

Music of Central Asia **VOL.5**

BADAKHSHAN ENSEMBLE

SONG *and* **DANCE**

from the **PAMIR MOUNTAINS**



Smithsonian Folkways

MUSIC OF CENTRAL ASIA is a co-production of the Aga Khan Music Initiative in Central Asia, a program of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, and the Smithsonian Institution Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. The aim of the series, released worldwide by Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, is to present leading exponents of Central Asia's rich and diverse musical heritage to listeners outside the region. As a new generation of talented performers reinterprets this heritage — much of it ruptured or lost during the Soviet era — older traditions are reanimated and transformed. *Music of Central Asia* documents the work of musicians who represent both a mastery of their own tradition and a contemporary spirit of innovation expressed through new approaches to performance style, repertory, and technique. Each release includes a DVD with a documentary film on the featured performers as well as a map, musical instrument glossary, and short introduction to *Music of Central Asia* and the Aga Khan Music Initiative. These intimate, often poignant, musical portraits bring to life a group of remarkable artists whose creative achievements proclaim Central Asia's prominence on any musical map of the world. ~~~ THE AGA KHAN MUSIC INITIATIVE IN CENTRAL ASIA was created in 2000 by His Highness the Aga Khan to contribute to the preservation, documentation, and further development of Central Asia's musical heritage. The Music Initiative pursues its long-term goals both within its region of activity and worldwide. In Central Asia these goals include revitalizing important musical repertoires by helping tradition-bearers pass on their knowledge and craft; building sustainable cultural institutions that can eventually be maintained by local organizations and communities; and supporting artists who are developing new approaches to the performance of Central Asian music. Worldwide, the Music Initiative strives to increase knowledge about Central Asia's music and culture, particularly among students, and to nurture collaborations among musicians from different parts of Central Eurasia and beyond. For more information, see: <http://www.akdn.org/Music>

“My goal is to ensure that future generations of talented musicians will know this music, and perform it
WITH ALL THEIR SOUL AND HEART.”

—Soheba Davlatshoeva



CD TRACKS

1. FALAK-I BADAQSHANI 4:18
2. AY PARI 8:18
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DVD

*MUSIC OF CENTRAL ASIA AND THE
AGA KHAN MUSIC INITIATIVE*

*THE BADAQSHAN ENSEMBLE:
SONG AND DANCE FROM THE
PAMIR MOUNTAINS*

*INTERACTIVE INSTRUMENT
GLOSSARY*

MAP OF CENTRAL ASIA

*Music of Central Asia Vol. 5
The Badakhshan Ensemble: Song and Dance
from the Pamir Mountains*

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MUSICIANS

AQNAZAR ALOVATOV, vocal

SOHEBA DAVLATSHOEVA, vocal
and dance

JONBOZ DUSHANBIEV, *ghijak*

SHODI MABATQULOV, *daf*

OLUCHA MUALIBSHOEVA, vocal

MUKHTOR MUBORAKQADOMOV,
setâr

GHULOMSHO SAFAROV, Pamiri
rubab, Pamiri *tanbur*, vocal

CENTRAL ASIAN MUSIC

An Overview

Central Asia is commonly understood to encompass the territory of six nations: Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan (see map). Yet patterns of settlement and cultural links that predate the establishment of current political boundaries argue for a broader definition of the region. For example, the Uyghurs, a Muslim, Turkic-speaking people whose traditional territory is in western China, have old cultural affinities with other Central Asian groups. The Turkmen, who comprise the titular ethnic group of Turkmenistan, are strongly

represented in the Iranian region of Khorasan that flanks Turkmenistan to the southwest. Shia Isma'ili Muslims in mountainous Badakhshan, the eastern region of Tajikistan, share cultural and religious traditions with Isma'ilis living in the nearby Northern Territories of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and western China, as well as in Khorasan and other parts of Iran.

Beyond Central Asia itself, diaspora communities created by recent emigration have spread cultural influences from the region far beyond its geographical borders. Some of Afghanistan's finest musicians were among the hundreds of thousands of



Afghans who fled to Pakistan and later emigrated to the West following the Soviet invasion of their country in 1979 and the rise of the Taliban in the 1990s. Outstanding musicians were also among the tens of thousands of Central Asian (“Bukharan”) Jews who left Uzbekistan and Tajikistan to resettle in New York City and Tel Aviv when the USSR opened its borders to Jewish emigration in the mid-1970s. Central Asian Jews long lived as a Persian-speaking minority population among their Muslim neighbors. Indeed, an overwhelming majority of Central Asia’s Persian-speaking and Turkic-speaking population identifies itself with Islam, as an active religious practice, a cultural legacy, a worldview that informs everyday social life, or all of these. Excluded from this group are

Russian-speaking Slavs and other non-Muslim immigrants who began to populate Central Asia after the tsarist conquests in the latter half of the 19th century and during the Soviet era accounted for half or more of the population of the region’s major cities.

