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MUSIC AND MUSICOLOGY, THEATRE AND DANCE

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Part One

MUSIC IN THE BUDDHIST AND PRE-BUDDHIST WORLDS

(*B. Lawergren*)

There are frequent references to music in Central Asian sources, both in texts and in illustrations. The very abundance shows that it was important but, since no notated music has survived, we cannot know the sounds. All we can do is examine the circumstances and theories of music and analyse the instruments.

Music flourished while two major religious movements swept through Central Asia, and each documented music in its own particular way. Buddhism encouraged visual depictions of sacred and profane life, including musical scenes. Islam prohibited images, but many texts deal with music. In both cases music existed in spite of the sacred tenets. According to the Theravāda doctrine, Buddhist monks were not allowed to attend performances of instrumental music. On the other hand, chanting was allowed and is attested in the first half of the first millennium A.D. in China. Early in this period, too, the Mahāyāna doctrine entered China (see below) and it showed an entirely different attitude towards music. Its holy books describe a Western Paradise filled with music emanating from glorious instruments. In the same vein, Buddhist courts in the Far East sponsored lavish instrumental ensembles and did their best to emulate Paradise. Islam, however, was often dubious about the value of music and some Qur'anic authorities condemned it outright. But Sufis maintained that the effects were determined by the listener's state of mind, and they embraced music for its ability to induce an other-worldly ecstasy. Islamic courts, especially in Iran and Muslim India, felt less bound by religious rules. Thus although instrumental music had little or no part in the rites of either religion, it played a substantial role in the everyday life of people living under both faiths.

Buddhist orchestras

The identity of Buddhist instruments can be ascertained from Chinese usage in the first millennium A.D. Long before Buddhism arrived, probably in the first or second century A.D., China had developed several types of acoustically advanced instruments, such as arrays of precisely tuned bronze bells and stone chimes. Large sets of these clangorous instruments were integrated into ensembles, like the one shown on a relief[1] from Yinan (Shandong province) dated between the second and the third century. The musicians occupy a large area of the foreground together with dancers and acrobats. In the rear are several large drums (played with two sticks), two huge bells (played with a rod suspended from a rope) and four large sounding stones (played with a mallet). The central ensemble sits in three neatly arranged rows. Five small drums are in the front row, each played by one person with a single stick. The next row has one further drum and some wind instruments (four pan-pipes, three flutes and one mouth-organ). The only stringed instrument, a zither, is relegated to the last row which it shares with three additional percussionists (clapper, cymbal?). The lack of stringed instruments is hardly surprising, since they would have had a difficult time competing with the clamorous percussion and shrill wind instruments. The lone zither is probably there because of its venerable status.

Very likely, the picture is only a schematic representation of much larger ensembles. Most sets of bells and chimes were probably less imposing than the 65-bell set belonging to Marquis Yi of Zeng (433 B.C., Hubei province) but, nevertheless, the instruments were extremely heavy and capable of producing a loud sound.

With the introduction of Buddhism, instruments became very light and less loud. Bells, chimes and large drums were banished, and stringed instruments promoted. Whereas the old orchestras had been quite stationary, the new stringed instruments were easily portable with hollow wooden bodies. A typical ensemble on a seventh-century relief[2] shows players sitting neatly on rows of carpets. Counting from the front there is an angular harp, two lutes, a zither, a mouth-organ, a transverse flute, an end-blown pipe, a pan-pipe, an hour-glass drum (beaten with both hands), a pair of cymbals and some small percussion instruments. Harps and lutes take pride of place in Buddhist ensembles. The preference for strings, flutes and small percussion instruments (in that order) is evident on many Sui and T'ang dynasty figurine ensembles and persists on Buddhist monuments from Central Asia. We shall consider these instruments – particularly harps, lutes and hour-glass drums – as being closely associated with Buddhism.

[1] Sirén, 1956, Vol. 3, Pls. 3–4; Lawergren, 1996*b*, Fig. 1.
[2] Fong, 1987, Fig. 23.

Since nearly all evidence comes from paintings, reliefs and statuettes, it is worth itemizing iconographic subjects that often show musical instruments. The Buddha himself was exposed to music throughout his life, and these episodes are common subjects of Buddhist art. As a youth he listened to the harp, flute and drum played by seductive harem ladies. Just before he attains enlightenment, Mara's daughters try to tempt him with music. Finally, the fully enlightened Buddha is distracted when the harper Pañcaśikha plays for him at the Indraśaila cave. Celestial beings are often shown playing music in solo performances or in ensembles.[3] There are also many portraits of real court ensembles.

Since this study mostly deals with visual representations, it relies on material uncovered and examined by archaeologists and art historians. Their results will be used here, but our ultimate aim goes beyond the image: we wish to know if real instruments served as models for the instruments depicted. If so, did they participate in music-making or were they just symbolic objects? As an example of depicted instruments that probably did not exist (since no examples have been found), let us consider some small objects (less than15 cm) in Gandhara[4] with a Graeco-Roman iconography. Merchants or soldiers could easily have transported these across vast distances. The context is foreign, and the instruments are never shown in the hands of local people. This situation also pertains with regard to the lyre, an instrument that was characteristic of the Mediterranean region. When we find them represented in northern India, Bactria (the later Tukharistan) and along the Silk Route,[5] we may well doubt that real lyres were present and integrated into musical life. On the other hand, some imaginary situations – like flying *gandharvas* clutching musical instruments – show 'real' instruments. This we know because the same harps, lutes, flutes and drums appear in realistic situations and are mentioned in inventories.

The harp

It is probable that the harp was the most characteristic Buddhist instrument. One *Jātaka* story[6] tells us that the Buddha had been an accomplished harp-player in an earlier life, and some Mahāyāna sutras place harps prominently in the Pure Lands (Paradises). The close relationship between harps and Buddhism is supported by the fact that the instrument declined in China when Buddhism waned after the T'ang dynasty. In Japan real harps were probably never played, but their image was used as a Tantric symbol long after the harp had died out in China.

[3] For example, in the Dunhuang caves: Chang and Li, 1983, nos. 16, 285, 299, 428.
[4] Francfort, 1979, nos. 7, 14.
[5] Karomatov et al., 1987, nos. 128–30.
[6] Lawergren, 1994, pp. 228 et seq.

ARCHED AND ANGULAR HARPS

Arched harps first appeared in Iraq and Iran late in the fourth millennium B.C., and angular harps followed *c.* 1900 B.C. The former consists of a long bent rod, joined smoothly to a hollow soundbox at the lower end. The box is covered by a leather membrane but, because of its fragility, the strings cannot be attached to it directly. Instead, they are tied to a thin wooden rib in contact with the membrane. The other end of each string is tied to a tuning device on the rod (Figs. 1A and 1D). The angular harp differs in the way its rod joins the box. The rod passes through a large hole at the lower end of the box and forms a nearly perpendicular angle with it. Some parts of the arched harp are also found on the angular harp, e.g. the rib and the tuning mechanism (Figs. 1E and 1J). As a rule, the angular harp has more strings (typically 25) than the arched harp (typically fewer than 10).

Over the millennia, angular harps changed little, while they spread far from their place of origin. Greece and Egypt adopted this type of harp (reluctantly) in the latter half of the first millennium B.C. Many of the harps in Athens looked like the Near Eastern type, but it also spawned several unorthodox angular harps (called *trigonon*). After the demise of classical Greece, angular harps migrated into many corners of the Hellenistic world, but it was the old Near Eastern type that travelled rather than the novel Athenian ones. This Near Eastern harp from the Hellenistic period varied little from place to place, and it is difficult to distinguish between representations from the Aegean, Egypt (called *bnt*), Turkey, Iraq, Iran (called *chang*), Khwarazm and Bactria. Whenever details are clearly visible, one sees a sturdy box that progressively widens towards the top. Its straight sides result in a trapezoidal front and side surfaces. Rods have a large diameter, about 6 cm – far more than is required for mechanical stability. Such trapezoidal boxes and bulky rods are found already on extant Egyptian angular harps from the Late Period (seventh-fifth century B.C.).

It was this Near Eastern form of angular harp that Buddhism adopted and brought to the Far East, although major modifications were introduced *c.* 600 (see the light angular harp, below). In the Islamic world – principally in Greater Iran and Turkey – angular harps lasted until the seventeenth century (mostly in the form of lever harps).[7]

Arched harps present an entirely different historical and geographic picture. Shortly after its birth in the Near East, this harp is found in Egypt where it developed many local

[7] Meanwhile, in Europe a new type (the pillar or frame harp) emerged during the Carolingian period. It was a drastically modified angular harp. First, a pillar was inserted between the distal ends of the rod and box; this added structural rigidity. Then the rod was bent into a S-shaped curve; this made the strings easier to tune. Finally, the instrument was held upside down with the rod at the top where the strings were plucked; this permitted the (bottom end of the) harp to rest on the ground, a property that eventually led to larger and heavier harps.

