Diversity in the Traditional Musical Kurdish Themes and the Tourist Attraction

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Received: 01.02.2015; Accepted: 06.06.2015

Abstract. The present study has tried to associate the themes of Kurdish music with tourist attraction activities. On the other hand, it has tried to pave the way to attract cultural tourists to Kurdistan through theme diversity and inspiration by natural ecological phenomena and also to attract those tourists with different tastes who are interested in local and traditional music. To achieve the above goals, different methods have been used including interviewing with celebrities, using existing resources such as audio versions of the traditional Kurdish music in the form of DVDs, CDs and also its video versions. Kurdish language is one of the most original languages in Iran that over the time has maintained its identity despite foreigners' onslaught and has not been subjected to too many changes. Many experts have expressed that the traditional Kurdish music is one of the richest traditional Iranian music. Using different themes, inspiring by ecological and natural phenomena and also social and cultural themes are some of the characteristics of the Kurdish music. Taking advantages of the available potentials in each region promotes the Iranian tourism identity all around the world. Using traditional Kurdish music along with the other attractions in the Kurdistan region improves the internal or domestic tourism. In addition to increasing the internal trips, it establishes friendship among people all around the country (Iran).

Keywords: Music Themes, Traditional Kurdish Music, Tourist, Culture, Anthropology of Tourism

1. INTRODUCTION

People’s habits, tastes, desires and tragedies are included in their systems of music. Since music is a part of culture, to understand the culture, the music should also be considered in the cultural studies. Music is a way of expressing thoughts by means of which we can convey the concepts and issues which cannot be expressed in the other ways.

The musical system of Kurdish people which is affected by the environmental, social, cultural, and economic factors has introduced more features and elements than other systems (Farokhnia & Mohammadi). Local music is a part of the national and ethnic identity and also part of the culture of every society. Music of each region reflects the aspirations, desires and feelings of its residents. These feelings and aspirations are expressed by means of some gestures. These gestures show love, epic, consolation, mysticism and the other cultural representations. Music is inspired by myths, stories, anecdotes, proverbs, and generally culture, literature and art are the main sources of the inspiration. Music is one of the complex cultural issues in each society and Iran’s music is one of the most complex ones in the world (Zandbaf, 1379, 233) and Kurdish music is one of the richest and the most productive ones in Iran (Rahgani, 1377, 670). In developing countries with different ethnic groups, traditional and ethnic culture is regarded as a way to attract tourists which can be very important in sustainable development. Today sustainable development is widely discussed in the society and addressed the three aspects: economic, social and ecological/environmental aspects. Social and ecological concepts are also addressed in the studies on the development of domestic tourism. The development of domestic tourism has many socio-cultural effects that lead to many consequences if they are ignored.

Nunez's paper entitled "Tourism, Traditions and Acculturation: “weekend in a Mexican village” (1963) is often referred to as the first paper on the anthropology of tourism in the USA. The feat

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Special Issue: The Second National Conference on Applied Research in Science and Technology

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of Wall Smith entitled "The Hosts and the Guests" (1977 and 1989) as well as the invaluable work by Margaret Mid in the field of visual anthropology shed light on the future of tourism anthropology. His magazine, “Annals of Tourism Research “1983 was allocated to the anthropology articles. Certain anthropologists such as Nelson Graburn (1977) and Denison Nash (1977) have studied personality transformation in the tourism and tourism as a new form of imperialism. Victor Trent's study (1996) on the rituals of transition has been helpful. Rituals of transition is a ceremony which is held when a person transform from one status to another one. Tourism is considered as sacred journey and its traditional association with pilgrimage has been widely discussed. Turner (1978) argues that this ritual process has three stages: the first stage is called departure (break) (which is a routine); the second stage is the threshold stage. In this case, order and daily structures are stopped. The third stage is rejoining stage in which the normal structures of social distinction are disappeared and people come together (Paeizi, 1392) and Salvine (1996) have mentioned three main areas in tourism anthropology:

1. Social and cultural changes
2. Tourism semiotics
3. Political economy of tourism

Peter M. Burner (1385) in a book titled “the Introduction to Tourism Anthropology have studied theoretical views on development, anthropology of tourism, globalization and development and anthropology, tourism and tourist. He named five main themes of anthropology as follows: The importance of culture, culture and survival, group formation, search in the system and change and future.