Central Asia’s history has been shaped by its strategic position at the intersection of two great axes of civilization. One axis points southwest, toward the sophisticated urban culture of Iran. The other axis points northeast, to what has been called Turan—the nomadic world of the Inner Asian steppe, where pastoralists belonging to myriad Turkic and Mongolian clans created a succession of powerful steppe empires. Iran vs. Turan, sedentary vs. nomadic,

urbanite vs. steppe-dweller—in broad strokes, these contrasting pairs represent the distinctions of worldview and way of life that echo strongly in Central Asia’s musical traditions despite centuries and millennia of intermingling among its diverse social groups.

In nomadic cultures, the consummate entertainer is the bard, and music is characterized by a strong narrative dimension. Epic tales as long as thirty times the length of Homer’s *Iliad*, and instrumental pieces whose wordless melodies and rhythms relate beloved stories through a kind of musical onomatopoeia all reflect a nomadic sensibility. Traditional nomadic spirituality ascribes spiritual power to a range of natural phenomena and living creatures, and

nomadic music and sound-making often serve as a means of representing and accessing the power of spirits.

The music of sedentary-dwellers, by contrast, reflects the deep impact of Islam as a spiritual and cultural force. The central artifact of musical performance is the elaboration and embellishment of words and texts by a beautiful voice. Singers are typically accompanied by small ensembles of mixed instruments that almost always include percussion. The beauty of the voice may also be represented symbolically by a solo instrument such as a plucked lute, violin, or flute, which reproduces the filigree embellishments and ornamentation characteristic of a great singer.

In the years following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, the

Soviet Union tried to bring about fundamental transformations in the organization, transmission, and expression of indigenous culture among the inhabitants of its vast empire. Since the beginning of the post-Soviet period, musicians throughout Central Asia have sought to recover and reanimate older musical traditions in response to growing interest in their cultural heritage, among both local inhabitants and outsiders. These traditions

are firmly rooted in local musical practices, but none of them is “pure.” Central Asia’s long history of contact and exchange with other cultures continues to evolve in our own time. And as the musicians whose performances come alive on *Music of Central Asia* leave their own creative imprint on the region’s musical legacy, there can be no doubt that authentic traditional music remains forever contemporary.

INTRODUCTION

The Badakhshan Ensemble: Song and Dance from the Pamir Mountains

The Badakhshan Ensemble takes its name from the mountainous region — poetically known in Persian as Bam-i Dunya, the “Roof of the World”—that comprises the sparsely populated eastern half of Tajikistan and northeast Afghanistan. There, nestled in a series of riverine valleys that descend from the Pamir Mountains to the Panj River, the boundary line between Tajikistan and Afghanistan, are scores of small settlements whose inhabitants have cultivated a vibrant tradition of devotional song, dance, and contemplative instrumental music.

Badakhshani music and dance represent a distinct cultural practice within Central Asia that has been shaped by the combined forces of geography, history, language, and religion. In Tajik Badakhshan, where the majestic Pamirs reach heights only slightly lower than those of the Himalayas, rugged terrain has impeded contact between Pamiri peoples and inhabitants of other regions of Central Asia. One consequence of cultural isolation has been the preservation of so-called Pamiri languages, which belong to the Eastern Iranian family of



RIVERS IN THE PAMIR MOUNTAINS

languages but are distinct from Persian and are not used in a literary form. Orally composed folksong texts in Pamiri languages such as Shughni and Rushani are common in Badakhshan, but the literary texts typically set to music in spiritual songs are drawn from

classical Persian or modern Tajik, an eastern dialect of Persian. Oral and literary poetry have merged to a certain extent, and poems by classical poets such as Rumi, Hafiz, and Hilali are often transmitted orally in forms that diverge from written sources, if, indeed, written sources exist. Many poems attributed to the great poets, in particular Rumi, are almost certainly apocrypha.

