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Himalayan Hybridity and the Evolution of Ladakhi Popular Music

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Himalayan Hybridity and the Evolution of Ladakhi Popular Music

Noé Dinnerstein

Historically, Ladakh in the Western Himalayas was a significant nexus of Trans-Himalayan caravan trade, and thus exhibited a significant hybridity in its material, linguistic, religious, and musical culture. In this paper, I examine the rise of Ladakhi popular music in and through these crossroads, paying attention to themes of hybridity. I look at the development of Ladakhi ethnic, political, and musical identity, and the role of government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and individuals with regard to the rise of new musical genres. Accompanying the historical survey of the music is a discussion of the evolutions of textual content. Changes in mass media technology and economics have had a profound effect on this remote region, and have shaped how cultural identity is negotiated by both song writers and consumers of popular music.

Keywords: Ladakh, popular music, *zhung lu*, hybridity, *lu soma*.

Introduction

Ladakh is an ethnic Tibetan area in the Western Himalayas that currently occupies the eastern portion of the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir. Historically, it was a significant nexus of Trans-Himalayan caravan trade to and from Baltistan, Turkestan, Western and Central Tibet, Lahul/Spiti, Himachal, and Kashmir, with hybridity in material, linguistic, religious, and musical culture. In this paper, I examine the rise of Ladakhi popular music out of crossroads hybridity¹, tracing the evolving semiotics of melodic and rhythmic style, instrumentation, and representations of sonic space. I present an historical overview of the development of Ladakhi ethnic, political, and musical identity, and how agendas of government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and individuals shaped the form and content of new musical genres. The evolution of poetic style is also of interest, and is an area of continued discussion and contention among Ladakhis. I also trace the path of popular music through the evolution of mass media technology and economics in this remote region, noting how cultural identity is negotiated by song writers and consumers of popular music.

This article presents a broad historical survey of the emergence of Ladakhi pop music, its styles and meanings. I present an analytical survey that includes music transcriptions and translations in order to help readers experience the content of these songs. The only prior study on this subject was Mark Trewin's 1999 article, "Tibetan and Ladakhi Popular Music in India", which serves as a

significant source for tracing the earlier development of its various styles, and the socio-political forces that shaped them. I extend this discussion with the help of interviews I conducted with most of the major figures in this narrative—many of whom are close friends and associates. These individuals include Padma Shri Morup Namgyal, Ngawang Tsering Shakspo, Dorjay Stakmo, Tashi Chosphel, Tsering Angchuk Ralam, Tsering Chorol Patsi, Rigzin Norbu, and Tsewang Phuntsok. In some cases, I have actually worked with these artists in the recording studio, or have performed publicly with them, and have discussed the music of earlier artists, as well as their own creative processes. My analysis also draws on mass media recordings of pop music, in both analog and digital forms. To procure additional recordings of pop music, I have combed through the bazaars of Leh, Ladakh's capital, and gotten various recordings from friends as well as the ubiquitous YouTube. I have also spoken with music fans of all ages in the Leh district, collecting anecdotal data.

My analysis explores how the popular music relates to, or diverges from, previous traditional music genres. This includes an examination of changing poetic styles in the lyrics.² The following discussion begins with an introduction to traditional song genres from the Leh court, villages, and the Changthang nomads. I next discuss the post-Independence period from the 1950s through 1970s, with the development of new genres influenced by other Himalayan regions such as Himachal, Garhwal, and Nepal, that were motivated by social reform agendas of national and state governments and NGOs. I then discuss the rise of mass media in the 1970s with the establishment of radio broadcasts in the region. The cassette revolution soon followed in the 1980s through the 1990s with the evolution of what I call a 'Pan-Himalayan' musical vocabulary. I conclude the article with a description of the 21st century digital revolution's effect on musical production and style in Ladakh, as this Himalayan region has become part of the internet's globalizing environment.

Divergence from Traditional Genres

Ladakhi popular music markedly diverges from traditional music of the region in terms of melodic style, rhythmic structure, and the instruments used to accompany songs. In this music genre, the composite rhythms common even in rural genres gave way to simpler, binary and ternary meters that were inspired by other Himalayan regions. The textual style underwent changes as well, as early popular songs were composed to further social reform agendas instigated by federal and state governments, as well as NGOs. However, in Ladakh, popular music traditional styles segued into a more cosmopolitan style, as mass media and

commercial production and consumption became part of the cultural landscape.

I will analyze the features of some of the notable traditional music genres, and note points of continuity and divergence from the new Ladakhi pop music. The traditional Ladakhi music from the urban and agrarian sectors uses the iconic *surna* and *daman*, which is a double reed/kettledrum ensemble brought from Baltistan in the 16th century that was traditionally played by low-caste specialists in instrumental music known as *mon*. Some of these traditional songs were also accompanied on *daman* and *daf* by members of even lower-castes who are itinerant musicians known as *beda*. In this traditional repertoire, we hear instrumental dances and songs in a variety of metrical cycles, many of them composite rhythms—2-2-2-3, 3-2-2, etc.—where the *daman* beat functions as an ostinato. The melodies employ various penta- and heptatonic patterns, some similar to Tibetan models, but many more similar to Kashmiri or Indian models. An example is shown in the following transcription of the *zhung lu* 'Kawa Rinpoche' [The Precious Pillar] (Figure 1).

As the golden precious pillar is erected

It spreads over the pedestal of the four continents

It is said to spread over the pedestal of the four continents

It is filled by the light of the earth. (Rabgias 1970: 77)

These texts were generally written by aristocratic or monastic literati, and set to music by the *khar mon* (palace musicians). The imagery is highly literary, often with influences from Tibetan Buddhist meditation visualizations. Viewing these songs as being part of a continuum, we might view the court genres as being close to art songs in terms of their performance milieu because the texts were written according to rules of Tibetan prosody (using a fixed number of syllables per line) and employed literary conventions shared by literary elites based on pan-Tibetan aesthetics. The rural genres show a mixture of high-culture Buddhist imagery mixed with more nature-based, pre-Buddhist references to chthonic numina and seasonal phenomena, and may be more straightforwardly referred to as folk songs. In both cases, many songs of this style were dependent on instrumental specialists for their performance in public settings, including festivals, life-cycle events such as weddings, etc.

In my study of traditional songs and their imagery (Dinnerstein 2013a), I note that in many cases a mandala-like hierarchy is described that delineates the heavens,

Voice

ka ba la ri - (l)n po che

Daman

gser la bzhe-(le)ngs yod (de ni) ka (la) stegs (po) gli-(li)ng bzhi ru

khyab ka stegs gling bzhi ru

khyab song ze - (le)r na (de ni)

sa - (la) gzhi po 'o - (lo)d kyis sang khyab

Figure 1. 'Kawa Rinpoche'.