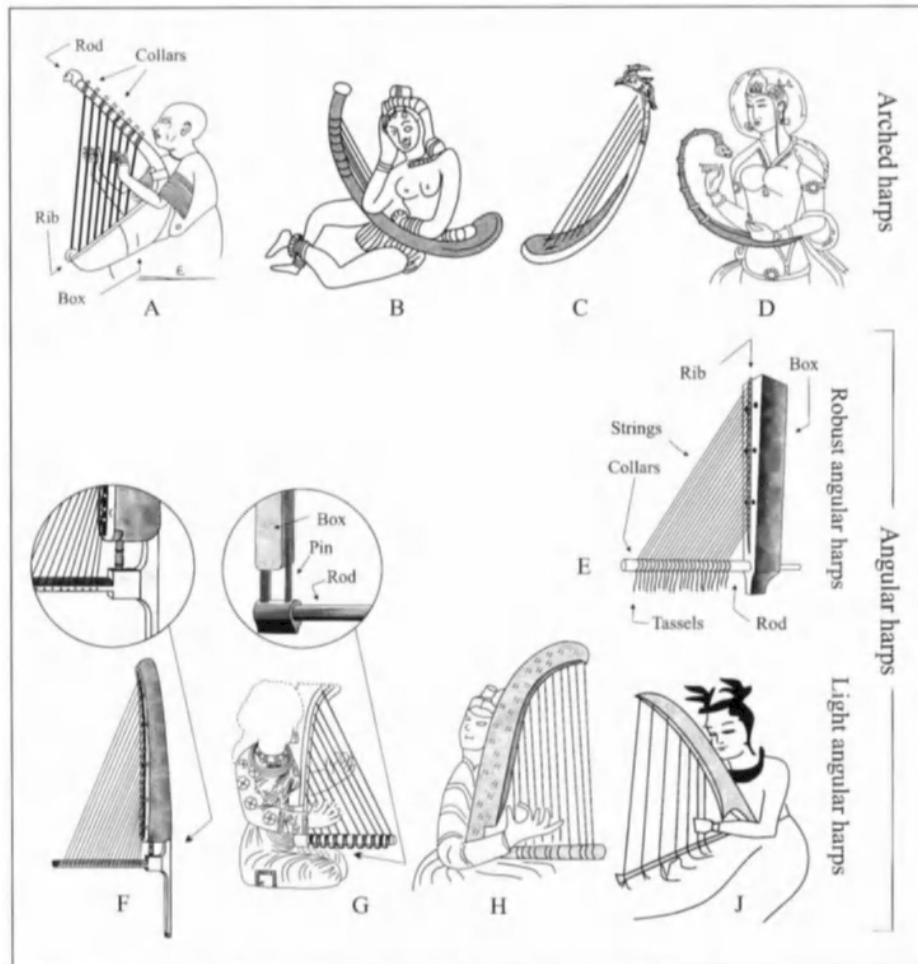

Fig. 1. Arched and angular harps. A: Egypt (first millennium B.C.). B: India (Nāgārjunakonda). A sleeping female harpist (from the second to the third century), after Kaufman, 1981, Fig. 62. C: China (Dunhuang, cave 327) (from the tenth to the thirteenth century). D: Sogdia (Panjikent) (eighth century). E: Egypt (first millennium B.C.). F: Japan (Shōsōin) (eighth century). G: Iran (Taq-i Bustan) (*c*. 600). H: China (Henan) (*c*. 551), after Sachs, 1940, PI. Xa. J: China (Dunhuang, cave 285) (*c*. 535–56).

variations. After the second millennium B.C. it was rarely shown in the Near East, where angular harps became dominant. But the arched harp was the principal Indian string instrument between the first century B.C. until *c.* A.D. 800 (called *vīnā*). The Indians had an affinity with the arched harp, which, very likely, went far back into history. The inhabitants of the Indus valley civilization (before 1800 B.C.) even had a writing sign in the shape of an arched harp.

THE LEVER HARP: A MODIFIED ANGULAR HARP

A new type of angular harp arose in the sixth century. It gradually gained acceptance and lasted until the time when angular harps, as a whole, disappeared a millennium later. The design had a very slim rod placed below the box, where it pushed against a short pin descending from the box (Figs. 1F and 1G). A mechanical *tour de force*, it enabled very slender parts to withstand great string tension. In effect, the rod acted as a lever, one end of which was attached to the thin tail and the other to the strings. The pin was a fulcrum against which it pivoted. Its elegant design was the opposite of the traditional Near Eastern angular harp, with its thick rod and heavy trapezoidal box.

The first evidence of the lever harp comes from the Iranian site of Taq-i Bustan *c.* 600 and from China some 50 years earlier. The rock carvings at Taq-i Bustan show many harps; the best-preserved examples display the crucial joint between the rod and the box(Fig. 1G).[8] The rod hangs under two narrow vertical parts, one of which descends from the back of the box. The vertical on the front (the fulcrum) is formed by the rib extending below the box. None of the Chinese harps actually shows the pin, but the box has a large indentation just above the rod (Figs. 1H and 1J). Without a pin, the instrument would probably have collapsed. Each harp probably had a pin, but the artists neglected to show it. An extant harp in the Shōsōin Repository (Nara, Japan, eighth century) demonstrates the construction very clearly.[9] Its pin is an intricately turned piece, the ends of which fit snugly into holes in the body and the rod (Fig. 1F).

It is difficult to say whether Iran or China invented the lever harp, since the dates are close. Although there are no Central Asian representations of this harp as early as the Iranian and Chinese dates, it could still be the place of invention. The region is poorly documented and the harp from Pazyryk (Altai region, dated fourth century B.C.)[10] shows that unusual harps existed here. The details of the Pazyryk harp are quite unlike those on contemporary harps from Iraq and Iran. It had symmetrically rounded ends which were

[8] Fukai et al., 1972, Pl LIXb.
[9] Hayashi et al., 1967, Pls. 93, 111. (The harp was probably imported from China.)
[10] Lawergren, 1990, Fig. 10.

unknown in the Near East, but reappeared over a millennium later on Central Asian harps (Fig. 1G). China is equally likely to have invented the lever harp shown at Taq-i Bustan. Among the instruments shown there are mouth-organs typical of China. Like these, the harps may have been derived from the East.

As noted above, the pin is sometimes not shown, although there is a space for it and mechanical stability demands it. This may have been due to careless drawing, or merely to the smallness and the novelty of the part. Often it is obscured by the player's right arm. Careful inspection reveals such a pin on many Central Asian harps from the Buddhist era. Lever harps are common in illustrated Islamic manuscripts, *c*. 1400–1600. Their rods were usually morticed to the long tail which extended far below the box.[11]

THE DIVERGENCE OF IRANIAN AND INDIAN HARPS

The first major thrust of Buddhism into Central Asia came during the period of the Kushan empire (first-third century). Before that time a very simple situation existed: angular harps existed only in the west, i.e. a region that included Egypt, the Aegean, Iraq, Iran and Khwarazm (and, presumably, Syria); arched harps were found in India. During the Kushan period, the situation becomes more complex. Representations of angular harps are found in northern India,[12]but it is doubtful if the instrument itself was ever adopted there. A few angular harps are shown in Bactria and actual instruments probably also existed here. Arched harps also reached Bactria (from India), and the region may have been an entry point for both types of harps that were to travel along the Silk Route after the end of the Kushan empire. It was this polarized situation which presented itself to Buddhist travellers along the Silk Route. The usage of different types of harp reveals the strengths of western and Indian musical influences in the vast region between Bactria and China.

THE SPREAD OF HARPS FROM IRAN AND INDIA

There are over 500 representations of harps in Central Asia during the time of Buddhism. Most sites are on the Silk Route, with its northern branch passing through Dunhuang, Turfan, Kucha, Usrushana, Sogdia, Margiana and Bactria, and its southern branch going through Khotan and Miran. During the first millennium A.D., both angular and arched harps took hold along the Silk Route. Angular harps gradually penetrated from west to east. They were present in Iran before the first century B.C., and appeared on Sogdian and Bactrian monuments between the first and the third century A.D. We find them in the Turfan region

[11] Lawergren, 1996*a*.
[12] Czuma, 1985, no. 87.

a few centuries later. By the fifth century, they were firmly established in China (where the harp was called *konghou*). On the southern Silk Route they are not shown until the eighth century, but were probably part of the traditional Buddhist culture of Khotan before that time. Arched harps moved north from India and became concentrated on Bactria and Kucha before continuing to the north-east. Each site shows a high degree of preference for one type of harp or the other.

China adopted only the angular harp, although Dunhuang, at the gate to Central Asia, had a few arched-harp stragglers. Kïzïl shows the opposite preference,[13] with three times more arched than angular harps. Some other sites in the Kucha region also went for arched harps. On the other hand, the Turfan region was partial to angular harps but, like nearby Dunhuang, it is not entirely devoid of arched ones. The entire Khotan region opted for angular harps, in spite of its close proximity to regions where the arched harps ruled supreme. Harps reveal complex musical interactions between Central Asia, China, India and the west. We note first that arched harps were not transferred earlier than angular ones, or vice versa. This can be seen in the Kuchean region, where both types were painted during the brief interval of the fourth to the sixth century. In China, both angular and arched harps were painted as late as the thirteenth century. Second, the pictorial context does not in most cases determine the choice of harp. Religious scenes portray both arched and angular harps, as do secular scenes. There is a tendency to put arched harps in scenes from *jātaka* tales and from the life of the Buddha, but other religious subjects – flying *apsarasas* – use both types of harp at Dunhuang. Paradise ensembles use both angular and arched types, as do secular entertainers.