The Badakhshan Ensemble was the brainchild of Soheba Davlatshoeva (b. 1970), a vivacious singer and dancer who grew up in a small village on the Ghund River, fifty miles from Khorog, Badakhshan's capital and, with a population of around 50,000, its largest town. "We created the ensemble ourselves," Soheba recounted proudly. "It's not a state-sponsored group. We were students in the Institute of Arts

in Dushanbe [Tajikistan's capital] at the end of the 1980s. We finished one semester there, and then in the winter of 1990, the Institute closed because of the conflict that grew into Tajikistan's Civil War. We had to leave Dushanbe and return to Badakhshan. Half the city of Dushanbe left." Eventually, Soheba and other ensemble members regrouped under the umbrella of the regional drama theater in Khorog, where they played music for theatrical productions and gave concerts. Their music-making extended beyond the theater, and at many events they were joined by Jonboz Dushanbiev, a charismatic *ghijak* (spike fiddle) player a generation older than Soheba and her cohort, with a broad knowledge of Badakhshani music, poetry, and musical instrument-building.

The Badakhshan Ensemble's repertory encompasses a variety of musical styles and genres, and each corresponds to one of the distinct social roles that the Ensemble fills in its own community. The most typical of these roles is to provide music for wedding festivities. "We don't perform folklore at weddings," Soheba said matter-of-factly. "If we did, no one would hire us. What people want to listen and dance to is pop music." The pop music Soheba had in mind is a local variety that combines the unmistakable melodic intervals, piercing vocal timbres, and loping rhythms of Badakhshani songs with the accompaniment of synthesizer, bass guitar, and electrified Pamiri instruments (an example appears on the accompanying DVD). Such hybrid pop music exists in myriad local forms

throughout the former USSR and is rooted in older styles of tradition-based popular song that developed during the Soviet era. Several of these traditional favorites, “Ay Pari” (Oh Fairy, track 2) and “Lolazorume” (Tulip Garden, track 4), are performed on this CD.

Another of the Badakhshan Ensemble’s community roles is to perform devotional songs at a variety of ritualized events. These include all-night gatherings following the death of a community member, weekly Thursday evening and Friday prayer meetings, and celebrations linked to Nawruz (traditional New Year) and Ramadan. Many if not most Badakhshanis are Shia Ismaili Muslims, and the Ismaili spiritual and devotional tradition has had a strong and abiding influence on Pamiri expressive culture. Ismaili

communities have existed in the Pamir Mountains for close to a millennium. Badakhshani Ismailis attribute the founding of these communities to Nasir Khusraw (b. 1004), a Persian theologian, philosopher, traveler, and poet who brought Ismaili teachings to Central Asia from Fatimid Egypt in the middle of the eleventh century.

Ismaili religious thought emphasizes a balance between the exterior, literal meaning of sacred scriptures and religious commandments (*ẓāhir*) and their esoteric or inner meaning (*bātin*), which illuminates eternal spiritual truths (*haqā’iq*). Such a vision of Islam, common to other esoteric traditions, such as Sufism, finds expression in broader cultural forms that are often located in the vernacular and draw on local musical genres and



A TRADITIONAL PAMIRI HOME

styles. Among the Badakhshani Ismailis, spiritual concerts featuring sung poetry austere accompanied on stringed instruments and frame drum (*daf*) serve as one route toward the inner—toward the soul—and the illumination of

spiritual truths. This performance genre is called *maddoh* (also transliterated as *maddâh*, *madâh*, *madh*)—literally, “praise.” A *maddoh* typically offers praise to the “Family of the Prophet” (*Ahl al Bayt*), and in particular to Ali, the first Shia Imam, and to the current Imam, or hereditary spiritual leader, of the Ismailis, His Highness the Aga Khan. *Maddoh* provides a vessel for the spiritual power known as *baraka*, and *maddoh* singers, called *maddohkhon*, are highly esteemed in Badakhshan.

Among the younger generation of *maddohkhons* in and around Khoroq, the most sought after is Aqnazar Alovatov (b. 1970) (see track 6). Interested from an early age in both music and poetry, Aqnazar is frequently called upon to sing at memorial gatherings and at Thursday evening prayers. “It’s normal

to sing for two or three hours at these events,” Aqnazar explained. “There’s usually more than one *maddohkhon*—sometimes a lot of them show up, and they take turns singing. The skill of *maddoh* performance is in putting together texts that create a particular mood or feeling. I change the text from one performance to the next, and I try not to use texts that are used by other musicians.” Rich in mystical allegory and allusion, the metaphysical poems that singers sequence together in *maddoh* purify the soul of the deceased, offer succor to the bereaved, and provide ethical and spiritual guidance to the community.