(sung by Dorjay Stakmo, 2009)

the spiritual powers, temporal powers, family, and the personal life. Other writers describe geography in spiritual terms as the abode of various mythological or chthonic spirits or deities (Dinnerstein 2013a). Guiseppe Tucci noted these types of poetic depictions in folk songs in Gyantse and Western Tibet (Tucci 1966). Similarly, Anna Morcom, in her article on the transformation of Tibetan songs, noted similar use of nature-inspired lyrics in traditional rural music genres (Morcom 2015).

By contrast, other music genres are based around simpler rhythmic patterns: binary, ternary, and the occasional compound seven-beat meter (3-2-2). In the case of ternary meters, there is a frequent use of hemiola, the use of two beats against three or two beats alternating with three (six beats divided either 3-3 or 2-2-2). The latter is a common feature in Kashmiri, Balti, Afghan, Nepali, and Garhwali music. For instance, among the nomads on the Changthang Plateau, who are musically and linguistically more akin to the Tibetans, one of the most popular song and dance genres is *Zhabro*. However, unlike the better-known Tibetan version, the Changthang versions are primarily in ternary meter. Like Tibetan *zhabro* styles, the most iconic instrument accompanying this genre is the *damnyan* or *kopongs* lute. Figure 2 is a transcription of a famous *zhabro* 'The Damnyan Tashi Wangyal.'

sgra snyan nga la zer ba'i bla ma mi 'dug ma sems.

sgra snyan bkra shis dbang rgyal la bla ma mi 'dug ma sems.

sgrub chen thang stong rgyal po sgra snyan nga yi bla ma. 2x

Don't think to tell me that my *damnyan*
does not have a lama.

Don't think that the *damnyan* Tashi Wangyal
does not have a lama.

The great spiritual attainer Thangtong Gyalpo is my
damnyan's lama. 2x

sgra snyan nga la zer ba'i yab chen mi 'dug m sems.

sgra snyan bkra shis dbang rgyal la yab chen mi 'dug ma sems.

*shing de shing rgyal rgyal po de sgra snyan nga
yi yab chen yin. 2x*

Don't think to tell me that my *damnyan* does not
have a big father.

Don't think that the *damnyan* Tashi Wangyal does
not have a big father

That wood of the king of the giant-tree is my *dam-
nyan's* big father. 2x

Figure 2. 'The Damnyan Tashi Wangyal'.

(traditional *zhabro*)

sgra snyan nga la zer ba'i yum chung mi 'dug m sems.

sgra snyan bkra shis dbang rgyal la yum chung mi 'dug ma sems.

sha ba yu mo'i pags pa sgra snyan nga yi yum chung yin. 2x

Don't think to tell me that my *damnyan* does not have a little mother.

Don't think that the *damnyan* Tashi Wangyal does not have a little mother.

That skin of the female deer is my *damnyan's* little mother. 2x

sgra snyan nga la zer ba'i spun mched mi 'dug ma sems.

sgra snyan bkra shis dbang rgyal la spun mched mi 'dug ma sems.

tse tse ra ma'i tsi ri de sgra snyan nga yi spun mched yin. 2x

Don't think to tell me that my *damnyan* does not have siblings.

Don't think that the *damnyan* Tashi Wangyal does not have siblings.

The intestines of the she goat are my *damnyan's* siblings. 2x

sgra snyan nga la zer ba'i chos grogs mi 'dug ma sems.

sgra snyan bkra shis dbang rgyal la chos grogs mi 'dug ma sems.

*phyag mdzub bcu po tsang ma sgra snyan nga yi
chos grogs yin. 2x*

Don't think to tell me that my *damnyan* has no
dharma companions.

Don't think that the *damnyan* Tashi Wangyal has no
dharma companions.

All my ten fingers are my *damnyan*'s
dharma companions.

(Ladakh Cultural Academy 2014: 1, trans. ND).

The use of metaphor is striking in this, and other, songs in the genre. Again, we see a hierarchy of relationships depicted: lama, parents, siblings, and fellow spiritual practitioners. As noted earlier, the use of nature imagery is common, such as in these lyrics from a *zhabro* recorded by David Lewiston in 1977 (Lewiston 1977).

You are the high sky

You are the sun and the moon

We did not think of meeting before

But we met in the home today

There is nothing as happy as that.

Ghazal is another notable genre popular in Kargil and Leh towns. The usual prestige accompaniment of *surna* and *daman* figures prominently. Originating in Baltistan, the texts are generally romantic, playful, or sentimental in nature. Unlike *ghazals* in Persian and Urdu, the term *ghazal* seems to apply to romantic or playful strophic songs that can be in the form of quatrains that are thematically linked in some cases. Local taxonomy is fluid in this regard. However, unlike the Urdu *ghazal*, there are no double meaning in texts that mixes the spiritual with the worldly.

Melodically, *ghazals* tend to have syllabic settings with minimal melismatic ornamentation. Settings in ternary meter often display hemiola. Figure 3 is a transcription of the vocal and *daman* lines from a cassette recording by Kunzes Dolma, the daughter of famed singer Tseschu Lhamo, 'Ache Nyima Zangmo' [Elder sister Nyima Zangmo].

A ce nyi ma bzang mo, sgo gang gi g.yu chung

Ban dha nyi ma bzang mo, sgo gang gi g.yu chung.

De 'dra sgo gang khyong mkhan, kho ba mi yi a jo

De 'dra g.yu chung khyong mkhan, sde pa phyag mdzod chen mo.

Big sister Nyima Zangmo has a turquoise on the
middle of her door

Miss Nyima Zangmo has a turquoise on the mid-
dle of her forehead

Whoever brings it, elder brother, is like,

Whoever brings the turquoise is like the chief of a
great treasury from the capital.

A ce nyi ma bzang mo, yo gor bog chung

Ban dha nyi ma bzang mo, yo gor bog chung.

De 'dra bog chung khyong mkhan, kho ba mi yi a jo

De 'dra bog chung khyong mkhan, sde pa phyag mdzod chen mo.

Big sister Nyima Zangmo has a small gem-
stone in that place

Miss Nyima Zangmo has a small gem-
stone in that place

Whoever brings the gem, elder brother, is like,

Whoever brings the gem is like the chief of a great
treasury from the capital.

A ce nyi ma bzang mo, brang gan gi bod shel

Ban dha nyi ma bzang mo, brang gan gi bod shel

De 'dra bod shel khyong mkhan, kho ba mi yi a jo

De 'dra bod shel khyong mkhan, sde pa phyag mdzod chen mo.

Big sister Nyima Zangmo has a Tibetan crys-
tal on her breast,

Miss Nyima Zangmo has a Tibetan
crystal on her breast

Whoever bring the Tibetan crystal is like,

Whoever brings the Tibetan crystal is like the chief
of a great treasury from the capital.



Figure 3. 'Ache Nyima Zangmo'.

