" — unpainted part, which can be inserted in any resonator).
- 2/ Lateral view on saranda from Mazari Sharif ("a" — head, "b" — stringing pegs, "c" — colophony, "d" — resonance desk on hollow neck, "e" — place cut out for movement of bow, "f" — animal membrane, "g" — main strings, "h" — sympathetic strings, "i" — decorative carvings).
- 3/ Lateral view of dilruba from Mazari Sharif ("a" — wooden fret mounted, "b" — stringing pegs of sympathetic strings, "c" — lath for stringing pegs, screwed to wall of hollow neck, "d" — bone projections to elevate sympathetic strings above the level of resonance desk of neck, "e" — gut fibres, fixing metal arches, "g", "h" — connecting part between neck and proper resonator, "i" — ornamental carvings, "j" — main strings, "k" — sympathetic strings, "l" — woodenblock to attach strings on, "m" — animal membrane).
- 4/ Bow for saranda from Mazari Sharif ("a" — rod from tree branch, "b" — free horse-hair, stretched with finger while playing, "c" — attaching of horse-hair to rod by string).
- 5/ Bow for dilruba from Mazari Sharif ("a" — rough-worked branch, "b" — textile winding, "c" — evenly spread horsehair, "d" — draw fret).
- 6/ Bow of ghijak and saranda ("a" — unevenly spread horsehair).
- 7/ Bow of dilruba ("a" — rough-worked branch, "b" — draw fret fastened by string and inserted into grooves in rod).

XIII



XIII. Children's toys — drum, rattle and pipes

1/ Drum ("a" — wooden chock, "b" — string, "c" — wooden frame, to which membrane is fixed, "f", "d" — connection of both ends of bent wooden plate, forming frame, "e" — piece of wood inserted into frame, forming holder of drum).

2/ Rattle.

3/ Pipe in earthen toy ("a" — blowing hole).

4/ and 5/ Pipe in earthen toy ("a" — ornamental holes).

Children's toys pictured here come from Ankdhui.

1/ Part of a wedding procession in the desert near Kelif, not far from the Amudarya river (April 1964)



2/ Musical group in a tea shop. Instruments from left to right — dambura, tambour, zarbagali (Andkhui, May 1963)



3/ Musicians in a tea shop: dol with two sticks, surnay. On the right a boy dressed for a solo dance (Andkhui, May 1963)





4/ Group of musicians at the celebration of the Liberation Anniversary. From left to right: a saranda player, an Indian harmonium and a singer accompanying himself on a rebab (Mazari Sharif, Aug. 1963)



5/ The same group as in photo No. 4. On the right a chamber dol player (Mazari Sharif, Aug. 1963)



6/ The workers of Toffa Hassate Petrol playing a bow-ghijak and an American ocarina after work in their tent (Andkhui, June 1963)

7/ A circus group on a tourné in Akchah. From left to right are the instruments surnay, dol with two sticks, small drum and dol with one stick (Akchah, December 1963)

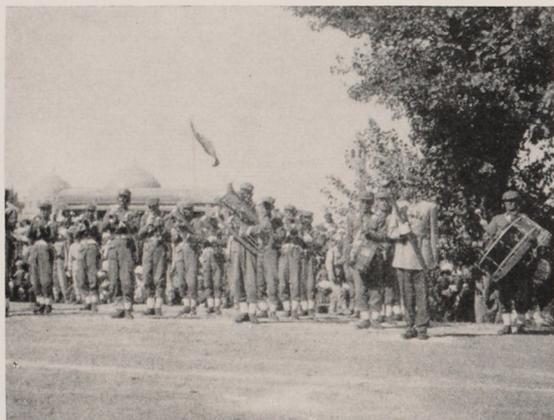


8/ Fire brigade brass band in Mazari Sharif after the end of the religious festivities of the Ramadan, while playing in front of the residence of one of the town's representatives. Cast: three cornets, one trumpet, two bagpipes, one triangle, small drum and large drum (Mazari Sharif 1963)



9/ Fire brigade brass band, the same as on photo No 8, at the same festive occasion, but with new instruments, bought abroad (Mazari Sharif 1964)





10/ Military band in Mazari Sharif during a military parade near the mosque (Mazari Sharif, Aug. 1963)



11/ Dol with two sticks accompanying "hair" dance, during celebrations of the Liberation Anniversary (Mazari Sharif, Aug. 1963)



12/ "Santur" dulcimer from the Museum in Mazari Sharif (Aug. 1964)

13/ A vendour of doira drum at the market in Andkhui (March 1963)



14/ Dol with two sticks from Kabul (December 1962)





15/ A "dolak" drum player during a children's dance in the school yard in Andkhui (March 1963)