Another musical genre that figures prominently in the repertory of the Badakhshan Ensemble is *falak*—sober, lament-like songs that many



MEMBERS OF THE BADAKHSHAN ENSEMBLE,
FROM LEFT: SHODI MABATQULOV, MUKHTOR
MUBORAKQADOMOV, AQNAZAR ALOVATOV

Badakhshanis believe to possess healing qualities, and whose texts typically address philosophical themes. One of the meanings that *falak* conveys is “fate,” and the poems set to music in *falak*

often speak of the vicissitudes of fate and the limitations of human agency. *Falak* is sung both by men and women, and may be performed a cappella, in free rhythm, as in the first track on the CD (“*Falak-i Badakhshani*”), or with instrumental accompaniment and in a regular meter, as in track 5 (“*Falak*”).

Finally, the Badakhshan Ensemble’s repertory includes a rich variety of instrumental music that, like Badakhshani vocal genres, has a strong regional identity. Archaic dance tunes such as “*Rapo*” (track 7) blend the nasal, metallic timbre of the *ghijak*—a spike fiddle whose resonating chamber Badakhshanis often make from a tin can—with the blunt, plucking sounds of the Pamiri *tanbur*, a gut-stringed variant of the more common metal-stringed instruments found in other

parts of Central Asia, and the resonant thump of a *daf*—a large frame drum. Badakhshani dance focuses on graceful movements of the arms and hands that are believed to symbolize the flight of birds—an atavistic reference to Badakhshan’s animistic, pre-Islamic past. “*Khâlatro Banda*” (track 8) features the *setâr*, a fretted, long-necked lute whose multiple sympathetic strings provide a gentle drone background to the plucked melody line, creating a contemplative sound reminiscent of the Indian *sitar*, of which the *setâr* is most likely a distant ancestor. Another common instrument in Badakhshan is the fretless Pamiri *rubab*, whose gut strings produce a less strident sound than other kinds of *rubab* strung with metal strings. The distinctive rhythms that underlie Badakhshani music are



SOHEBA DAVLATSHOEVA

expressed not only as accompaniment for stringed instruments but in ritualized drumming performed by groups of drummers, both male and female, during weddings, funerals, and other festivities.

Soheba Davlatshoeva is optimistic about the survival of Badakhshan's distinctive musical heritage. "People

often come to me and ask me to teach their daughters and sons to sing," she said. "I tell them that when I have time and a place to teach, I'll take them. I'm planning to build a house, and on the first floor, to have a small classroom. There are a lot of good older musicians just sitting at home, and they could also be attracted to teach. The kind of music we play and sing has been performed in the Pamir Mountains for a thousand years. My goal is to ensure that future generations of talented musicians will know this music, and perform it with all their soul and heart."

TRACK NOTES



FALAK-I BADAKHSHANI

TEXT: UNATTRIBUTED

MUSIC: TRADITIONAL

VOCAL SOLO: SOHEBA DAVLATSHOEVA

This powerful a cappella performance illustrates the drawn-out, forcefully delivered, intricately ornamented melodic style typical of the *falak* genre. The melody itself unfolds entirely within the interval of a whole tone (for example, *do-re*) and consists of three pitches that form two adjacent semitones (approximately *g-g#-a* in absolute pitch). "The text is a popular *rubai* [quatrain]," said Soheba. "I listened to a lot of our old singers and they always sang this at funerals, and I started to sing it myself. I learned it all by ear. You could sing the text at weddings if you used a different melody."

*The world is like a passageway with two gates,
Oh, every day in this passageway there comes a different group of people,
I thought, I should go see the sights of this world!
And I learned that the sights of the world are constantly changing.*

*I didn't see any kindness in this world, and my life passed,
As I was biting my finger regretting that, my life passed.*

*The world is like a garden, and I am like the morning breeze,
As I just blew through it one morning, my life passed.*

*In this ever-changing world, what will remain of us?
Just a good name will remain from you and me.
If I sow the seeds of eternity in the ground,
Even then, good will be good and bad will be bad.*





AY PARI (OH FAIRY)

TEXT: QADIRI
MUSIC: AUTHOR UNKNOWN

According to Soheba Davlatshoeva, “Ay Pari” was first performed in the 1950s by the Pamir Ethnographic Ensemble, a Dushanbe-based state-sponsored group that composed, arranged, and performed many songs that remain popular in Badakhshan today. “Everyone sings ‘Ay Pari,’” said Soheba. “It’s performed in concerts, at weddings, and in theater productions. A well-known Tajik musician, Daler Nazar, turned it into a pop tune. We took our arrangement from other musicians who worked in the theater before us. The poet whose *ghazal* is used for the lyrics was a Badakhshani from Afghanistan, but none of us in the ensemble know when he lived.”