(Ghazal)

A ce nyi ma bzang mo, dung lag gi rta rmig
Ban dha nyi ma bzang mo, dung lag gi rta rmig
De 'dra dung lag khyong mkhan, kho ba mi yi a jo
De 'dra dar mig khyong mkhan, sde pa phyag mdzod chen mo.

Big sister Nyima Zangmo, has a conch-shell
 ornament on her arm

Miss Nyima Zangmo has a conch-shell
 ornament on her arm

Whoever brings it, elder brother, is like,

Whoever brings the 'silk eye' is like the chief of a
 great treasury from the capital.

A ce nyi ma bzang mo, si kim gyi sked rags
Ban dha nyi ma bzang mo, si kim gyi sked rags
De 'dra ske rags khyong mkhan, kho ba mi yi, a jo,
De 'dra ske rags khyong mkhan, sde pa phyag mdzod chen mo.

Big Sister Nyima Zangmo has a sash from Sikkim

Miss Nyima Zangmo has a sash from Sikkim

Whoever brings the sash, elder brother, is like,

Whoever brings the sash is like the chief of a great
 treasury from the capital.

A ce nyi ma bzang mo, sog lham gyi phur ma
Ban dha hyi ma bzang mo, sog lham gyi phur ma
De 'dra sog lham khyong mkhan, kho mi yi a jo,
De 'dra phur ma khyong mkhan, sde pa phyag mdzod chen mo.

Big Sister Nyima Zangmo has Mongolian
 boots with a border

Miss Nyima Zangmo has Mongolian
 boots with a border

Whoever brings Mongolian boots, elder
 brother, is like,

Whoever brings the Mongolian boots is like the
 chief of a great treasury from the capital.

The text here is similar to various rural genres such as *chang lu* (beer songs) and *bagston lu* (marriage songs), and *stod lu* (praise songs) (Rabgias 1970, Dinnerstein 2013a, *Ladakh Cultural Academy* 2014). Songs enumerating gifts, or the attributes of something or someone, are common. What is noteworthy in this text—as in texts from marriage songs in particular—is the descriptions of material goods from other areas along the caravan routes: Tibetan quartz crystal, Sikkimese cloth, conch shell from India. The Mongolian boots are a style of shoe with embroidery and upturned toes, inspired by the Mongols' cavalry wear.

As opposed to the court genres, the commonalities of the genres with simpler meters have affinities with music of neighboring regions. Ternary meters with hemiola in particular may be seen as a stylistic link with music of other regions.

1950s-1960s: The Rise of Lu Soma or 'New Song'

Ladakhi concepts of ethnic and national identity have been in flux since the mid-19th century. The kingdom was conquered by the Dogras of Jammu and Kashmir in 1834. Subsequently Jammu and Kashmir joined independent India in 1947. Since then, Ladakh has been a tense border region with armed conflicts with Pakistan (1948, 1965, 1971, and 1999) and China (1962) directly involving combat in the area. As a military zone from 1948 to 1974, Ladakh had virtually no contact with the rest of India or elsewhere. All cultural, economic, and political development was under the close scrutiny of the Indian government. Ladakhis primarily lived by subsistence farming that was supplemented by small- or large-scale caravan trade, depending on location and socio-economic status. After the borders with Pakistan, and Chinese-controlled Turkestan and Tibet were closed, the majority of that lucrative trade ceased, leading to a decline in regional income. In response, the military, as well as state and national governments, generated a certain amount of employment. Most of this work involved building infrastructure (especially roads) or working in new government bureaucracies.

Ladakh has been closely connected by religious, linguistic, and cultural ties with Tibet. The two nations were sometimes in conflict, as in the Tibet-Ladakh-Mughal War of the 1680s, but Ladakhis most often looked to Lhasa, in particular, as being a place of reverence and pilgrimage. Following the Chinese takeover of Tibet and the crushing of the 1959 uprising, approximately 100,000 refugees fled from Tibet with the Dalai Lama to India (Tibet Net 2016). This was followed by the Sino-Indian War of 1962, where China claimed sovereignty over Ladakh,³ seizing control of the mainly uninhabited Aksai Chin. Fear of Chinese conquest solidified a sense of Ladakhi identity as distinct from the Tibetans, and aligned Ladakh firmly with Indian nationhood. Fear of Pakistani (Muslim) takeover additionally polarized Ladakhi Buddhists, who had been pushing for a separation from Kashmir on the grounds of being a distinct nation on the basis of race, language, religion, and culture (Trewin 1999: 54-55). Nevertheless, there is to this day a kind of duality born out of Ladakh's isolation from the rest of India, with outsiders referred to as *gyagar-pa* (Indians), as opposed to *ladags-pa* (Ladakhis). At the same time, Ladakhis are generally proud to be part of India.

According to Trewin, India's 1951 five-year plan "set out directives by which every citizen should be able 'to relate his or her role in the larger purposes of the nation as a 'whole' and that 'all available methods of communication have to be developed and the people approached through

the written word no less than through radio, film, song, and drama" (Trewin, 1999: 55). The first Ladakhi language broadcasts were started in 1954, based out of All India Radio (AIR) in Srinagar, under the auspices of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

At this time, several Ladakhi composers began writing songs to spread the government's social and political propaganda: fostering a sense of nationhood, encouraging education, and discouraging polyandry, smoking, and drinking. These song writers were connected to the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA), an intellectual religious reform movement which had been pushing for social reforms since its founding in 1934. Their philosophy of consciousness raising was called '*spyi tshogs la yar rgyas pa*' [uplifting of society], and equated the development of 'backward' Ladakhi society with spiritual deliverance. The earliest of these composers was Ishey Tondup (1897-1980), a noted scholar of Tibetan and president of the LBA. He was also the teacher of Tashi Rabgias (b. 1927) (Trewin 1999: 54-55).

Tashi Rabgias (also spelled Rabgyas) has been one of the most influential scholars, composers, writers, and cultural workers in modern Ladakh. From 1953 to 1958, he was personal assistant to the First Deputy Minister for Ladakh, the late Kushok Bakula Rimpoche, one of the founders of the modern Ladakhi political establishment. From 1960 to 1962 he was in charge of Ladakhi language programming for Radio Kashmir, Srinagar. From 1964 to 1982 he was an information officer for the J and K government. During this time, he also founded the Ladakh Cultural Forum, and was secretary of the LBA. He was also active as a collector of folksongs, publishing a collection *Ladvags gyi yul glu* in 1970, which was aimed at validating Ladakhi as a language separate from Tibetan. It was also during this period that he began composing neo-traditional songs as part of government and NGO reform agendas (Reach Ladakh 2016).

Lu soma (new songs), or *dering gyi lu* (songs of today), developed during the 1950s and 60s, influenced by the 200,000 Indian troops being stationed in Ladakh. Many of these troops were initially drawn from other high-altitude areas, notably Garhwal, Kumaon, and Nepal, and exposed Ladakhis to music and dance styles from these regions. In a personal communication with the author on August 7th, 2014, famed singer Morup Namgyal recounted how performances were held for the troops in Zorawar Fort in Leh, to which the local population were invited, and related how much of a revelation these new styles of song and dance were.