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN ANGULAR/ARCHED HARPS AND IRANIAN-/INDIAN–INSPIRED ARTISTIC STYLES

The distribution of the usage of different types of harp corresponds to a geographic pattern of Iranian and Indian musical influences. This largely agrees with the spheres of influence mapped by art historians. For example, Parthian art is known to be deeply affected by Graeco-Roman art. We find that Parthian instruments, too, are entirely western (lyres and angular harps) with no trace of Indian harps. The Sasanians continued the trend but also introduced a new design, the lever harp.

Art historians command more extensive material and can draw more detailed analyses than our harp data permit. They see subtle mixtures of stylistic influences, but few such subtleties can be discerned among harps. Bussagli's statement[14] that Turfan 'oscillated

[13] Yao, 1983, p. 244.
[14] Bussagli, 1963, p. 96.

between Iranian and Chinese forms' cannot be supported in relation to the harp, since Iran and China both used the same type of instrument. Our data demonstrate that Kïzïl had a preference for Indian harps, and, indeed, art historians have long recognized an Indian style of painting there, as well as a Sasanian Iranian style.[15]

One artistic style – the Indo-Iranian one – is meaningless when it comes to harps. Harps conform to the style of one region or the other but not to both. It is not clear which harps were painted in the Indo-Iranian style, if any.

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN KUCHEAN AND CHINESE HARPS

When the Buddhist pilgrim Hsüan-tsang visited Khotan around 630, he noticed that the inhabitants were unusually fond of music, but his highest accolades were reserved for Kuchean musicians.[16] In the latter half of the first millennium, the Chinese greatly esteemed western music, and that from Kucha was considered the finest. However, in 647–8 the Chinese army destroyed Kucha, slaughtered many of its inhabitants and installed a subservient ruler. Art in the region never recovered, but music may have fared better, for Kuchean ensembles were still prominent at the courts of the T'ang dynasty.

All depictions of harps at Kïzïl come from the period prior to the destruction of Kucha. At that time, arched harps dominated, but this fact conflicts with Chinese information. The *Sui shu* [Dynastic Annals of the Sui] (581–618) attest that Kuchean ensembles at the Chinese court had only harps of the angular type. Moreover, some Chinese terracotta figurines from the same period depict Kuchean orchestras, and only angular harps are shown. In other words, actual practice attested in Chinese records is not in accord with the visual records from Central Asia.

However, nobody can doubt the presence of Indian music at Kucha. A Chinese musician reported that a Kuchean lutenist named Sujīva used seven musical modes, and he called them by Indian names, as the Chinese transliteration makes clear.[17]

[15] Howard, 1991, pp. 68–72.
[16] Beal, 1969, Vol. I, p. 19; Vol. II, p. 309.
[17] Liu, 1969, p. 103, and note 749.

Part Two

MUSIC IN THE ISLAMIC ENVIRONMENT

(*E. Neubauer*)

The eastern Iranian lands and Transoxania

The countries along the Oxus (Amu Darya), at the western end of the Silk Route, have left impressive testimonies to their musical life in the first centuries A.D. Relics of musical instruments, musical scenes depicted in mural paintings or sculpted in stone, and terracotta figurines of musicians have been discovered by archaeologists in Khwarazm and Sogdia, in the eastern part of Parthia, and in Bactria.[18] When, at the beginning of the eighth century, the borderland between Iran and Turan, between the Persian and the Turkish world, was conquered by Muslim Arabs, the region, thereafter called Khurasan and Transoxania, retained its musical individuality. The Iranian population, the Arab and the growing Turkish minorities, and finally the Mongol occupants, all contributed to the musical life of the area.

When, during the ninth century, Iranian dynasties regained power in Khurasan, music became an integral part of court life;[19] it was even considered 'one of the signs of rule'.[20] The poet Rūdakī (d. *c*. 941), a boon companion of the Samanid Nasr II (914–43), composed songs to his own verses and accompanied himself on the lute (*rūd* or *barbat* in Persian, *'ūd* in Arabic).[21] The same is reported of his poet colleague Farrukhī from Sistan (d. 1038), who served at the court of Mahmūd of Ghazna (998–1030). Several Seljuq rulers were fond of music.[22] A famous lute-player from Khurasan, called Kamāl-i Zamān (Perfection of the Age), performed at the court of Sultan Sanjar (1118–57) in Merv. The female poet and musician Firdaws-i Mutriba from Samarkand was favoured by the Khwarazm Shah ᶜAlā' al-Dīn Muhammad (1200–20).[23] When, in 1220, Bukhara and Samarkand were captured by Chinggis Khan, she was taken over by the Mongol ruler, who is said to have saved the

18 Karomatov et al., 1987.
19 For pre-Mongol Iran, see Farmer, 1939, pp. 2789 et seq.
20 NarshakhĪ, 1954.
21 Ibid.
22 See Turan, 1965, pp. 294–300.
23 See Ishaque, 1950, pp. 56–7.

artists of the towns he seized. He kept an orchestra of some 20 'masterly playing, beautiful' female musicians and favoured Tangut musicians besides his minion, the Mongol *qughur* (fiddle)-player Arghun (or Arghasun).[24] When Bukhara was taken, Chinggis Khan 'sent for the female singers of the town to sing and to dance for him, whilst the Mongols raised their voices to the melodies of their own songs'.

During the rule of the Il Khanids, the main musical activities shifted west and the rulers became accustomed to Irano-Arab urban art and court music. After capturing Baghdad in 1258, the Il Khan Hülegü (d. 1265) saved the life of the eminent musician and writer on music Safī al-Dīn al-Urmawī (d. 1294), as did Timur with the musician and littérateur ᶜAbd al-Qādir al-Marāghī (d. 1435) when he took Baghdad in 1393. Al-Marāghī spent the rest of his life in Samarkand and Herat, where he served Timur's sons and governors and wrote four important books on Irano-Arab art and court music.[25] Through the concentration of artists at the Timurid courts, Samarkand and Herat became the leading musical centres of the Muslim world in the fifteenth century. The local and 'national' styles of Safavid Iran, Ottoman Turkey, Shaybanid Transoxania and Mughal India of the sixteenth century all profited from the heritage of Timurid art and court music.

Arab and Persian writers on music made a clear distinction between the music of central Persia and that of Khurasan (and Transoxania). From the beginning of Islamic rule, the music of Khurasan was considered something special. Musical instruments of the country were sent to an Umayyad caliph in Damascus, and singing girls from Khurasan performed at the courts of the ᶜAbbasids in Baghdad. Bukhara was known for a musical style of its own, including 'amazing songs' about the mythical ruler Siyāwush and traditional dirges transformed into songs of art music.[26] Virtuoso instrumental pieces, called *rawāshīn*, 'which the human voice cannot imitate', were considered characteristic of the local style of Khurasan by the author of the *magnum opus* on musical theory in Islam, al-Fārābī (d. 950), who was of Central Asian Turkish origin.[27] The philosopher Ibn Zayla(d. 1048) knew of both instrumental and vocal *rawāshīn:* the latter were mainly melismatic and not bound to musical metrics. According to Ibn Zayla, the repertoire of Khurasan also contained a song form called *dastān* in which the syllabic structure of the text determined the metric and rhythmic structure of the melody. The Persian term *dastān* was adopted by the Turks on their way westwards and used by them as a literary term to denote the heroic and 'romantic' genre of their epics, which are composed of passages in prose and sung poetry.

[24] For Mongol and Il Khanid Iran, see Neubauer, 1969, pp. 242 et seq.
[25] Al-Marāghī, 1366/1987; 1344/1965; 1370/1991.
[26] Narshakhī, 1954.
[27] Al-Fārābī, 1967, pp. 69, 77; d'Erlanger, 1930, pp. 17, 21.

Another specific form of Transoxanian vocal music consisted of *dubaytīs* (quatrains) sung to 'heroic' melodies. In the *Qābūs-nāma* [Book for Qābūs] composed in 1082 by Kay Kāwūs b. Iskandar, a Persian petty ruler in the Caspian provinces, musicians are advised to perform these songs for people of the warrior class.[28] Here the character of the melodies and of the audience seems to point to a Turkish rather than an Iranian environment. Lullabies in Persian (*lalā'ī*), as well as in the Turkish language (*nenni*, *ninni*), are alluded to in a satirical poem by Sūzanī (d. 1174), a poet from Samarkand. The song forms of *tarāna* and *ghazal*, mentioned in the *Qābūs-nāma*, are the earliest known vocal forms of Persian court music. They were integrated, together with *qawl* and *firūdāsht*, in the *nawba* (four-part 'suite') of the Irano-Arab court music attested from the thirteenth century onwards. Apart from these, the vocal forms of *pīshraw*, *naqsh*, *sawt* and *ᶜamal* flourished under the Timurids. They were all described by al-Marāghī and have been recently investigated, based on sixteenth-century Turkish song textbooks, by Owen Wright.[29]

Musical modes

Our knowledge of the early modal system of Khurasan in Islamic times (and of Iran in general) is still limited. The first author to mention three contemporaneous mode names was the philosopher Ibn Sīnā (*c*. 980–1037), who started his career under the last Samanids. Another three names of modes occur in the *Dīwān* of Manūchihrī (written *c*. 1030–40 in Ghazna), and seven more in the *Qābūs-nāma*. We find them later in the thirteenth-century Irano-Arab court music outlined by al-Urmawī in Baghdad.[30] To judge from its terminology, al-Urmawī's 'international' modal system was intended to represent the predominant Arab and Persian local traditions. Besides this mainstream of urban art music, local variants may have existed that only partly corresponded to al-Urmawī's system.