*Oh fairy, flirtatious tyrant, how long will you torture me, my love?
I am left without feathers or wings, how long will you torture me, my love?*

*From the torment of longing for you,
I became a wandering dervish, how long will you torture me, my love?*

*From your love, Qadir moans like a nightingale in the orchard
I finished this tale, how long will you torture me, my love?*



ZOHIDI POKIZASIRISHT (PIOUS ASCETIC)

TEXT: HAFIZ
MUSIC: MUKHTOR MUBORAKQADAMOV (COMPOSED IN 2000)
VOCAL SOLO: AQNAZAR ALOVATOV

Mukhtor Muborakqadamov, who plays *setâr* in the Badakhshan Ensemble, set this well-known poem of Hafiz to a melody that he composed himself. “It’s popular among both old and young people in Khorog,” said Mukhtor. “Young people here read Hafiz. They study his poetry in school, and also read him on their own. Older people know the text by heart. We perform the song a lot in our concerts and at weddings. You can accompany it with a synthesizer, but it’s better in a folk style.” (An elegant translation by Gertrude Bell of the full poem is reproduced in *Hafiz: The Mystic Poets* as “No Reproach for the Drunkard” [see bibliography].)

*Do not reproach the wrongdoers, oh you, my good fellow
So that the sins of others will not be written upon you.*

*Whether I am good or bad, go worry about yourself,
In the end, each person reaps what he sows.*

*Everyone seeks the Beloved, whether drunk or sober,
Every place is a house of love, whether a mosque or a temple.*



LOLAZORUME (TULIP GARDEN)

MUSIC AND TEXT: UNATTRIBUTED

“This song was written before the Revolution,” said Soheba. “The text tells the story of a girl who is on her way to fetch water and, lingering in a tulip garden, is spotted by three horsemen who gallop up, sweep her into the saddle, and kidnap her. These kinds of abductions were common before the establishment of Soviet power in Tajikistan. In those times, if a local ruler saw a pretty girl whom he wanted, he’d send his soldiers after her. For that reason, girls tried not to show themselves. I learned this song from Gharibsulton Khudoyârbekova. She worked in the theater and was a great performer of traditional Pamiri dance. When she turned 80, she asked me to sing ‘Lolazorume’ for her.”



FALAK

TEXT: RUBAI (ANONYMOUS); GHAZAL (RUMI); GHAZAL (HAFIZ)

MUSIC: UNATTRIBUTED

VOCAL SOLO: OLUCHA MUALIBSHOEV

Falak—the broad generic designation for lament-like songs with philosophical texts—is divided into a number of sub-styles. *Ghijak* player Jonboz Dushanбиеv described this one, performed in a high vocal register by Olucha Mualibshoev, as

an example of *falak-e sûzi*: a *falak* of spiritual suffering. The text is a composite of three poems: the first a folk *rubai* (quatrain) whose author is unknown; the second, a *ghazal* attributed to Rumi; and the third, a *ghazal* of Hafiz. The Rumi text, which describes an experience of mystical ecstasy in which the poet loses awareness of his own being, appears in a different musical-poetic genre, *ghazalkhânî*—“singing of *ghazals*”—on the compact disc *Religious Music from Badakhshan* (see discography). The juxtaposition of the straightforwardly secular and nationalistic *rubai* with the mystical language of the *ghazals* exemplifies the diverse social forces that shape contemporary expressive culture in Badakhshan.

RUBAI (anonymous)

*I'm so fortunate to have this homeland I've been given,
Flowers from the orchard, I've been given,
I believe in it, and I wouldn't exchange it for a hundred worlds,
The love of the homeland I've been given.*

GHAZAL (Rumi)

*Oh, let's say who am I, I am not myself, my self is not mine.
I am hosting this life in my body, I am not myself, my self is not mine.
Ignite the fire of love, and burn all wisdom,
The darkness of night is transformed to the lightness of day, I am not myself,
my self is not mine.*



*I am the Beloved's white falcon, the shadow of his willow,
I'm expecting the hope He offers me, I am not me, my self is not mine.
And then Shams* comes into my life and makes me aware of myself,
He told me to talk about goodness and badness, I am not me, my self is not mine.*

* For his pen-name (*takhallus*), Rumi used the name of his spiritual mentor, Shams-i Tabrizî.