Travelling social theater groups led by Tashi Rabgias mixed drama, song, and dance, all freely adapted from Indian and

Nepali models—no secular theater forms had previously existed. Morup Namgyal told me that sometimes he composed original music in this new idiom, while at other times would merely take an existing melody and put Ladakhi words to it. Copyright considerations did not come into the picture at all. Noted scholar Ngawang Tsering Shakspo recounted that, starting around 1965, some of these performances were also sponsored as fund-raisers for the Lamdon Society (p.c. 25 July, 2016). This society was founded by the Venerable Gelong Thubstan Palden, Morup Namgyal, and the local politician Tsering Samphel. According to the Lamdon School website:

Lamdon School was established by the Lamdon Society, a volunteer organization, in 1973. The main aim is to provide equal education opportunity facilities to all children, particularly to poorer ones, through modern educational practices. At the same time, the school helps the students to appreciate their own culture and its values. All students study three languages: Ladakhi, Hindi and English (Lamdon 2016).

In addition to introducing rhythms, instruments and/or melodic influences from these other regions, these social theater productions were also accompanied by new mimetic, mudra-like gestures in dance—a very Nepali style. Besides Tashi Rabgias, other notable singers/composers of the time were Mohammed Shafi Reli, Alchi Lonpo, and Morup Namgyal, with the latter being one of the founders,

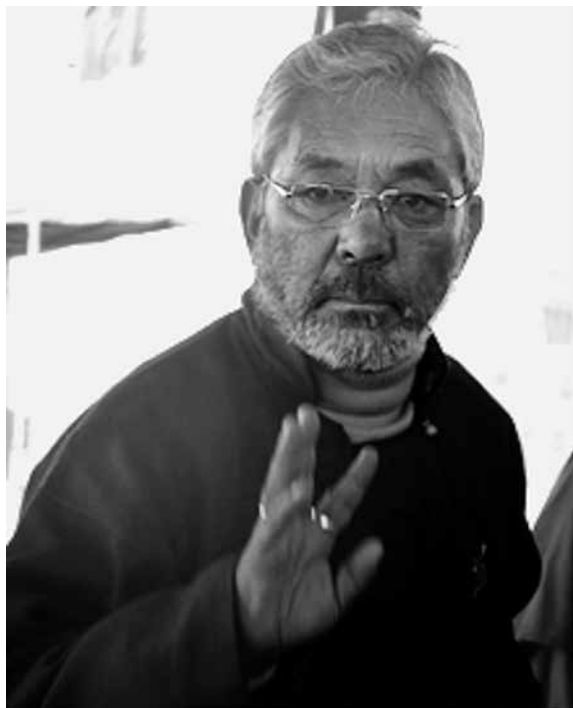


Figure 4. Morup Namgyal.

(Dinnerstein, 2011)

as well as being one of the first teachers at the Lamdon School (Figure 4).

Figure 5 is a transcription from the Lewiston recording of Mohammed Shafi Reli singing and playing the autoharp-like Indian ‘banjo,’ a cheap Japanese import also known as the *Taishokoto*, or in Hindi *bulbultarang*. He was heterophonically accompanied by *damnyan*, with rhythm played on a dholak-like barrel drum called *dingjang*. Unlike older Ladakhi genres where hemiola consisted of the occasional alternation of two and three, as in Figure 3, the use of a continuous, bouncy, two-against-three hemiola pattern in modern Ladakhi music was considered to be innovative, and became a hallmark of many songs in modern Ladakhi popular music.

As with a number of rural traditional genres, the song text is nature oriented, with the common traditional theme of the turning of the seasons.

*The air has become cold and days have become shorter;
the spangyan flower has been with us for three months.
The turquoise-like leaves of the trees have turned yellow.
The apricots and apples have become ripe....*

(Translation by Tashi Rabgias, from Lewiston 1977).

The 1970s: The Advent of Mass Media

The founding of the Leh branch of All India Radio (AIR) in 1973 accelerated the evolution of *lu soma*. Morup Namgyal explained that part of the objective of the AIR central directorate was to equip the studio with instruments such as harmonium and tabla, as well as Indian artists to play them and train others—a one-size-fits-all approach. This led to new arrangements of *zhabro*, *ghazal*, and *lu soma* played with instruments such as the harmonium, tabla, *santoor*, *bansuri*, and *damnyan*. The inclusion of harmonium coincides with AIR’s lifting its ban on the use of harmonium in 1971 (Rahaim 2011), made easier, no doubt, by Leh being a regional station that avoided contention by their choice not to play Hindustani classical music.

AIR employed two classes of musicians at this stage. The staff musicians/composers, like Morup Namgyal, were not from the *Mon* and *Beda* castes, and sang and played both the new instruments and traditional instruments. In fact, many of the musicians came from the more educated upper-echelon households, both Buddhist and Muslim, with many of the Buddhist artists coming from old aristocratic families. What AIR categorized as casual artists would either be singers from any social class or instrumentalists, many of whom were *Mon* and *Beda*, and primarily played *surna* and *daman*.



Figure 5. 'Ston gyi lu (Autumn Song)'.

(Muhammed Shafi Reli)

These new versions of *lu soma* utilized a semiotic palette I term 'Generic Pop Himalayan' or 'Pan-Himalayan.' I coined this term to indicate the mass mediated, common-denominator origins of these musical traits that include stereotyped melody forms, rhythms, and musical instruments common to Himalayan regions as they are presented in Bollywood movies, television, and pop music recordings. From a semiotic view, this palette is indexical to the Himalayas, with all the associations of romantic or idyllic sentiments, rural simplicity, and pristine nature (Dinnerstein 2013: 81)

A couple of melodic types came to predominate in current practice: one, a pattern similar to the Hindustani Raga Pahadi (*pahāri* = hilly) that originated in Himachal Pradesh, and the other resembling a Raga Jhinjhoti pattern, which combines elements from Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh (Figure 6). In a personal communication on October 11, 2016, Stefan Fiol noted that "neither of these melodic types is common in Uttarakhand, where purely pentatonic modes reign supreme." It should be noted that Ladakhi musicians do not discuss melodic types, and have only a small amount of theory relating to traditional rhythmic patterns.

Rhythmically, the predominant rhythms used in this type of music are binary rhythms akin to Hindustani *kaherva taal*, and most notably, a ternary rhythm similar to *khemta taal*, which frequently employs hemiola. A few songs utilize a *rupak taal*-like seven beat rhythm, also very evocative of Himalayan folk music, but this is far less common. The similarity with the indigenous seven-beat rhythm lends a familiarity for Ladakhi listeners, making it accessible.