Are there any clues that indicate a specific Khurasanian modal tradition? There is indeed a document that tells us about the music of Nishapur in the early thirteenth century. It is an important Persian treatise written by a certain Muhammad b. Mahmūd b. Muhammad Nīshāpūrī, known as Ustād-i Khurāsān (Master of Khurasan). The text differs considerably from that of al-Urmawi and his successors. Being strictly related to musical practice, it resembles the later, less 'scientific' Persian musical literature. Some of the mode names, and the arrangement of the 12 main modes (called *parda*) and the 6 derived modes (called *shuᶜba*) are different, and its principal term, *bāng* (voice, sound), known hitherto only from

[28] Yūsufī, 1362/1983, p. 236.
[29] Wright, 1992.
[30] Wright, 1978, p. 90, note 2.

later Persian and Turkish sources,[31] appears here for the first time: ‘You should know that the science of music (*ᶜilm-i mūsīqī*) consists of 18 *bāngs*.’ Since 1 *bāng* can be divided into 2, it seems that Nīshāpūrī meant the 18 steps of the double octave, including major and minor thirds and sixths. In the text, the *bāng* theory is related to a 2-stringed cordophone, most probably the *tanbūr* or *tunbūr* of Khurasan (see below). In a stricter sense, the term *bāng* determines the whole- and half-tone steps in relation to the division of the frets. Thus each mode is defined by a certain number of initial *bāngs*. Half a *bāng* is the minimum, 2 *bāngs* the maximum. In Table 1, Nīshāpūrī’s 12 modes and their characteristic *bāngs* are listed in the order given in the manuscript, i.e. by decreasing *bāngs*. They are compared with the mode names of al-Urmawī and followed by the 6 derived modes of both sources. The names mentioned in the eleventh century by Ibn Sīnā, Manūchihrī and in the *Qābūs-nāma* (where no distinction is made between main and derived modes) are given in romanized form.

In the anonymous fourteenth-century Persian treatise, the *Kanz al-tuhaf* [*Treasury* of Gifts], *nihāwand*, the eighth of Niīshāpūrī’s main modes, is called the Bukharan equivalent of *zankūla*; *sipihrī*, the last of Nishāpūrī’s *shuᶜba* modes, is called the Khurasanian variant of the mode known as *dugāh*.[32] Until the discovery of Nīshāpūrī’s text, these and similar remarks were the only hints at individual traditions developed in Khurasan and Transoxania; Nīshāpūrī is the first to give us more detailed information.

The academic study of music

Khurasan was also known as one of the major centres of classical learning in Islam. This included musical ethics as a philosophical discipline. The versatile scholar Abū Zayd al-Balkhī (850–934), who had studied in Baghdad with the philosopher Abū Yūsuf al-Kindī (d. *c*. 870), wrote extensively on the effects of music in a book called *Masālih al-abdān wa ‘l-anfus* [Sustenance for Body and Soul].[33] The same subject was taken up by Abū Zayd’s pupil in the second generation, namely the physician Ibn Hindū from Nishapur (d. *c*. 1029); he placed the musician, alongside the pharmacist, as an assistant to the physician.[34] A direct pupil of Abū Zayd al-Balkhī was Ibn Farīghūn, who may have been a member of the ruling family in Guzgan (northern Afghanistan). Ibn Farīghūn left a remarkable work, the *jawāmiᶜ al-ᶜulūm* [Comprehensive Work on the Sciences] (see above), where the ‘composition of melodies’ (*ta’līf al-luhūn*) is listed as one of the metaphysical (!) disciplines of

[31] Jung, 1989, pp. 102–3.
[32] Bīnish, 1371/1992, p. 106.
[33] Abū Zayd al-Balkhī, 1984, pp. 224–31.
[34] Shiloah, 1972, p. 460.

philosophy, together with arithmetic and astronomy. Music is said to reveal 'harmony and disharmony in the moving energies of the celestial and terrestrial, physical and spiritual phenomena'.[35] Here, the Greek notion of the harmony of the spheres meets the Iranian concept of the influence of the celestial bodies and the impact of sound on the individual. The pre-Islamic Sasanian system of seven modes was regarded as a representation of the seven planets.[36] That of Islamic Iran developed into a 'zodiacal' system of clearly astrological connotation. Consequently, the suitable time of performance, and the choice of the appropriate mode, became a main topic of Persian writings on music, including those produced in Khurasan.

Table 1. musical modes (al-Urmawī and Nīshāpūrī)

Al-Urmawī (1236) Main modes (*parda*):	Nīshāpūrī (prior to 1258) Main modes (*parda*):	Number of *bāngs*:
^{c}ushshāq		
nawā		
būsalīk		
rāst	rāst	2
^{c}irāq	*mukhālif-i rāst*	2
isfahān	māda	2
zīrāfkand	^{c}irāq	$1^{1}/_{2}$
buzurk	*mukhālifak*	$1^{1}/_{2}$
zankūla	būsalik	$1^{1}/_{2}$
rāhawī	nawā	$1[^{1}/_{2}]$
husaynī	*nihāwand*	$1^{1}/_{2}$
hijāzī	rahāwī	1
	isfahān	1
	husaynī	1
	^{c}ushshāq	$^{1}/_{2}$

Āwāz modes:	*Shu^{c}ba* modes:	Derived from:
kardāniya	*zīrkash*	*husaynī* and *māda*
kawāsht	baste	*mukhālifak* and *rāhawī*
nawrūz	*^{c}uzzāl*	*nawā* and *^{c}ushshāq*
māya	*nigārīn*	*būsalik* and *isfahān*
shahnāz	*hijāzī*	*^{c}irāq* and *nihāwand*
salmak	*sipihrī*	*rāst* and *mukhālif* [-*i rāst*]

[35] Ibn Farīghūn, 1985, pp. 144, 170.
[36] Dānishpazhūh, 1344/1965, pp. 100–1.

Musical instruments

In the last quarter of the tenth century, Abū ᶜAbd Allāh Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Khwārazmī compiled, in Bukhara, his dictionary of scientific terms entitled the *Mafātīh al-ᶜulūm* [Keys of the Sciences], dedicated to the vizier of the Samanid Nūh II (976–97), a ruler who was particularly fond of music (see above). Besides theoretical terms, the chapter on music deals with Greek, Arabic and Persian names of musical instruments originating from China in the east to Byzantium in the west.[37] Among them figure the principal instruments of Khurasanian court music, the four-stringed and later the five-stringed lute of the *ᶜūd* type and the vertical angular harp (*chang*; for the instrument, see Part One above). Both instruments had been inherited from pre-Islamic Iran.

Besides the lute and the harp, several other instruments were common to the musicians of Khurasan. Ibn Khurradādhbih (d. 911), whose father had been governor in Tabaristan, mentions the seven-stringed *wanj* or *muwannaj* as one of the characteristic instruments of this and neighbouring regions. He says it was 'played like a harp',[38] an insufficient indication for a convincing identification of the instrument. The *rabāb* was also 'well known to the people of Khurasan', as al-Khwārazmī writes, without, however, describing the instrument. It seems to have been the bowed chordophone (the proto-rebec and forerunner of the North African *rabāb* of today) treated by his elder contemporary al-Fārābī. Among the aerophones, the reed instruments *nāy* (Arabic, *mizmār*) and *surnāy* (Arabic, *saffāra* or *yarāᶜ*) are listed by al-Khwārazmī.[39] Together with lute and harp, the *nāy* formed the main body of melodic instruments of courtly 'chamber music'. Two generations after al-Khwārazmī, the poet Manūchihrī mentions 20 names of instruments, among them the *mūsīqār* (pan-pipes) and, for the first time in oriental literature, the *santūr* (box zither). He is familiar with the Indian one-stringed stick zither, the *kingira* (the predecessor of the *kendrā* of Rajasthan), which was common in Iran, and he mentions the names of several military instruments.[40]

THE PANDORE

The most popular chordophone of Khurasan was the pandore called *tanbūr* in Persian and *al-tunbūr al-khurāsānī* (the 'pandore of Khurasan') in Arabic. It was regarded as the specific instrument of Muslim Central Asia for centuries, but there is no iconographic evidence and no proper description of the *tanbūr* from the first centuries of Islam to tell us

[37] Al-Khwārazmī, 1895, pp. 235–46.
[38] Ibn Khurradādhbih, 1961, p. 16; Farmer, 1928, pp. 511–12.
[39] Al-Khwārazmī, 1895, p. 237.
[40] See Mallāh, 1363/1984.

about the actual shape of its body. We learn from al-Kindī that the instrument was mounted with 2 strings and that it had '7 or more' frets. The tuning of the strings and the position of its frets were described a century later by al-Fārābī (d. 950), who specifies that the instrument was used in Khurasan and its eastern and northern neighbouring regions and that it differed in form and length but always had 2 strings of the same kind.[41] He gives a precise description of the function of the tailpiece, the correct position of the bridge near the end of the soundbox, and the position of its 2 lateral pegs. The long neck was normally mounted with 5 *dasātīn rātibas* ('fixed' frets) and 13 *dasātīn mutabaddilas* (movable or interchangeable' frets), making a total of 18. The 2 strings could be tuned in 9 different ways. Normally, they were tuned a major second apart, so the instrument had a total range of one tenth. The tuning of a minor third was called 'tuning of Bukhara'. The scale was divided into a regular series of 2 Pythagorean *limmas* (90 cents) and 1 *comma* (24 cents) each. In its standard tuning, the *tanbūr* or *tunbūr* thus lacked the 'neutral' third and other microtone positions. These were obtained, if so desired, by additional frets. In this case, the number of movable frets could exceed 20.