GHAZAL (*Hafiz*)

*When my beloved takes a glass in her hand, all idols shatter before her,
I'm floating like a fish in the sea, hoping to fall into the net of my beloved,
I fell at the feet of the Beloved, hoping to be pulled up by the hand,
Whoever sees my Beloved's intoxicating eyes would wish to be arrested for inebriation.
Happy is the soul that, like Hafiz's, drinks the eternal wine of love.*



MADDOH (PRAISE)

TEXT: HAFIZ, RUMI, NASIR KHUSRAW, ANONYMOUS

MUSIC: TRADITIONAL, ARR. AQNAZAR ALOVATOV

This 16-minute *maddoh* is an abridged version of what would typically be a much longer performance. The performer is free to choose the individual poems whose texts he will sing (*maddoh* is always performed by men), but the performance itself follows standard formal conventions. The *maddoh* begins with an unattributed *ghazal* (poem composed according to a metrical scheme of long and short syllables whose form consists of rhymed couplets that share a refrain) sung softly in free rhythm to the spare accompaniment of a Pamiri *rubab*. This introduction sets a contemplative mood and draws listeners into the text:

*Greetings, oh most precious jewel from the river of generosity,
Greetings, most pure flower from the eternal desert,
Greetings, oh one who is the descendent of Adam,
Whose pure radiance no angel worshipped.
I will send you a hundred salaams with every breath, oh generous of the most generous,
If I catch even the merest scent of an answer to a hundred of my salaams.*

Next (at 1:32) comes a *ghazal* attributed to Hafiz, but surely apocryphal, also set in free rhythm and accompanied only by *rubab*:

*Oh God, every creature is worshipping you all the time,
You made all of them aware of your kindness,
You save the lost souls of penitents,
Your beggars are kings and clerics,
You will grant them greatness and wealth.*

At 6:06, a *ghazal* attributed to Nasir Khusraw, the great *pir*, or saint, of the Badakhshani Ismailis, marks a transition to a metrical rhythm articulated by the *daf* in a slow 6/8 meter (*zarb*). The solo *rubab* is joined by a second *rubab* and a *setâr*, creating a thicker texture in the instrumental accompaniment.

*Nobody knows how and in what state human beings come into existence,
And how they will leave it.*

*In a word, it's like trying to identify a tree that hasn't yet borne fruit,
You have to see the fruit before you know what kind of tree it is.*

*About people whose deeds and acts are well-liked,
Do not dare to ask their origins.*

A fourth *ghazal* begins at 9:16, this one by Ghiyâsî (d. 1767–68), a Badakhshani poet whose verse is still popular among local performers and listeners. The poetic transition is marked by a change in the vocal texture: Aqnazar's solo vocal is replaced by responsorial singing in which he alternates verses with Ghulomsho and Olucha.

The same text, with additional couplets and variant wording, is transcribed by Gabrielle van den Berg in *Minstrel Poetry from the Pamir Mountains* (p. 460). Van den Berg mentions that “the name of Ghiyâsi does not seem to be connected with Ismâ’ilism, but rather with the Naqshbandiyya Sufi order. This shows once more the variety of material used in the poetical tradition of Badakhshan nowadays” (p. 136).

*The heart is your palace, Oh Messenger of God,
You reside in my heart, Oh Messenger of God,
And that is your place, Oh Messenger of God,
Both this world and the next were created
By God for you, Oh Messenger of God.*

At 10:50, the beginning of the fifth *ghazal*, attributed to Rumi, launches an acceleration in tempo as the responsorial singing builds in intensity.

*I am with the Beloved tonight,
The eyes of God are upon me tonight.

This state of happiness and freshness that I am in,
Who else on the face of the earth has that tonight?*

The sixth poem, which begins at 12:06, is not a *ghazal* but a *rubai* attributed to Hafiz, sung in the melodic style of a *falak*, in free rhythm. According to Soheba Davlatshoeva, it is typical for a *falak* to be sung somewhere in the middle of a *maddoh*.

About bravery, ask the one who tore down the gate of Khaybar,
About the secret of generosity, ask the master of Qambar.**
If you search for the abundance of truth in the sincerity of Hafiz
About its source, ask Him who gives the water of the spring of paradise.*

* The name of a legendary fortress whose gate was torn down by Ali, the first Shia Imam.