AIR programming was dominated by Hindi language national feeds of music and news, but also included Ladakhi language folk music, drama, news, and new music. New songs were composed or appropriated, driven both by the creative urges of the artists, and by government agendas. To meet deadlines, composers often resorted to adding Ladakhi lyrics to existing songs from Garhwal, Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet, etc.—it didn't matter. Again, issues of copyright did not occur to anyone, which was common throughout the subcontinent at that time.

Up through the 1980s, the only means of mass media distribution of Ladakhi music was via radio. No commercial recordings on LP were produced in India, where the Gramophone Company of India controlled the production of commercial recordings and had little interest in such a small niche market. This changed in the 1990s when

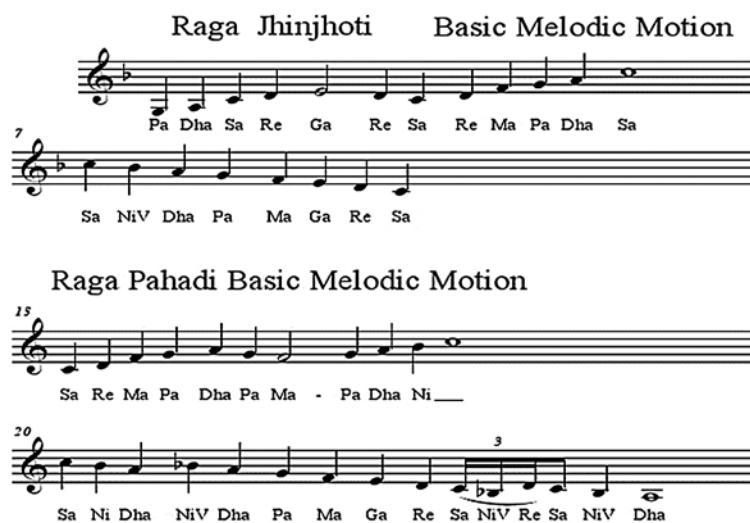


Figure 6. Indo-Himalayan Melodic Patterns.

cassette technology finally became common in the region (cf. Manuel 1993).

During the late 1970s and into the 1980s, one of the most influential pop artists was a relative of Tashi Rabgias, Phonsok Tsering Dembir (born 1952), known by the stage name Phonsok Ladakhi. Trained at Mumbai's Film and Television Institute (FTI), he embarked on a career as an actor, singer, and dancer in Bollywood, and although he earned a reasonable amount of money, he never achieved major stardom, he said in a personal communication on July 17, 2016. He is known for an influential style of popular song that incorporated the film-style *ghazal* with either Ladakhi language lyrics or with Hindi lyrics and Tibetan Buddhist themes (Trewin 1999: 60). He never performed/recorded on AIR Leh, although whether it was by his choice or that of AIR is not clear, considering he has always been known as a flamboyant, somewhat irrational character. Like many artists in Ladakh, he has made some of his living through live performances in Ladakh and at Ladakhi gatherings in Delhi. Unlike his compatriots, he has instead made a name for himself in the Ladakhi and Tibetan exile community, giving live performances in India, Nepal, Europe, the UK and US.

In part, he has been able to capitalize on his slight fame in Bollywood to publicize himself and position himself as a pan-Tibetan artist. His Hindi-language songs 'Om mani padme hum' and 'Namo namo' (the latter praising the Dalai Lama) are perennial favorites, and are accessible to both communities in Hindi, the lingua franca of North India. Hence, there is an assertion of a common Tibetan Buddhist culture. Nevertheless, Phonsok Ladakhi's songs appear to occupy a particular niche because they are sung by a Ladakhi who has some degree of fame beyond the regional borders, but does not engage in Ladakhi language musical production per se. He has attempted to position himself as a more cosmopolitan figure within both India and the wider world. As such, he has not continued to be a part of the evolving musical discourse in Ladakh, but is something of a figure apart.

The 1990s: Cassette Culture

The 1990s saw an increase in tourist trade and a growth in the Ladakhi economy. Aided by low cost cassette technology, private recording studios and/or private music production entrepreneurs began to produce commercial recordings of traditional and popular music, breaking free of the AIR monopoly. A few studios were in Leh itself, but much of the production was done in better equipped studios an hour's plane ride away in New Delhi.

The following is one of Morup Namgyal's famous performances from this period 'Lungspo juju' [Please, oh wind] (Figure 7), written by Tsering Angchuk Ralam (Figure 8) in 1991, with lyrics by Tsering Angdus Saspol Kalon.

gnam zla dpyid di dpyid zla gsum po

skya sir rlung po'i dbang zhig rgyu 'dug

rlung po 'ju 'ju thal rtsub ma lung

nga yi nye mo'i zhal gdong nogs 'dug.

The three months of spring are delightful

But the powerful wind blows the dust around

Therefore, please, oh wind, don't be harsh

To my beloved's lips.

gnam zla dbyang ri dbyar zla gsum po

nyi ma lags mo'i nyi zer tshan te

srin nag 'ju 'ju nyi zer 'gog gang

nga yin nye mo'i zhal gdong tshig 'dug.

In the mountains, the three months of summer

Are sunny, and the sunlight is hot

Please, oh black clouds, block the sun's rays

So they are gentle on my beloved's lips

gnam zla ston ne grang gro snyoms mo

mgyogs pa ma skyod gor gor rig bzhugs

ri dang rlung gi me tog kun la

nga yin ye mo'i glu dbyang len nyin

In autumn, it is cool and the wheat is ripe

It does not go around, but stays

Into the flowers of mountain and air

Take my beloved's melody in the day.

gnam zla dgun ne dgun zla gsum po

kha ba babs te gnam zla grang mo

nyi ma 'ju 'ju nyi zer stsal lang

nga yin nye mo'i ser mo skyod 'dug.

Free alap-like introduction Santoor Kaherva tal in tabla

Voice

Bansuri

5 Instrumental refrain
Bansuri, santoor, damnyan, and synthesizer

10 Voice, synthesizer, santoor, damnyan
gnam zla dpyid di dpyid zla gnam po

15 Female voice
akya cir rlung po'i dbang zhig rgyu 'dug Ah - - - gnam zla dpyid di

20 dpyid zla gnam po akya cir rlung po'i dbang zhig rgyu 'dug rlung po 'ju 'ju

24 Instrumental refrain
thal rtsab ma lhung nga yi nye mo'i zhal gdong nogs 'dug rlung po 'ju 'ju

28 thal rtsab ma lhung nga yi nye mo'i zhal gdong nogs 'dug

Figure 7. 'Lungs po juju'.

(Music by Tsering Angchuk Ralam; lyrics by Tsering Angdus Saspol Kalon)

In the three months of winter
The weather has snowfall and is cold
Please, oh sun, begin to bestow sun beams
So my beloved becomes golden.