Mehri Azani (1392) in a study investigated Sama (Sufi) dance as a symbol of faith in literary-religious tourism of Iran with focus on Sama from Molana’s point of view (Divan Shams). The author believes that being familiar with those who perform Sama dance and understanding the meaning beyond these twirling movements have significant effect on developing the borders of domestic religious – literary tourism and attracting tourists. Kurdistan music has had a great impact on Iran music. Kurdish has been fairly successful in production of cultural content. Today, in Iran Kurdish composers have played a seminal role in the success of the most musical albums. It is clear that the collective spirit of Kurds has been associated with music. Although Kurdish music itself has been influenced by Turkish, Persian, Arabic, Armenian and Greek, simultaneously has had an impact on these kinds of music and this is inevitable in cultural interactions.

Even we can see that modern Kurdish music is Fusion music or is combined with western music and instruments. The traditional image of Kurdish music has been manifested in the older generation of traditional Kurdish singers and musicians. Listening to music of new generation confirms this fact. This is due to communication with western music world as well as introduction (emergence) of electronic instruments. But often this cultural exchange has not only reduced the originality and the beauty of Kurdish music but also has added to its elegance and effectiveness. However, those who are interested in traditional music are against it. Musical themes can be divided into 5 categories: mania (sheydaei), sad, exciting, cheerful, and tranquil. The present study has tried to pay more attention to Kurdish music in cultural tourism planning due to its conceptual features, rhythm, diverse themes, inspiration by different natural-ecological phenomena and social and cultural issues. The study aims at associate anthropology with tourism. So first it investigates the relationship between culture, tourism and anthropology and introduces some key themes of Kurdish music (the authors believe that this is only a small drop of the vast see of Kurdish music).
2. METHODOLOGY

The present study has been conducted using three instruments: face to face interview with experts, and Kurdish music celebrities, the use of available resources and aloe using Kurdish music DVDs and CDs in addition to video forms.

3. TOURISM AND CULTURE:

In the division of the types and the forms of tourism by Zolfaghari (1389,23) , cultural tourism has been defined as participating in cultural events such as artistic programs, concerts theaters, films festivals and etc. the purpose of these tourists is to become familiar with characteristics, beliefs and cultural manifestation of the host community.

Tourism is one of the largest growing industries in the world. Especially it has grown substantially in the last 60 years and we can say that it was an explosion in industry. So it is not surprising that tourism has become the main focus of different disciplines both as an industry and as a cultural phenomenon. As “Nash” states tourism is more or less an industry, a culture or a kind of leisure. Recently tourism has been addressed in anthropological studies. Although the relationship between them is ignored, both of them aim to provide a better understanding of culture.

Tourism takes place in the context of geographical environment which is consisted of natural, cultural and social environments. Each of these environments is consisted of the factors which affect the tourism and are influenced by it. Tourism has significant effects on the touristy areas. These may be social, political and environmental and economic. Considering the complexity and frequency of tourism practices and its popularity, its consequences should be addressed in tourism studies.

Certain scholars have described tourism as a social phenomenon which includes behavior, utilizing resources, interactions, economy and environment. Developing these areas maintains the interaction between tourists and the host community and over the time leads to cultural development and social constructions that improve host community. Tourism industry potentially can affect different cultures and generally is the main way of interaction between different communities.

4. TOURISM ANTHROPOLOGY

Tourism is only one of the factors that affect development of culture. Identifying the key and underlying issues of anthropology, we find that anthropology contributes to tourism in the following ways:

*The comparative index (studying various phenomena in different areas in order to understand different trends.

*Holistic approach: (considering social, environmental, economic relationships between the three factors).

* Deeper study: such as studying motivation for travel (M. Burner, 1385; 109).

Today, relative development and progress in transportation system in the world has contributed much to the development of tourism so that tourism has globally become an industry and different countries earn a lot of money through their tourist attractions. In anthropology science, the most important thing in terms of tourism is cultural, social, economic, and political aspects of tourism.
“Nuns D” in Chamber’s book states that there has been no interest in tourism in anthropological studies. But with scientific practices that have begun in 1970s, this issue has been more addressed and anthropologists have identified the importance of tourism since that time (Eshrigel Shaner, 2009:11-14).

Tourism anthropology is an interdisciplinary science which using different theories and methods investigate tourism as an important issue from an anthropological perspective. Anthropologies often have focused on the issues such as tourists incentives to travel and the cultural impacts of the passengers (tourists) on the host community. Today, it also studies the cultural effects of this visit on tourists and the tendency of the indigenous community to engage or not engage in tourism process (Gholikhan, 1391:71).