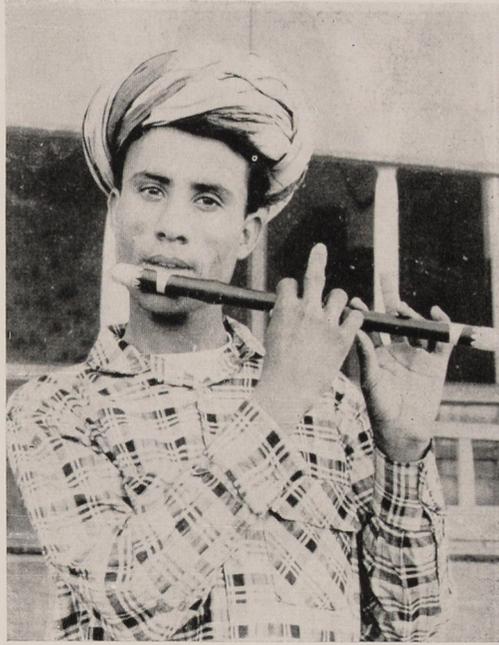


16/ Drums tabla and baya (Mazari Sharif, August 1964)



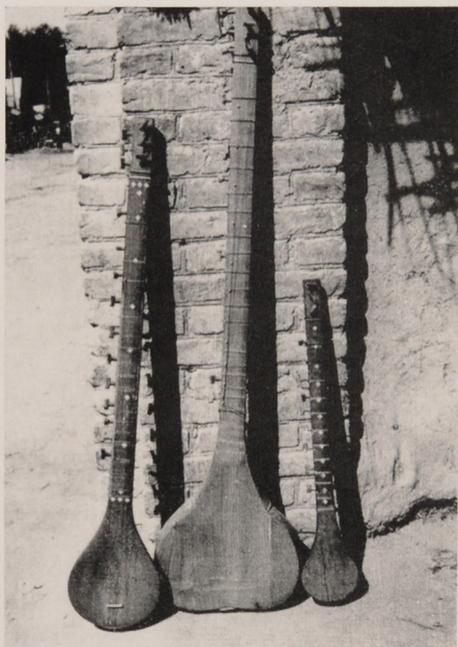
17/ Indian harmonium (Kabul, December 1962)

18/ Flutist from Andkhui (February 1963)

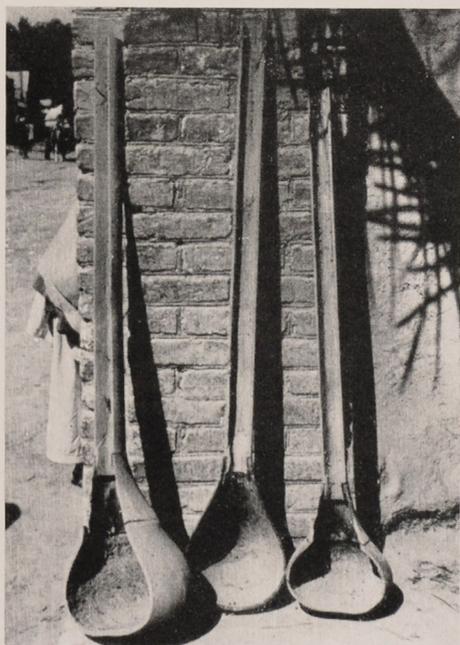


19/ Tambourist from Mazari Sharif (Aug. 1964)





20/ Tambour in three sizes
(Mazari Sharif, June 1964)



21/ Semi-finished tambours in
the instrument maker's work-
shop in Mazari Sharif (June
1964)

22/ Setor from Andkhui (June 1963)



23/ Rebab from Kabul (December 1962)

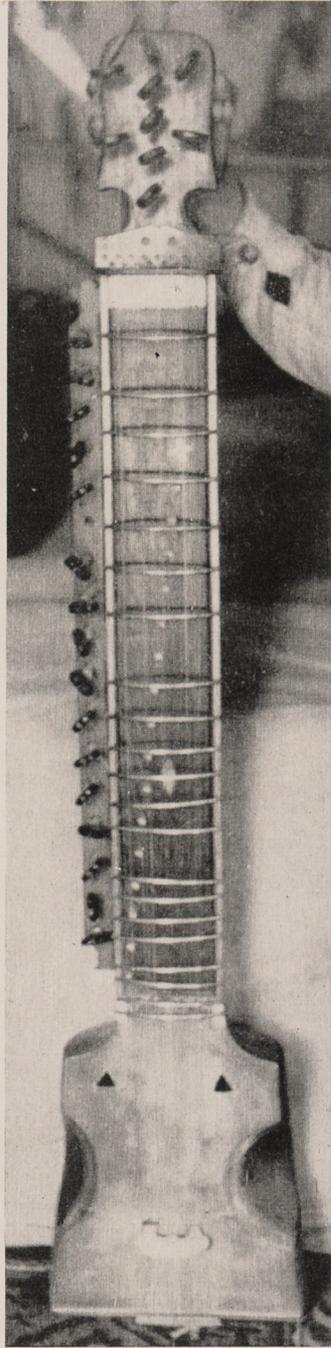




24/ Ghijak from Kabul (November 1963)



25/ Saranda from Kabul (November 1963)



26/ Dilruba from Kabul (November 1963)



27/ Manufacturer of musical instruments in his workshop (Mazari Sharif 1964)