The imagery of the change of seasons is a direct descendant of songs like the earlier "Autumn Song" of Mohamed Shafi Reli. The nature references, stylistically derived from traditional rural models, combine with romantic language reflecting a more modern, cosmopolitan rhetoric. The use of reverb, is part of the standard semiotics depicting a mountain environment, along with the use of *bansuri*, *damnyan*, and *santoor*. Morup Namgyal's vocal tone is characterized by the traditional, high, tight-throated quality used in traditional music, a feature that continues to be a mainline trait of Ladakhi popular music.

At this time, studios in Leh were small scale affairs—a 2-track Tascam deck, some mikes and a sound proof room—put together by part-time producers who had other sources of income. A few producers, such as Music Centre and Bamboo Music, were and still are tent and A/V contractors who also organize live concerts. With the exception of musicians who were employed by AIR, all musicians at the time were working other jobs, many in the tourist trades.

The 2000s: Internet, Digital Technology, and YouTube

Since the turn of the millennium, Ladakh has experienced a boom in tourism, with a sharp rise in urban migration and income. Ladakhis, flush with new found prosperity, are embracing their cultural uniqueness while enjoying the technological and social benefits of being part of modern India. Cultural production, such as drama,

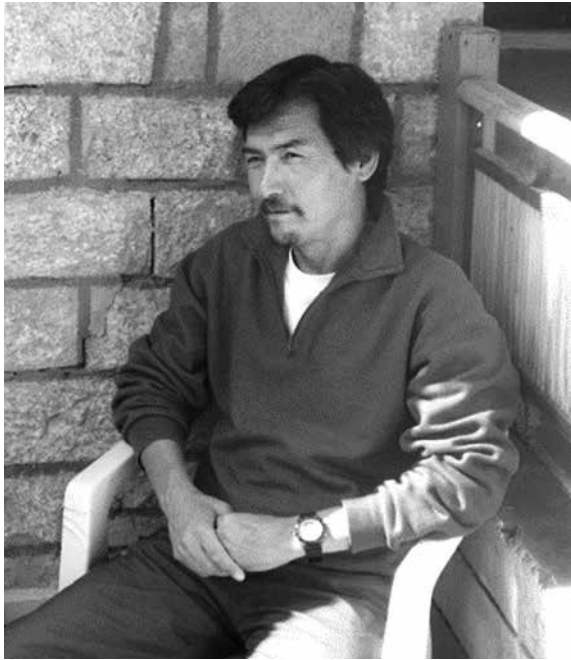


Figure 8. Tsering Angchuk Ralam, current music director at AIR, Leh, Ladakh.

(Dinnerstein, 2012)

art, and music, has increased, and multiple discourses on culture, tradition, and cultural preservation are currently acknowledged by artists, academics, and the general population.

New artists have come into prominence, like Morup Namgyal's student Dorjay Stakmo (Figure 9), currently one of the few full-time musicians in Ladakh. Like his mentor, he employs a traditional vocal style in both his traditional and popular works.

He produces much of his own music in a modest, state-of-the-art studio, singing both traditional and popular music. He and others have adopted an arranging style more akin to Bollywood, with less emphasis on the neo-traditional acoustic sound. Instead, he makes ample use of guitar, synthesizer, drum kit and/or rhythm machines or digital rhythm tracks, *tabla*, *dholak*, as well as the ubiquitous *bansuri*. An example of his song style is his 1996 hit 'Lung la mentok' (Figure 10).

Lung la men tok kun gyi zhing tsot tse ni
yul la gyi zhing cha ni lungspo gyu gyi
tha lo yagi skyitnyams lungsta'i nga la
nga yi gawa'i nyemo itu skyud di
nga yi gawa'i nyemo itu skyud di



Figure 9. Dorjay Stakmo.

(Dinnerstein, 2016)

In the air, the flowers are waving in the field
 In the village fields the birds are flying in the wind
 This year the season is pleasant for me
 As I gladly remember my beloved.

Similar to early *lu soma*, nature imagery is part of Dorjay's palette, while at the same time he utilizes the direct romantic rhetoric of songs like 'Lungspo ju ju,' which uses almost purely acoustic instrumentation (with the exception of very discrete synthesizer which has taken the place of harmonium).

A quest for a more cosmopolitan sound has led him and the producers who hire him to collaborate with Uttarakhandi singer Meena Rana. Her Lata Mangeskar-like vocal production contributes to a more trans-regional image, contrasting with Dorjay's more regional vocal style. For example, his song, 'Phoso choste lepin' [Where do you come off doing that?], is a Ladakhi language appropriation of the Nepal tune 'Ghalghali.' He acknowledges the plagiarism, but says the producers oblige him to do this—it's a job.

Many people I've spoken to in Leh are critical of such appropriations, especially when the songwriters claim the tunes as their own (Dorjay doesn't). Furthermore, many listeners consider the ubiquitous, routine love song lyrics to be unimaginative, such as words like *nyemo-le* (one near

Figure 10. 'Lung la mentok'.

(Dorjay Stakmo)



to my heart), *chespa* (dear), or *chocho* (sweatheart) that are somewhat analogous to what Middle Eastern music scholars refer to as the *habibi* dilemma where the word 'darling' is used incessantly.

As computer and video technologies have become more accessible, Ladakhi youth are now producing and viewing online music videos that affirm their ties to others from the region, in part through the music, language and images of the video, but also through interchanges in the 'comments' area on websites like YouTube. Modern Ladakhi popular songs weave together Ladakhi linguistic and cultural identity and the influence of mass mediated music. Marketing 'tradition' or 'nostalgia,' most online music videos present images of rural life, traditional dress, and musical instruments that appeal to young Ladakhis who are obliged to migrate outside the region for education and employment.

In examining Nepali *lok pop* music, Paul Greene noted:

The paradoxes such as the memorializing of a rural Nepal that still exists grow out of contradictions that underlie contemporary Nepali ideologies of modernity. As *lok pop* simultaneously celebrates and (to put strongly) falsely eulogizes the folk, it serves the state's agendas of modernity; agendas internalized by many Nepalis and rooted in competing and sometimes contradictory ideologies. (Greene 2002: 44)

By contrast, Ladakhi composers are not explicitly guided by state agendas, given that there is a decentralization of media through cassettes, CDs, VCDs, and the internet. This is not to say that the radio station doesn't commission music for specific events or holidays—Anchuk Ralam does this on a regular basis. However, agency rests more with individual producers, both commercial and amateur.

Ladakhi society's modernization creeps along with the development of infrastructure, increased access to

education, and the growth of the economy, but Ladakhis are reluctant to leave the region except by necessity, and they often come back when they can. The necessity to leave is real, with few jobs other than in tourism or the army, comparatively poor schools, and no universities in the region (most have to go Srinagar, Jammu, Delhi, or Chandigarh). Nevertheless, even at the village level, people happily embrace modern technology, such as satellite television, along with the vast array of Bollywood and Western media production. Ladakhi popular music, especially videos, shows the tension between Western and/or Indian cosmopolitan modernity, and the allure of simple village life (Dinnerstein 2013).