In the first half of the fifteenth century, the otherwise unknown poet Ahmadī composed an amusing 'Contest of String Instruments' in Chaghatay Turkic, the literary idiom of the Turkish population of Khurasan and Transoxania.[42] Seven instruments, representing seven nations and religions (cf. the number of planets and climates!) and, at the same time, seven ranks or social standings, argue with the trouble-maker, the *tanbūra*, about their musical (and social) value and importance. The *tanbūra* is characterized by a long neck mounted with frets 'from head to foot', and by having two strings, but no pegbox. It can thus be regarded as a successor to al-Fārābī's '*tunbūr* of Khurasan'. The instrument seems to personify certain 'Turkic' pretensions in face of the Persian (and Arabic) cultural hegemony of the educated urban societies. In Table 2, the antagonists of the *tanbūra* are listed in order of their appearance.

Some of the above characteristics of the instruments are clearly delineated, others are alluded to in metaphors. In the end, the *tanbūra* is accused of having started the trouble. It shows repentance and all the instruments play a 'melody of reconciliation'. Besides its political implications, the poem can be regarded as a depiction of the colourful international music scene at the Timurid courts.

When describing a festivity that Shāh Rukh gave in Samarkand in the summer of 1404, the historian Hāfiz-i Abrū (d. 1430) also speaks of musicians of seven different nations performing their own music. He uses the term *tarīqa* for the Persian style, the Turkish

[41] Al-Fārābī, 1967, pp. 698 et seq.; d'Erlanger, 1930, pp. 242 et seq.
[42] Bodrogligeti, 1987.

Table. 2 The antagonists of the *tanbūra* in Ahmadi's work.

Instrument	people/religion	Represent ative of social rank or class
Lute (*ᶜūd*)	Arab	King
Harp (*chang*)	Persian	King's boon companion
Plucked chordophone */qopuz/*	Turk	Prince
Half-tube zither (*yātūghān*	Mongol	'Newcomer' of the warrior class
Plucked chordophone */rabab/*	Central Asian Islam	Sufi dervish
Spike fiddle (*ghīzhak*)	Central Asian shamanism	Itinerant story-teller and singer of epics
Stick zither (*kingira*)	Indian Hinduism	Ascetic, beggar

word *yosun* (custom) for the Turkish, and the Mongol word *ayalghu* (song, melody) for the Mongol contribution. He further differentiates between the styles of (other) Iranian (*ᶜajam*), Arab, Chinese and Altaic musicians by using different Arabic terms meaning 'manner', 'rule' and so on to stress the variety of styles.

The Chinese impact on the instruments played under the Timurids is shown in miniatures and documented by al-Marāghī. Among the 40 instruments he mentions in his books[43] are the Chinese *lute pīpā* (Chinese, *p'i-p'a*) and the mouth-organ *chubchīq* (Chinese, *sheng*), known already to al-Khwārazmī in the tenth century. But in addition to these, the Mongol half-tube zither *yātūghān* (Mongolian, *yatuga*, *yatga*), one of the champions in Ahmadi's poem, and the plucked cordophone *shidirghū* or *shidurghū* (Mongolian, *shudraga*), are also labelled 'Chinese' by al-Marāghī, who tends to confuse Chinese with Mongol, and Mongol with Turkish elements.

The modes and song forms of Turkish music

When al-Marāghī speaks, in a most revealing passage, about the 9 basic modes and the 366 derived modes (or melody types) called *kök*, he ascribes them at one moment to the Mongols and at another to the Turks.[44] Now the term *kök* is a (Chaghatay) Turkish word, meaning 'melody' (*āhang*) according to ᶜAlīshīr Nawā'ī (d. 1501), the promoter of Turkish literature in Herat. The two mode names that can be clearly identified – *ulugh kök* (great mode) and *qutadghu*(auspicious) – are also Turkish. A third name may be the Turkish *yürüsh* or *yörüsh* (march). At the same time, the term *kök* was also a Turkish loan in Mongolian (*kög*), and one of the modes, *quladu* (white falcon), bears a name known from modern Western Mongolian (Kalmuck). On the whole, the system looks like a Central

[43] See Farmer, 1962.
[44] Al-Marāghī, 1372/1993, p. 199; 1344/1965, p. 129; 1370/1991, p. 356; Doerfer, 1963–75, Vol. 4, pp. 290–1.

Asian blend dominated by Turkish elements and seems to represent the Turkish counterpart of the local Khurasanian and the 'international' Irano-Arab modal systems. The 9 basic *köks* may be regarded as representative of the '9 heavens' of the Turks, corresponding to the 12 'zodiacal' *parda*-modes of the Iranians. The 366 derived modes or melody types were intended to cover the daily repertoire performed 'in the assembly of the Khan'.[45] The word *kök* has survived, in the form of *küy* and so on, as a fundamental modal term among the Kyrgyz, the Bashkir, the Kazakh and other Turkic peoples of Central Asia.

The music of the Turks of Khurasan (and Transoxania) had already been noticed by al-Kindī in the ninth century. He stated that the Turks had a musical style of their own, based on the (Pythagorean) Greek scale. In al-Urmawī's modal system of the thirteenth century, the diatonic modes *ᶜushshāq, nawā* and *būsalīk*, based on the mixolydian, hypodorian and hypophrygian scales respectively, were still called characteristic modes of Turkish music.[46] This was repeated by al-Urmawī's disciples and successors up to al-Marāghā, who points out that the *kök* modes were cognate, in their tonality, with these three modes.[47] Another aspect of Turkish music was taken up by ᶜAlīshīr Nawā'ī. In one of his books, he gives examples of seven traditional Turkish song forms, such as the wedding song *chenge* with its fixed rhyme *yār yār* ('O friend, friend'), or the strophic forms *tuyuq*, also called *türkī* (the term 'folk song' of later Ottoman Turkish), and *qoshuq*, sung in the metre *urghushtek* (the first known term of Turkish musical metrics). The latter were favoured by Sultān Husayn Bayqara (1473–1506) and performed at the Herat court. The 'Turkish' plucked chordophone (*qopuz*) and the 'shamanistic' spike fiddle (*ghīzhak*) of Ahmadī's poem were indeed common instruments of the Turks in Khurasan. In Karakhanid Turkistan (eleventh century), the *qubūz* played the most prominent part and was even played by singing girls in competition.[48]

Military bands

From the tenth century onwards, court military bands (*nawba*, *mihtar*) became one of the prerogatives of local rulers, in Khurasan as in other parts of the Islamic world. They played at the daily prayer times, at various official occasions and during warfare. The bands are depicted on miniatures and their employment was recorded by historians. Some of the instruments are described by al-Marāghī,[49] such as the *nafīr* (straight trumpet) and its

45 Al-Marāghī, 1372/1993, p. 199.
46 Al-Urmawī, 1984, p. 90.
47 Al-Marāghī, 1372/1993, p. 199.
48 Al-Kāshgharī, 1939–41, Vol. 2, p. 220.
49 Farmer, 1962, pp. 247–8.

Turkish relative, the extra-long *burghū* (Ottoman Turkish, *borgu*, *born*), the *karranāy* (S-shaped trumpet), the shawm (*surnā*), and a wind instrument called *nāy-i chāwūr*, used by 'some Turks'. Among the membranophones, al-Marāghī concentrates on the *duhul* (drum), the *naqqārāt* (small kettledrums; sing, *naqqāra*), the *kūs* (ordinary kettledrum) and the *kūrgā* (*kögürge*, *kögerge*, Mongol monster kettledrum). The importance of the ruler's band was emphasized by splendid craftsmanship; the kettledrums in the *nawba* of the Khwarazm Shah ᶜAlā al-Dīn Muhammad were adorned with silver and gold.