** Qambar was Ali’s servant, thus the master of Qambar is Ali.

The concluding *ghazal*, by Nasir Khusraw, begins at 13:07. Here the metrical articulation of the *daf* returns, and the *maddoh* reaches a culmination. A variant of the same text appears in van den Berg’s *Minstrel Poetry from the Pamir Mountains* (p. 447).

*When you stick your hand in a burrow, think about the poison of the snake,
When you put your foot on the ground, think about the sting of thorns.
If you don’t know how to swim, don’t stand beside the sea,
If you’d drown in the middle, think about it while you’re still on the shore.*

*As much as you can, do not reveal the secret of your heart to a friend,
Let’s assume that your friend is a friend, but be wary of a friend of a friend.*

*Nasir Khusraw, if you’re a drinking person, then dare to be one,
Drink to the bottom, but think about the morning-after.*



RAPO

MUSIC: TRADITIONAL

JONBOZ DUSHANBIEV, *GHIJAK*

GHULOMSHO SAFAROV, PAMIRI TANBUR

SHODI MABATQULOV, *DAF*

“*Rapo* is an old dance,” explained Jonboz Dushanbiev. “The name comes from two Tajik words: *rah* (road) and *po* (foot), thus ‘foot on the road.’ It’s normally played on the *ghijak*—you can add other instruments, but the *ghijak* has to be there. Men and women both dance it, and the dancing can take different forms. The arms make swimming movements while the legs work more quickly. These days people dance *rapo* at weddings. It starts slow, gradually speeds up, and in the end, it’s really fast.”



KHÂLATRO BANDA (I’M A SLAVE OF YOUR MOLE)

MUSIC: TRADITIONAL, ARR. MUKHTOR MUBORAKQADAMOV

MUKHTOR MUBORAKQADAMOV, *SETÂR*

SHODI MABATQULOV, *DAF*

This is an instrumental version of a texted song. “I heard this song performed by Qimmatshah Parpishoev, a *ghijak* player now in his seventies, and adapted it



to the *setâr*,” said Mukhtor. “I use two strings to play the melody, and the other strings—there are 12 in all—are resonating strings. When it’s sung, the song has a strongly meditative feel. I like Indian music and frequently listen to it, so probably that’s why my style sounds Indian.”



JONUM, IKHTIYOR DORÎ (MY LIFE IS IN YOUR HANDS) and YOR-I MAN (MY FRIEND)

TEXT AND MUSIC: TRADITIONAL

These two folksongs represent a genre of responsorial duet consisting of a romantic dialogue between a man and a woman. “Such songs were traditionally performed at weddings,” Soheba Davlatshoeva recounted. “One of the women would dress up in a man’s costume and sing the man’s lines, or a man dressed up in women’s clothes and sang the woman’s lines. Men and women didn’t actually sing together—what husband would allow his wife to sing with men? First the ‘man’ sings the verse and the ‘woman’ answers with the refrain line, and then they switch. At weddings these songs would be performed in a theatricalized form with movement and dance. Nowadays they’re only sung in concerts.” The text of the second song, “Yor-i Man,” is in Shughni, the principal Pamiri language.

*Your faultless face,
My life is in your hands (refrain)
I am drunk from the scent of the apple you gave me,
My life is in your hands
I am bound to the promise that you made,
Don't change your mind about the promise you made to me,
The promise that you made to me, I will keep as well,
I am a slave to your drunken eyes,
My life is in your hands.
I am a slave to your drunken eyes.*

YOR-I MAN:
*My friend, my friend, my faithful friend,
You're from there, I'm from here, my friend,
You're an eagle, I'm a dove, my friend,
You're from there, I'm from here, my friend.
We'll bring boughs and make shade, my friend,
In the shade, we'll cry, my friend.*



SABZAK MEDLEY

TEXT: RUMI AND UNATTRIBUTED AUTHORS

MUSIC: NAWROZSHAH KULBANHUSAINOV ("SABZAK"), GHULOMSHO SAFAROV ("AY OSHIQON")

UNATTRIBUTED ("MASTI KHUMORAM BOSHĪ," "GULI LOLA")

This medley consisting of four lyrical songs in contrasting meters builds toward an emotional climax at the end. The scheme of the medley is as follows:

"Sabzak" (The Dark-Skinned One): 1:00–2:05

"Masti Khumoram Boshĭ" (Be My Passion): 2:05–2:48

"Guli Lola" (Tulip Flower): 2:48–3:54

"Ay Oshiqon" (Oh Beloved One): 3:54–6:30

The texts of the first, second, and third songs are quatrains whose lyrical verse artfully describes the passions of love. The fourth song, "Ay Oshiqon," is set to a *ghazal* attributed to Rumi.