Anna Morcom noted the development of parallel pop music styles in Tibet: one inspired by Chinese pop, the other based in Tibetan traditional music with voice accompanied by mandolin or *damnyan*, called *dunglen* (play and sing) (Morcom 2015: 161). This contrasts with current Ladakhi popular styles, which have almost exclusively gone in the direction of the Indo-Nepali style with Western overlays and retain only vocal timbres. Hence, much of this current repertoire exhibits the concatenation of a heterogeneous musical vocabulary, characterizing what Claude Lévi-Strauss described as *bricolage*.

"The possibilities always remains limited by the particular history of each piece and by those of its features which are already determined by the use for which it was originally intended or the modifications it has undergone for other purposes. The elements which the 'bricoleur' collects and uses are 'pre-constrained' like the constitutive units of myth, the possible combinations of which are restricted by the fact that they are drawn from the language where they already possess a sense which sets a limit on their freedom of manoeuvre." (Lévi-Strauss 1966: 19).

As we see in the following examples, Ladakhi popular music is increasingly layered with Western-style rhythm tracks, guitar tracks, synthesizers, etc. (Dinnerstein 2013).

In ‘*Chespa mi cho*’ [Dear one, I don’t [want to fall in love]] the video opens with ‘sonic mountain space’ evoked by reverb, and the use of *bansuri*, in addition to actual mountaintop shots of the actor lip-synching in an *alap*-like introduction reminiscent of calling through the hills. Once the melody begins (Figure 11), the reverb continues, accompanied by *dholak* playing *kemta taal*, with the melody using hemiola. The ubiquitous synthesizer provides string orchestra-like timbres to the chordal accompaniment—a clear influence from Bollywood. Additionally, some sort of plunky-sounding string instrument is in the background—either *damnyan* or banjo, and forms part of the Himalayan semiotic palette. The fast ternary rhythm is a complete divergence from traditional Ladakhi styles, and indexes generic Indo/Nepali Himalayan styles. I give the first verse of the lyrics with translation.

Chespa mi cho, mi cho sam na

Khyed la sembo cho rin song

Tha chi cho hai,

Nge semla hago chig sal

Dear, even though I won’t fall in love

I feel for you, but what can I do?

Tell my heart what to do.

A further visual subtext is supplied by shifting back and forth between rural images, with the male protagonist (dressed in cosmopolitan Western dress) looking at photograph of a young woman wearing jeans, a t-shirt and the traditional wicker basket backpack of a farmer. The action shifts to a chorus line of young women. The women are dancing in the new mimetic neo-traditional

style, with shots of them dressed alternatingly in jeans, sunglasses and t-shirts, and then North Indian *salwar/kameez*, and then traditional Ladakhi *salwar* with *sulma* (pleated overdress). We are thus dealing with multiple messages of nostalgia for Ladakhi rural simplicity, as well as the multi-layered representations of Ladakhi youth’s self-image: traditional, generic cosmopolitan Indian, and Western-style cosmopolitan.

What we might call multi-layered bricolage occurs in ‘*Oh ho chocho ldemo*’ [Oh beautiful darling]. The score in Figure 12 shows one layer with a melody accompanied by the reggae-style skank or ska strum on the upbeat. Added on top of this are multiple layers of rapid drum machine tracks and fast guitar strumming with a wah-wah pedal to give an up-tempo pop dance effect. The generic up-tempo disco-style drum track, not traditional in any way, adds a much higher rhythmic density than the leisurely reggae layer. The video itself shifts back and forth between nostalgic flashbacks to the female love interest in a rural setting, and that same girl dancing in a discotheque with what look like college-age Ladakhi youth, probably in Jammu.

Oh ho chocho ldemo nyerang karu skyotat

Nga yi sempo skurste nyerang karu la skyotchan.

Oh ho chocho ldemo.

Oh ho pretty darling, where are you going?

You stole my heart. Where are you going?

Oh ho pretty darling.

Goma nyerang dzong tus

Jalches zampo dzad Nga yi sempa’i nang la

Rewa chenmo borpin



Figure 11. ‘*Chespa mi cho*’.

(Music and lyrics by Tsewang Namgyal)

The time we first met
You spoke nicely
In my mind, I kept a lot of hope.

In both examples just given, the lyrics are a departure from either traditional *zhung lu* or the *lu soma* of the 1950s through mid-1990s, and many Leh music connoisseurs feel that they are a step downward and lack class. These examples are instead part of a more globalized pop love song style. Many Ladakhis, even those in their twenties, yearn for the musical and literary quality of the 1970s through early 1990's, according to Dorjay Stakmo's nephew Tsering Norphel, himself a millennial generation musician, who described such examples as "naïve" (p.c. August 3rd, 2013).

Nevertheless, musical exploration continues online. Both of the previously mentioned videos are on YouTube with various comments by Ladakhi youth. Such online encounters allow various degrees of affirmation and/or contention with regard to identity, music authenticity, cultural representation, etc. These dimensions all go to create a Ladakhi ideoscape—a constructed, idealized vision of Ladakh as depicted in *‘Chespa Micho’* or of a Ladakhi diaspora in *‘Oh ho chocho ldemo,’* that shows Ladakhi youth working or going to school in places like Jammu or Delhi that are still joined together by language and memory of home (cf. Appadurai 1996).

David Henderson notes a similar pattern in his study of Nepali *lok git* (folk music) (2002). Henderson identifies two main audiences for folk songs on Radio Nepal. First, there are many people living in the city who grew up in villages and came to Kathmandu to work. Despite the hardships of village life, he found these people often talked about how folk songs remind them of life in a closely-knit community full of shared pleasure. People who have lived all their lives in Kathmandu enjoy folk songs for their evocation of simpler times that are seemingly still available in village life. This nostalgia is not rooted in actual experience of village life, but rather is created by memories of the folk songs themselves that combine with memories of village images that drawn from mass media (Henderson 2003: 8).

Nevertheless, there are differences between Nepali urbanites and those living in Leh. Ladakhis are, for the most part, rarely more than a generation removed from village life, and many people still have relatives living in rural areas. Secondly, Leh, with a population of around 30,000, is nowhere near the size of the sprawling urban center that is Kathmandu (population roughly 3 million), and does not isolate people in the same way that an all-encompassing metropolis does. Thirdly, the outer trappings of tradition are still considered to be important, for example wearing *gonchas* (men's Tibetan-style robes) and *sulma* on formal occasions, such as when important lamas are present, supersedes modern jacket and tie (Dinnerstein 2013).



Figure 12. 'Oh ho chocho Idemo'.

(Paldan and Otzer)

With both millennials and the somewhat older urban music connoisseurs, there is dissatisfaction with stereotypical love songs, even though they continue to occupy a significant niche in the Ladakhi sonic landscape along with Bollywood hits and Anglo-American popular music. Some people express nostalgia for what they view as the ‘quality lyrics’ of the 1960s- through 1990s. Angchuk Ralam actually expresses a yearning for the iconic sound of flute, santoor, Damnyan, etc., and specifically differentiates the songs of that period as being *lu soma*, and subsequent music as the lowest common denominator pop music. On the other hand, urban youth are searching for a more modern idiom that is both cosmopolitan, and uniquely Ladakhi.