The Sufis and music

The Islamization of Khurasan and Transoxania was a lengthy process and in the tenth century some Buddhist, Manichaean, Zoroastrian, Jewish and Nestorian Christian communities still existed in the region. They were surrounded by the acoustic signals of Islam, the *nawba* and the *adhān* (call to prayer), and by the attractive spirituality of Sufism that allowed the use of *samāᶜ* (music) and *raqs* (dance). The importance of the Sufi orders in propagating the Islamic faith in Central Asia, as well as in stimulating the musical culture of Islam, was considerable. Even the use of the term *maqām* (mode) instead of *parda*, which first occurred in fourteenth-century Iran and spread throughout the eastern Islamic world, may have been influenced by the Sufi term *maqām* (spiritual stage).

The founder of the Mawlawī or Mevlevi order of 'whirling dervishes', Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 1273), was a native of Balkh and had left his home town for Konya when he was about 10 years old. What might have inspired him to cultivate and bequeath to his disciples a meditative circular dance that still fascinates the spectator today? It should be mentioned here that 'whirling' female dancers from Central Asia, 'reminding one of flying white cranes', had aroused the enthusiasm of the Chinese of the T'ang period,[50] and that in Islamic times, Khurasan was still known for its dances. It thus may well be that the art of *charkhīdan* (circling) that is cultivated in the Persian *zūrkhāna* (the traditional gymnasium) up to the present day,[51] had been part of the dance repertoire of Khurasan at the beginning of the thirteenth century when Rūmī was growing up in Balkh.

[50] Hye-Kerkdal, 1961, p. 43; Mahler, 1959, pp. 147–8.
[51] See Battesti, 1968, pp. 196–7.

Part Three

FESTIVALS, DRAMA AND THE PERFORMING ARTS IN KHURASAN AND TRANSOXANIA

(*M. H. Kadyrov*)

Feast-days and festivals

Zoroastrian and Christian feast-days, with their rites and accompanying theatrical representations and pageants, were widely celebrated alongside Muslim feast-days. Hence Muslims observed the festivals of baptism, the summoning of rain, the night of touching, when women mingled freely with a crowd of men, and pilgrimages to the imprisonment pit of Joseph, son of Jacob, and other sacred places and tombs, the origins of which lay in all kinds of pre-Islamic faiths. Muslim feasts, including ᶜĪd al-Fitr (at the end of the fast of Ramadan), ᶜĪd al-Ad'hā (the Feast of Sacrifice) and Mawlūd (the Prophet Muhammad's birthday), were, of course, observed equally widely throughout the Islamic lands. These festivals were often accompanied by fêtes, carnival processions and fairs, which always included performances by folk and professional musicians, singers, actors and skilful dancers.

In writing of the feast-days of the Persians, and later of the Sogdians and the Khwarazmians, in his *al-Āthār al-bāqiya* [The Remaining Traces (of Past Ages)], al-Bīrūnī (973–1048) distinguishes between secular and religious festivals. Many of these old secular festivals were widely disseminated throughout the Islamic world, including Khurasan and Transoxania. Nawrūz (the New Year festival), Mihragān (the autumn festival) and Sada (the winter festival) were especially popular. Nawrūz began to be celebrated in a slightly different manner and at a different time of year under the Islamic caliphate. It had previously been celebrated in the summer, but al-Ma'mūn (813–33) and al-Mutawakkil (847–61) decided to shift the beginning of the year from the summer to the month of Farwardīn (the first month of the Iranian year, beginning on 20, 21 or 22 March) and their decision was implemented by al-Muᶜtadid (892–902). That Nawrūz began to be celebrated in the new style in

Khurasan under Sultan Malik Shāh (1072–92) was due in no small measure to the astronomical experiments of ᶜUmar Khayyām (*c*. 1048–1123) concerning the compilation of a new solar calendar (see above, Chapter 7, p. 232). In his *Nawrūz-nāma* [Book of Nawrūz], he asserted that the festival was connected with the name of the legendary king Jamshīd, while the association of Mihragān and Sada with the name of Farīdūn had been widely noted by the ᶜAjam (i.e. the Persians) and also Turan, since Farīdūn had handed over Turkistan, Rum and ᶜAjam to his sons Tur, Salm and Īraj respectively.

According to al-Bīrūnī, the Persians divided the year into 4 seasons and 12 months. There were feast-days in every month. Nawrūz was widely celebrated by them as marking the beginning of the creation of the world and the awakening of nature, a time when people sprinkled water on the earth, gave each other presents and ate honey and a sweet known as *halwā*. The autumn festival of Mihragān, when the Persians wore a crown bearing a depiction of the sun and its chariots, was celebrated on the sixteenth day of the seventh month Mihr (falling essentially in September). The Persians also observed the traditional festivals of Urdībihishtagān, Khurdadagān, Tīragān, Shahriwaragān, Ādhar-Jashn, Bahmanjān, Muzhgirān, Abanagān, Anīrān, Isfandiyārmad and others celebrating various natural phenomena, historical events and manifestations of human activity. Some of them were accepted and assimilated by the Islamic rulers; thus the Buyid ruler of Fars, ᶜAdūd al-Dawla, accepted the custom of Isfandiyārmad, 'the Nawrūz of rivers and running water', when perfumes, rose-water and similar aromatic substances are poured into rivers, and he made it a festival for all the people.

Al-Bīrūnī comments that 'the Sogdians did not differ in any way from the Persians regarding the start of year and of some months; [they differed] only regarding where to position the additional five days'.[52] The Sogdians left these additional five days at the end of the months, but the Persians transferred them to the end of Ābān. The first day of Nawsard (spring) was Nawrūz, and the twenty-eighth day was the festival of Ramūsh-Aghām, which was initially celebrated at the fire-temple in the village of Ramush not far from Bukhara, but subsequently spread throughout Sogdiana. It was a time when people gathered around the village elders to eat, drink and make merry.[53] The Khwarazmians called the New Year festival Nāwsarchī. They also celebrated the festivals of Arī-Jāsuvān (the time when people 'get out of their clothes' and sow sesame), Ajghār (when winter wheat is sown), Faghbūriyya (the ruler's annual expedition [against the steppe Turks]), Azdākand-Khvār (the day when bread baked with fat is eaten), Chīrī-Rūj (the autumn

[52] Al-Bīrūnī, 1957, p. 253.
[53] Ibid., p. 254.

festival, like Mihragān) and Wakhsh-Ingām (the festival worshipping the river Amu Darya, referred to by al-Bīrūnī as Mina's Night).

Many of the Zoroastrian festivals gradually disappeared in the pre-Mongol Islamic period, leaving only traces that survived as ordinary entertainment, but the New Year festival of Nawrūz and the spring festival of Mihragān remained firmly established, although with adaptations to the new conditions. Under the Ghaznavids, Nawrūz and Mihragān had the status of public holidays, for which special resources were made available, many gifts were given and charitable works were carried out throughout the country. The eleventh-century Ghaznavid historian Abu 'l-Fadl Bayhaqī describes how the Amir Mas^{c}ūd liked to celebrate Mihragān with particular splendour. On 20 September 1031, for example, Mihragān was celebrated in the capital Ghazna:

> Envoys came from prominent persons and lords of 'Iraq and Turkistan'. Poets appeared and [began] to recite verses; then *mutrib*s (musicians) played and sang and wine was passed round ... The palace staff and the invited *mutribs* set about their business and everyone became merry, as if there was no sorrow remaining in that place but it had all fled away.[54]

The Amir Mas^{c}ūd bestowed a sum of 30,000 dirhams on all the musicians and clowns. On 18 September 1036 he sat down to celebrate Mihragān in his new palace, where coins were strewn over him, and then in the winter quarters. Great lords and *nadīms* (boon-companions) arrived, wine was passed round and musicians played.[55] Mihragān was celebrated in 1037, initially with readings by poets and with festivities, followed by a very splendid celebration of ^{c}Īd al-Ad'hā. In the words of Bayhaqī, 'on that day there was a review of the infantry and cavalry of the court and innumerable utensils and ornaments were on display because envoys had been sent by Arslan Khan, Bughra Khan, Lashkar Khan and the ruler Sakrnan ... '.[56]

In addition to Nawrūz and Mihragān, there was also a long-standing tradition of celebrating the Zoroastrian festival of Sada at the end of January, as is attested by Bayhaqī and the court poets ^{c}Unsurī, Farrukhī and Manūchihrī. Under the Ghaznavids, Sada was celebrated in the month of Bahman: a great bonfire was lit at night, large-scale illuminations were organized, a magnificent spread was prepared, usually on the plain, wine was drunk and music was played. Festive fires were even lit in the tents. In 1034, for example, Mas^{c}ūd celebrated Sada near Merv, for which purpose tents were specially erected, many eagles and doves were brought in and quantities of firewood were prepared. According to Bayhaqī:

[54] Bayhaqī, 1969, p. 261.
[55] Ibid., pp. 444–5.
[56] Ibid., p. 469.