*Oh lovers, Oh lovers, I am not myself, I am not myself,
Of the vessel of love, I am the cup, I am the cup.*

*My heart is screaming of happiness day and night,
Like a flower on the face of the world, I am the tavern, I am the tavern.*

*Longing for you, I will become like Majnun, I will float in my blood,
And then people with wisdom will hear about that, I am a tale, I am a tale.*

INSTRUMENT GLOSSARY



BADAKHSHANI RUBAB

Long-necked partially fretted lute with animal skin covering lower part of resonating chamber; five main strings and six sympathetic strings

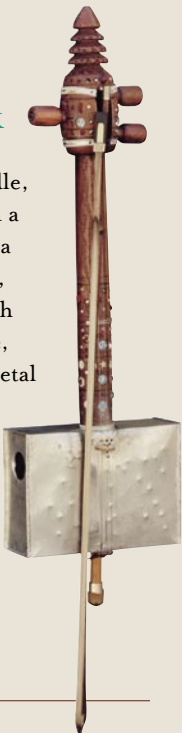


DAF

Frame drum of different sizes that is the principal percussion instrument of Badakhshan, played both by men and women.

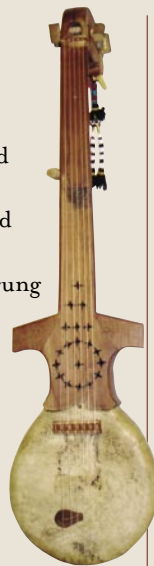
GHIJAK

Spike fiddle, often with a tin can as a resonator, strung with two, three, or four metal strings.



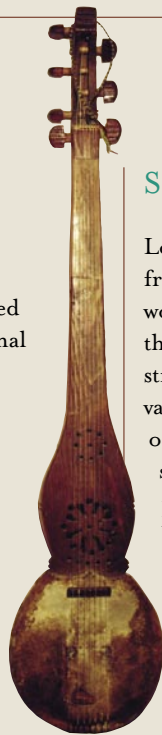
PAMIRI RUBAB

Unfretted long-necked lute with skin-covered resonating chamber strung with six gut or nylon strings.



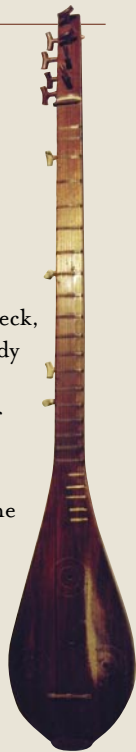
PAMIRI TANBUR

Long-necked partially fretted lute with animal skin covering lower part of resonating chamber; three melody strings and four or six sympathetic strings.



SETÂR

Long-necked fretted lute with wood-covered deck, three steel melody strings, and a variable number of sympathetic strings that provide a drone background to the melody strings.



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CREDITS

Produced by Theodore Levin
Series executive producers: Theodore Levin and Fairouz Nishanova
Recording engineer: Romain Frydman
Photography: Gary Otte, Sebastien Schutyser
Videography: Saodat Ismailova and Carlos Casas
Videography post-production: Marc Benaiche and Mondomix (Paris)
Booklet notes: Theodore Levin
Translation consultants: Faroghat Azizova, Kayhan Kalhor, and Will Sumits
Map: Nathalie Hericourt
Recorded at Cargo Studio, Paris, June 2005 and in Badakhshan, September 2005

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AGA KHAN MUSIC INITIATIVE IN CENTRAL ASIA (AKMICA)

Director: Fairouz R. Nishanova
Senior project consultant: Theodore Levin
Regional coordinator, Central Asia: Alexander Djumaev

SMITHSONIAN FOLKWAYS

Production supervised by Daniel Sheehy and D. A. Sonneborn
Sound supervision by Pete Reiniger
Production managed by Mary Monseur
Editorial assistance by Carla Borden
Design and layout by Sonya Cohen Cramer

Additional Smithsonian Folkways staff: Lauren Becker, fulfillment; Richard James Burgess, director of marketing and sales; Lee Michael Demsey, fulfillment; Betty Derbyshire, financial operations manager; Toby Dodds, technology manager; Mark Gustafson, marketing and radio promotions; Helen Lindsay, customer service; Keisha Martin, manufacturing coordinator; Margot Nassau, licensing and royalties; Jeff Place, archivist; Amy Schriefer, program assistant; Ronnie Simpkins, audio specialist; John Smith, sales; Stephanie Smith, archivist.



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