New developments include artists like the hard rock band Checkmates, who freely post their albums on sites like LadakhiMusic.com, in addition to selling CDs. Their music is a mix of all genres, including dance music that is in Ladakhi or is a mix of Ladakhi and English. As their co-founder, tour operator Rigzin Norbu observes, they are not in it for the money, but for the love of the music.

Rigzin and his collaborator, Tsewang Phuntsok, have broad musical and technical backgrounds. This is all the more notable for their being self-taught on guitar, having learned it from YouTube videos. Rigzin went to high school in Delhi, and then attended one of the top recording technology schools there as well. Their poetic style runs the gamut from social commentary to love songs. An example from their album ‘*Samlo*’ [Thoughts], where the cuts run from Ladakhi language heavy metal to pop dance tunes. ‘*Namlang la sharawa’I*’ [In the pre-dawn sky] is a pop-rock number that went positively viral throughout much of Ladakh a few years ago. I actually first heard it at a *dar tses* (archery festival) in Basgo Village in 2014. During a break in the traditional dancing, the young people put on recorded music and were circle dancing to it. I have transcribed the main section below (Figure 13).

In the pre-dawn sky there are many stars

In the list of stars is my beloved

You are my beloved, you are my dear.

Rigzin and Tsewang are actually a little dismissive of this piece, viewing it as a pop throwaway number. Its I-vi-IV-V progression is straight out 1950s and 60s rock-and-roll. They are wrestling with the issues of what constitutes quality lyrics, both from a literary point of view, as well as addressing concerns of contemporary Ladakhi youth. Interestingly, I first heard the 1991 ‘*Lungspo ju ju*’ played for me by Rigzin as an acoustic cover for voice and guitar, and only afterwards became acquainted with the original.

The Ladakhi media- and ethno-scape has expanded into other social media. For example, LadakhiMusic.com was a website (as of this writing, it seems to have disappeared) founded by a Ladakhi college student named Richen Sagi, with the following purpose.

Ladakhi Music is an effort to keep the people of Ladakh as close as possible to their culture, their language and close to a sense of belonging to the place which is known by names like: Broken Piece of Moon, The Last Shangrilla [sic], Paradise [sic] on Earth etc. This website’s main aim is to provide the students and other people residing outside Ladakh a source to stay connected to their homeland (Ladakhi Music 2014).

With the apparent knowledge of many artists, the website was a repository for all sorts of recordings, both traditional and popular, audio and video. The website expired in August of 2016, but a Facebook page was still up at the time of writing, showing links to the website with user commentary.

The economics of music in Ladakh are challenging. With a few exceptions, such as Dorjay Stakmo and AIR staff artists, no one can make a full-time living from music, given how small the population is, and the fact that musicians get no royalties from recordings. One of the main sources of performance income is live performances organized by various organizations: governmental, NGOs, and commercial producers. The few commercial producers, whose business only incidentally includes recordings, want a product that will sell, and will pay composers to plagiarize tunes from Bollywood, Nepal, Tibet, Bhutan, etc. By ‘sell,’ I mean either CD sales, or admission fees to live concerts. Apropos of CD sales, all this technology empowerment comes at a cost. Piracy is uncontrollable, and producers are hard put to recover the cost of producing CDs. Dorjay Stakmo told me that he has several albums that he can’t release because of pirate thumb drive downloads in the bazaar. He can make some money back if he publishes VCDs of Ladakhi movies with songs—people like the movies—but the songs soon get ripped and are sold, often by the very producers who publish this stuff, for 50 rupees for 20 songs on your thumb drive. Basically, mass media is being relegated to the role of publicity, and many of the younger artists do this for the social capital and artistic expression. They produce songs and post them online as an act of ethnic pride. How musicians and producers can survive economically in a small niche market, besieged by pirates, is a quandary—as it is in the rest of the music world.

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are in Ladakhi. Chords are indicated above the staff: C, Am, F, G, and Am. The score includes a first and second ending for measures 10-11. Measure numbers 6, 12, 18, 24, and 30 are marked at the beginning of their respective staves.

Chords: C, Am, F, G, Am

Lyrics:
 nam lang la sha ra wa'i skara ma ma po - ska ra ma'i
 tho na ____ nga' - i nye mo mo nga' i nye mo nye rang nga' i
 ces pa nye rang
 nam lang la sha ra wa'i skara ma ma po -
 ska ra ma'i tho na ____ nga' - i nye mo

Figure 13. 'Namlang la sharawa'.

(Rigzin Norbu and Tsewang Phuntsok)

Conclusion

With a small population, fairly minimal infrastructure, and limited access to the rest of India, Ladakh does not support much commercial music production. Until the 1990s, the main motivating forces for production of new music have been institutions with specific agendas, such as the federal and state governments, or NGOs, such as the LBA and Lamdom Society. Nevertheless, the region's position as a crossroads of commerce and conflict has fostered hybridity. The population has embraced the new music genres to varying degrees. These have been conveyed primarily through state media, until democratic participative media such as cassettes, digital sound technologies, and the internet have opened up media space into the virtual world.

Musical style has evolved from the different traditional threads, and has incorporated idioms from neighboring Himalayan regions into the Generic Himalayan Pop Music vocabulary: instruments, melodic and rhythmic patterns, and sonic space with its associated studio techniques. Coming out of the first era of mass media in Ladakh, radio, then cassettes, the older *lu soma* style of the 1970s-1990s has endured in the position of popular musical classics, analogous to classic jazz or rock in the West. Moving into the digital era in the 21st Century, the crossroads of the global media-scape have not bypassed Ladakh, although the virtual roads into the region did come later. Globalizing influences have been incorporated into new musical styles, while the visual presentation of songs on the internet and videodisks shows a tension

between modernity and regional identity—Ladakhis are very attached to their homeland. As such, they make considerable efforts to produce and/or listen to popular music in their own language, both at home and when forced to migrate for school or work.

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Endnotes

1. I use this term to indicate hybridity that does not occur in situations of power imbalances such as colonialism (cf. Bhabha 194), but rather through relatively equal cultural exchanges along trade routes at entrepôts like Kargil, Leh, Khotan, Kashgar, Singapore, etc.
2. With regards to transcribing the lyrics, I have had to take two approaches. Firstly, if I had access to the Tibetan script (*bod yig*) I used the standard Wiley transliterations. However, in a number of cases, my informants did not have enough Ladakhi language education to help me write the texts down. In those cases, I supplied a simple phonetic transliteration.
3. This claim was based on a highly specious reading of the 1684 Treaty of Tingmosgang, which ended the Tibet–Ladakh–Mughal War.

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