> Sada began with the amir sitting at first on the canal bank where an awning had been erected. *Nadīms* and musicians arrived, and firewood was lit . . . The glow from the fires was seen from a distance of about ten *farsakhs* [60 km]. Doves covered with naphthalene were released, pursuit of the ignited birds was begun; it was a Sada the like of which I had never seen.[57]

Many festivals associated mainly with Zoroastrianism were thus still being celebrated in the eighth-twelfth century in western Khurasan and Transoxania, often with a wealth of visual entertainment, dances and games specially composed for them, including, for example, dances in which objects (bells, spoons and scarves) were used, martial dances with bows, swords and sticks, and also dances and theatrical performances associated with fire. According to the ethnographer T. Kilichev, T.e Khwarazmian dance cycle, the *maqām ufarī*, which is still practised, is the survivor of just such an ancient choreographic cycle.[58]

Festivals and dramatic spectacles associated with the images of Mithra, the god of the sun and agriculture, and Anahita, the goddess of water, fertility and well-being, still survived in one form or another into this period, these deities being originally represented as large dolls around which many dramatic events were enacted, often associated with fire. The well-known modern dance cycle *Lazgi* may have originated in the image of Mithra, in his further guise as the god of battles, as indicated by movements directed towards the sky, and gestures full of fiery temperament, depicting the sparks of the fire and rotations around it. In the pre-Mongol period, some of the great spectacles associated with the images of Mithra and Anahita went on for many days, but by then they had already been converted into local deities (Mithra, for example, was replaced initially by the image of Siyāwush and then by that of Rustam). They still exist today in spectacles and images: *kema oyin* (‘the game of the boatwomen’), *yaghachayaq* (‘stilt-walking’), *yaghachat* (‘the game of the wooden horses’), *ashsha daraz* (‘tall Ashsha’) and *khubbim*, in which large dolls of Rustam, the wonders and the wild animals against which he fought are sometimes interchanged and episodes from longer spectacles presented.

Performing artists

In medieval Islamic times, there was still no clear differentiation between kinds of performers. The historical and literary sources frequently contain references to *mutribs, qawwāls* and *nadīms*, which should be given a broader interpretation than has hitherto been the case. Musicologists, for example, treat only musicians and singers as *mutribs*. In our view, the correct interpretation of the term is that *mutribs* were performing artists, i.e. musicians, singers and dancers of both sexes, and could include performers skilled in making people

[57] Ibid., p. 393.
[58] Kilichev, 1988, pp. 53–4.

laugh, i.e. comedians and parodists. The term *qawwāl* was equally broad and could denote an itinerant poet, a singer or an author-performer. *Nadīms* were often highly educated and gifted people, well-versed in history, religion and other disciplines, skilled organizers of the leisure activities and banquets of rulers, amirs and princes, and, of course, adepts in the fine arts and great conversationalists. All these qualities are set out in chapter 38 of the *Qābūs-nāma* by the Ziyarid prince Kay Kāwūs (see above). In it we read that a *nadīm* should be a *mutrib*, a master of language, and 'should also know by heart a great many funny stories, interesting sayings and unusual tales'.[59]*Nadīms* received salaries, wore expensive clothes and took their place alongside rulers. There are historical records of many outstanding *nadūms*. One such was ᶜAbd al-Rahmān, a *nadīm* of Muhammad, the son of Mahmūd of Ghazna, to whom Bayhaqī applies the term *ustād* (master), which is an indication of his high professionalism.

In Khurasan and Transoxania, the term *maskhara* was used for the comedy actor, and there are frequent references to them by Bayhaqī.[60] Although the term is an Arabic word, it was not used by the Arabs themselves for comedy actors; according to A. Mez, they used the word *samājāt* for comedy actors and *hākiyāt* for parodists and mimics.[61] Use was also made of jokes and witticisms. Chapter 13 of the *Qābūs-nāma* is devoted to 'An Account of the Rules of the Joke, and of Playing Chess and *Nard* [backgammon]'. Kay Kāwūs begs his son and his readers here to observe certain rules: to joke with someone younger than yourself or, at least, with someone of the same age, to keep a sense of proportion and to avoid foul language.[62]

We are best informed about those performers in the visual and auditory arts who served in the courts of rulers and important dignitaries. Bayhaqī tells us, for example, that not only the Ghaznavid sultans but also many important dignitaries kept troupes of musicians and actors. Thus Prince Muhammad had the services of *nadīms,mutrib*s and *qawwāl*s even when under house arrest, since 'he occupied himself only with feasting and making merry'.[63] A Hindu by the name of Tilak, who had once been an interpreter and translator, but subsequently became a military commander, had his own musicians: 'They played on the tambourine and the drum in his abode, as is the custom among Indian nobles.'[64]

[59] Kay Kāwūūs b. Iskandar, 1951, pp. 196–200.
[60] Bayhaqī, 1969, pp. 74, 401–2, 580.
[61] Mez, 1973, p. 322.
[62] Kay Kāwūs b. Iskandar, 1951, pp. 67–9.
[63] Bayhaqī, 1969, p. 46.
[64] Ibid., p. 366.

Court patronage

Most of the dynasties that reigned in Khurasan and Transoxania tried in various ways to bring together eminent scholars and artists in their capitals, not necessarily because they desired the development of artistic culture but often for reasons of prestige. They undoubtedly included many musicians and actors. Palaces and gardens were used for the presentation of all kinds of festivals and entertainments, such as the kiosk erected in the ^{c}Adnani gardens near Herat on a whim of the Ghaznavid Amir Mas^{c}ūd, and where musicians, singers, actors and women dancers performed.[65] Bayhaqi records that on 2 May 1031, in the Kushk-i Ma^{c}mur palace and in the town of Ghazna itself, 'there was so much rejoicing, merry-making, parading, drinking of wine, visiting and being visited, that nobody could remember the like'.[66]

Among the Ghaznavids, Mas^{c}ūd was much given to all kinds of entertainment and games and he frequently organized banquets, festivals and military parades. To judge from the account given by Bayhaqī, the amir kept several troupes of musicians and actors and had his own *qissagūy* (story-teller) and *maskhara* (clown). *Nadīm*s, *mutrib*s and *maskbara*s accompanied him everywhere – in his leisure time, on campaigns and when hunting: 'The Amir Mas^{c}ūd rode out with the intention of hunting and amusing himself for three days with *nadīms*, close friends and *mutribs*,' writes Bayhaqī.[67] On 15 April 1031 the amir set out from Balkh for Termez. 'The amir went in one boat, the *nadīms, mutribs* and itinerant actors in another, and they came to the fortress.' Kutlugh, the commander of the *kutwal* (fortress), came out to meet them and started to entertain them. 'They began to eat, wine was passed round, and the sound of the *mutribs* singing could be heard from the ship, while on the bank the *mutribs*, women dancers and drummers of Termez, more than 300 in all, started up and began to sing and play, in such a way that I have rarely seen what I saw there in Termez.'[68] Enraptured at such a magnificent reception, Mas^{c}ūd gave 155,000 dirhams to the people of Termez, including their *mutribs* and women dancers, who performed with their faces uncovered in front of men.

In a few cases, the names of performers at Mas^{c}ūd's court are known, including Sitt-i Zarrīn, whose singing and dancing earned her a great reputation, and her partner in her performances, ^{c}Andalīb, a male singer and dancer. They performed in Ghazna on the occasion of the marriage of Mas^{c}ūd to the daughter of the Karakhanid Kadïr Khan Yūsuf on 6–9

[65] Bayhaqī, 1969 p. 132.
[66] Ibid., p. 246.
[67] Ibid., p. 187.
[68] Ibid., p. 233.

September 1034.[69] Also in his retinue was Muhammad Bashnūdī, a musician who played the *barbad* and who performed at the Mihragān festival on 12 September 1038.[70] Bayhaqī also mentions a well-known minstrel and clown (*maskhara*) called Buki, who played the tambour and lived to the age of 93; his death in 1035 caused general grief.

The story-teller

The story-teller was a popular figure. The repertoire of a *qissagūy* would include stories from *Kalīla wa-Dimna* and many other legends and myths. Bayhaqī, however, was hostile to story-tellers, regarding them as ignoramuses:

> They are simple people, who most love tales of unbelievable events, such as stories of marvels and fairies, and demons of the deserts, mountains and seas made up by some ignoramus. A crowd of like-minded people gathers and he tells his tale: 'I' he says, 'saw an island, at one point on which 50 people had landed; they had begun to cook a meal and had set up their cooking pots; when the fire flared up and the heat from it reached the ground, the island moved: it was a fish.' 'Or', he says, 'on such and such a mountain I saw such and such things, or an old woman, a sorceress, turned a man into a donkey and again another sorceress smeared his ears with oil and he was changed back into a man,' and similar rubbish that sends ignoramuses to sleep when they are read to at night.[71]

We may guess from the account that some story-tellers performed in public, gathering 'a crowd of people' around them, while others read from a manuscript before their master went to sleep. Those who performed in public spoke in the first person, making it appear that they were relating their own adventures, although their entire repertoire consisted of myths and legends.

The arts in Khwarazm

Khwarazm was, in general, renowned for its art – its distinctive music and interesting dances – during the reign of the local ruler Abu 'l-^{c}Abbās Ma'mūn in the early eleventh century. Himself highly educated, he held scholars, poets and performers in great esteem and loved to play the *rūd* (a stringed instrument) himself. Al-Bīrūnī worked for seven years in Ma'mūn's circle, where he was the object of the shah's special concern and respect, before going into Ghaznavid service.