1. Kurdish musical themes

Socio-cultural structure of Kurdish people is such that throughout the changing history, among natural, cultural, social, economic, racial, religious, historical, and epic concepts it has emphasized on those concepts (themes) which play a significant role in people’s lives. They have emerged in different modes. The selection criteria of these themes are their frequency in musical system. The priority criterion is the reflection of different themes in the modes. Also investigating the key informants and cooperative observation on the part of researchers is effective in theme selection.

- Homesick
- Oppression
- Resistance and stability
- Nature
- Women
- Identification
- Homeland
- World aversion
- Fatalism
- Religion
- Affection
- Historical and epic concepts
- National themes(Iranianness)
- Life and death
- Protest
- Happiness
- Love and the lover
- Grief and sorrow
- Kurdish people and Kurdistan

Following are some of the themes with examples

1.1. Oppression: Certain modes and songs (Basteye Kurdi) represent the oppression against Kurds in different eras. Iran is a country with different ethnic groups each of which have been historically deprived of their natural rights and Kurds have suffered the greatest injustice. This oppression (injustice) over the time has shown itself in the form of songs and modes (Magham) which begin with complaints are usually of this type.

Such as:

Kaê rrawâya bmdana bar goola yä rrâwm bnn

3968
Diversity in the Traditional Musical Kurdish Themes and the Tourist Attraction

1.2. Stability and Resistance: this concept can be heard in all types of Kurdish music. Kurdish people have shown resistance and stability against oppression, disorders, the changes have been imposed on their culture rather than surrender and this is manifested in their music. Such as:

Translation: Although I am captured by the pain of era, I never surrender it and bravely resisted. If I die of hunger, as long as I am alive, I never serve the aliens.

1.3. Loyalty: the other moral character of people of this region is their royalty which is manifested in their music and they are proud of it. Such as:

Translation: He addresses his lover and says: Kurdish people never break their promise. Who have taught you to break your promise?

1.4. Honesty: The other feature of the hardworking and the mountainous people of Kurdistan are their simplicity and honesty. Because most people here are emotional, profit-seeking and self-interested relationships which are the inevitable features of capitalism system rarely is observed in their behavior.

1.5. Literature: within each language, a specific type of behavior and text are developed such as different sciences, poetry, proverbs, and analogies and are known as literature. This transfer feelings and views of these groups to the next generation as well as maintaining their beliefs and values. In their literature, Kurds are proud of three groups: poets, scholars and fighters and ancient characters and symbols.

Examples of these groups are as follows: Abdolrahman Molavi (Maddom)- Abdolrahman Sharfakandi(Hazhar) - Mahvi, Nali-Himan-Ghane and the other poets 2- Ghazi Mohammad, Sheykh Saeed Barzanji, Sallaheddin Ayoubi 3-Kave, Zaroster, Medes, being Aryan and Iranian. Being Arian and being attributed to Kave

In the below song, the men have been compared with lions and they are regarded as descendants of brave Kave and Arian.

Such as:

Translation: He naturally said: We are the descendants of Kave and Arian.
1.6. **Art:** Art is also a kind of language through which people convey their feelings and perceptions and is considered as a factor to distinguish different groups. Music is one of the most important factors that Kurdish people use to introduce their culture and are proud of it. Musicians such as Barbod and Abdloghder Maraghei, and singers such as Ali Asghar Kordestani, Hassan Zirak, Ali Mardan, Mazhar Khaleghi, Sharam Nazeri, Kamkars Yousef Zamani and so on.

Kurdish artist adapt himself with ideals of society for more identification. Rozhe Bastid in a study entitled madness and genius investigated why some communities are drawn to madness. Rejecting psychological conclusion, he argues that the more genius the artist, the more he tries to adapt himself with cultural expectations of the society.

The society has created the image that noble artist should be different from ordinary people and must sacrifices for promotion of his society and art, these cultural thoughts leads him to madness, suicide, or learning his hometown. In some Kurdish modes the artist is encountered with these expectations. Because it is his art which make his popular. If his sprig of art creation dried up (if he loses his creativity) he is asked to sacrifice himself for the community or die or leave his community.

The following song conveys this message:

\[
\text{Xam-u-dardi zamana piri krdnvsk –u-be zavqm}
\]

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Translation: *It says that the sad days has made me old and taken my feelings and consciousness. When an artist loses his feelings (emotions), he should leave his community. As an artist, he regarded himself as a homeless but also adapt himself with cultural expectations of society in such a way that believes deserves such a fate. He finds himself alone, homeless, and wanders in the deserts and mountains. He thinks that he is deserved to be criticized by his friends and enemies.***

1.7. **Patriotism:** certainly, people in each community love their community and this love is manifested in the form of patriotism or sanctity. If a community over the time has suffered from oppression, pain, shortages (deficiencies) and so on, interest in the country develops in an extreme form of worship. The less suffering is felt, the less interest in country is observed. These differences in the level of interest in hometown are easily observed in musical culture.