[69] Ibid., p. 379.
[70] Ibid., p. 493.
[71] Bayhaqī, 1969, pp. 586–7.

Rules of behaviour for performing artists

Rules were drawn up governing the behaviour of musicians and performers in society. The whole of chapter 36 of the *Qābus-nāma* is devoted to this subject: the artist had to be a person of agreeable disposition, always neat, happy, attractive and well-spoken; should not become involved in the games and discussions of those who had requested his or her presence; should not get carried away by wine or be coarse; should be blind, deaf and dumb when it came to divulging anything that had been seen or heard at the gathering; should take his or her calling seriously; and should perform in a manner befitting the audience and the ages of those present.[72]

The Sufi *dhikr*

There is evidence in the sources that Sufi *shaykhs* (holy men) conducted *dhikrs* (ceremonies of recitation of the Divine Names) during the eighth to the twelfth century in Transoxania. Tombs, shrines and *zāwiyas* (religious foundations of a quasi-monastic type) were the scene for *dhikrs* on religious feast-days and to celebrate important events. Devotees formed a circle (representing the universe), with the *shaykh*, the *hāfiz* (Qur'an-reciter) and the musicians most often in the centre but sometimes to one side. The *dhikr* (literally, 'invocation of the Name of God') began at a slow tempo with the people sitting, and with everyone clapping out the beat and swaying. As the tempo increased, they stood up and moved in defined eurythmic forms anti-clockwise and around their own body axis; the tempo increased still further, the emotional atmosphere became more charged and the participants reached a state of ecstasy, thus apparently purifying themselves, endeavouring to merge with the divine essence or at least approach it. The *shaykh* and the singers interrupted the action with their monologues and songs in high registers. According to the eastern Iranian writer on Sufism, al-Hujwīrī, dancing made its appearance in *dhikrs* in the eleventh century and subsequently began to assume a prominent role.[73]

The effects of the Mongol conquests

The Mongol conquests of Transoxania and Khurasan, with their destruction of urban centres, had an adverse effect on culture, including the dramatic and performing arts, at least temporarily. Many musicians, singers, virtuoso dancers and actors had to emigrate to neighbouring countries, while those who remained eventually doubtless served the followers of

[72] Kay Kāwūs b. Iskandar, 1951, pp. 186–90.
[73] Mez, 1937, pp. 286–7; 1973, p. 420.

Chinggis and the Mongol governors. There were fewer small ensembles of musicians, singers and actors, and large troupes became a rarity; during this period, most performers operated as individuals: as *bakhshīs* and *qissagūys* (story-tellers) and *maddāhs* (eulogists), or as isolated musicians, singers and actors.

The local populations were nevertheless able to preserve their potential for artistic expression and this led to a gradual resurgence of artistic traditions. This process gathered momentum as Islamic and Turkish institutions were accepted and absorbed by the Mongol conquerors and as they abandoned their nomadic way of life; hence festivals, both religious and secular, began to revive.

Even so, the pace and level of artistic development remained far inferior to what they had been in the pre-Mongol period. A certain amount of political fragmentation of Transoxania and Khurasan during the fourteenth century made the normal development of art difficult, especially the organization of large-scale secular entertainments that require internal stability and peace. This explains the predominance of religious forms and Sufi influences in the arts during this period. The Moroccan traveller of the early fourteenth century, Ibn Battūta, describes numerous tombs of saints and the religious establishments (*zāwiyas*) connected with them, where Sufis usually lived and performed *dhikr*. The official receptions organized for Ibn Battūta were partly of a religious and partly of a secular kind. In Fath'abad, for example, the *shaykh* Yahyā al-Bākharzī arranged a reception in his honour at which there were recitations from the Qur'an, followed by an address from a *wā*ᶜ*iz* (preacher), after which a number of *hāfiz*s sang 'very good songs' in Turkish and Persian.[74]

The Timurid revival

As urban culture revived, Timur established a basis for the new development. The craftsmen and scholars he had brought from many countries to his capital Samarkand included practitioners of the fine arts and others with an expert knowledge of the staging and performance of entertainment. These included large-scale festivals and carnival processions with a dramatic component, with hundreds of musicians, singers, actors, dancers and circus artists taking part in them. Timur and his successors celebrated every military victory and diplomatic success with a *tūy* (triumphant celebration) and a *bayram* (festival). Festivities were also sometimes organized before battles and sieges with the aim of arousing fighting spirit. Amusements and festivities were undoubtedly held for a select audience in the inner rooms of the splendid palaces and gardens of the ruler, but were mostly organized, however, in the *rīgistāns* (town squares) or in the open air – in orchards and pastures,

[74] Ibn Battūta, 1971, p. 544.

on the banks of rivers and lakes, and in the *saylgāhs* (places of public assembly) outside the town boundaries.

The largest celebrations and festivals were held in Samarkand, Herat and Shahr-i Sabz. Careful preparations were made for these festivals: the city and its environs were decked for the occasion, arches and tents were erected in the pleasure grounds and pavilions, summer-houses and other temporary structures were provided. All the artists available in the city, plus others from outside, were mobilized: singers, musicians, actors, dancers and circus performers and also wrestlers, strongmen, horsemen and archers. The programmes of the performances were arranged by *kārfarmāns* (folk-theatre producers) and *bakāwūls* (organizers of military and sporting contests and entertainments). The magnitude of the task facing the organizers becomes apparent when we remember that important festivals could last for a month or 40 days, and some for as long as 3 months. And, of course, there were also the calendar feasts of Nawrūz and Mihragān, and the Islamic feasts and ceremonies.

The artistic traditions established by Timur, including entertainments and games, were continued by his descendants. Groups of artists sprang up in the large cities, *tarab-khāna*s (special buildings with stages) and *tamāshāgāhs* (arenas) were in use, and outside the cities there were *saylgāhs* (places for mass festivals and processions). One such *saylgāh* was at Kan-i Gil near Samarkand, where all the main official festivals of Timur and the Timurids were held. In Herat there was a special street in which actors and musicians lived and performed.[75]

Mīr ᶜAlīshīr Nawā'ī was patron to a whole generation of artists and actors, some of whose names are known: the *maskhara* Riyāz and the parodists ᶜAbd Allāh (the *dīwāna*, fool) and Khwāja Dihdār. Husayn Wāᶜiz Kāshifī and Mawlāna Riyāzī excelled as orators, and Sayyid Badr, Tāhir (the *chakka*, tiny one) and Māh-Chuchuk as dancers, while ᶜAbd al-Wāsīᶜ (the *munshī*, or secretary) was an outstanding wit.

In Timurid times, preference was given to secular theatrical ceremonies and rituals, and many ceremonies and rituals that had previously been associated with religion came to be accepted as ordinary spectacles. Performances in arenas and carnival processions, the basis of festivals both popular and official, were especially popular during this period. Most of the performances in arenas were strongly influenced by the way of life, outlook and tastes of the Turkish pastoralist tribes and communities in the rulers' military followings. The *paygā* (equestrian events), *qopkarī* (goat-lashing), *chawgān* (polo), *kayak oyin* (archery on horseback), contests with military weapons, *kurash* (wrestling) and similar pursuits were therefore prominent.

[75] Belinitsky, 1946, p. 182.

Traditional theatre and dance

There was a whole series of games and performances that we might, thinking in modern terms, call traditional theatre, comprising comic performances, puppet theatre and story-telling. Each of these categories, in turn, had its own forms and genres. Thus, for example, comic performances included satirical take-offs by the *maskhara*, the humorous pantomime of *taqlīd* (mimicry) and the sharp barbs of *zarāfat* (wittiness, subtlety), differing one from another in their repertoire and means of expression. The presentation of the *qissagūy*, the *wā*^{c}*iz* and the *maddāh* was always serious, invariably providing the spectators with something with which to empathize, even to the point of becoming shocked. The *kavurchak oyin* (puppet theatre), on the other hand, appears to occupy a position midway between the theatre of humour and satire and the performances of preachers and story-tellers.

Dance was a varied form, ranging from the simplest imitations of hunting to the most delicate lyrical (and generally allegorical) dances, and from folk dances associated with the rituals of fire-worshippers to intricate classical dances performed to *maqām* melodies. Circus acts of the period included *dar-oyin* or *dar-hāz* (tightrope-walking), *afsūn* (hypnosis), *sha*^{c}*bada* (sleight-of-hand), *koz baghlash* (conjuring tricks), *mu*^{c}*allaq* (acrobatics), *nayrang* (juggling) and *ram* (animal training). Many of the attractions were traditional and exclusive to Transoxania and Khurasan, but others were borrowed from India and China.

To sum up, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries saw qualitatively new developments in drama and the performing arts and in the presentation of festivals in Khurasan and Transoxania. The skills and traditions of the pre-Mongol period were not only restored and developed but raised to new and higher levels; theoretical and practical bases were developed, more performers became professionals, and the contents and forms of expression of different cultures combined to form a new range of entertainment and the performing arts.