In the following song, the man loves his country and is ready to sacrifice his life for his hometown.

\[
\text{Av ešqa ešqi wllāta}
\]

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Translation: *He who loves his country and is ready to sacrifice his life for his hometown.*
1.8. World Aversion: contentment and lack of attachment to the world due to poor economic conditions and the resulting poverty and is strongly emphasized in Iran’s music and Kurdish music is no exception so that the sentence (this will past too) has become a popular proverb among people. See the following mode:

دیوان بی بنیا کاروان سه ران ره نگ

دیواد بی بنیا کاروان ساره ره ره

سادی و دل دل شاد سادی و دل و دل

Sātē wa dāl šādē wa dāl tang

Translation: The world is considered as the inn (Karvansara) which is transient and sometimes bring joy and sometimes bring sadness.

1.9. Fatalism: the main feature of Iran culture and religion is looking beyond us. It means that paying attention to the hidden and supernatural forces of our fate (destiny). Social- political life of people in some way is affected by for example, God, heaven, luck, ghosts (spirits) and the fate.

This is the dominant mode of thought in Iran “eastern thinking” which unlike the western thinking which focuses on reasoning and thought focuses on the feelings, emotions and revelation. So, the eastern thinking is called “enlightened “and western researches are called intellectuals. Illuminative (eastern) thinking and determined destiny have frustrated cultural modernity in Iran. Reason (intellect) and rationality has been explicitly or in an ironic way scorned, and instead love has been emphasized. Fatalism and belief that everything has been determined already is evident in Kurdish songs. Of course, this doesn’t mean that we should simply deal with problems in a passive way. But it should be combined with active reactions. In this approach both inadaptability (incompatibility) and submission (surrender) is encouraged.

The following song conveys this concept.

هەوەی سەکەی من چی بوو، چه چەکەی خەکەی وا یایەنی

هەوەی سەکەی من چی بوو، چه چەکەی خەکەی وا یایەنی

čarxî čab waê le krdom to bo xoşt azâni

Translation: He attributes all his failures to the time, bad luck and so on.

1.10. Religion: Faith, belief, and religion are among the main themes of Kurdish music. Prior to Islam, Kurdish people were the followers of Zoroastrianism. Therefore, describing and praising Ahooramazda and its related elements such as goodness, lighting and devil damn and whatever is liked it such as evil and darkness.

After Islam, monotheism and its related terms entered Kurdish music culture. Describing God, the prophet, Guided Caliphs, Imams, the elders and religious leaders have formed the themes of some modes and songs. Certain music is played in Moloud month (the month in which the prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) was born in month of Rabi in the praise of the prophet and religious leaders in monasteries (Khangah). The mode of Allah Veysi is specific to these themes.

1.11. Emotionalism: Although emotions and feelings form the spirit of music, it has a wonderful manifestation in Kurdishish music. The significant point in these songs is that the events (problems) are dealt with emotionally rather than rationally in these songs. Of course, over time the rational dimension of Kurdish music became popular due to new training and notation and transcriptions of the songs.
1.12: Epic and Historical Concepts: Over the time, Kurdistan has encountered with different events which some of them have turned into epic and myth such as Demdem castle, the epic of Sheikh Saeed Barzanji against English, the conquest of Jerusalem by Salaheddin Ayoobi, revolution of Ghazi Mohammad and Kave Ahangar. All of these events are evident in musical culture. Here we represent Ghazi Mohammad revolution in the form of a song. For eleven months he established a democratic state at the time of Reza Shah in Mahabad. But when the government forces attacked, he surrendered himself to save people’s life and he was executed.

1.13. National Themes: In Kurdish songs, we are encountered with a song that goes beyond ethnicity and shows Kurdish people attachment to Iran and also indicate they are proud of being Iranian. Since Kurdish people regard themselves as Aryan and are deeply associated with Iran and Iranian people, they believe that they are responsible to protect the country and have shown this attachment in their music. Sometimes they are proud of Iranian themes, symbols and myths such as Rostam, Sohrab, Mount Damavand and etc.

The following song proves this:

ئیران، نیران، نیران بوعی به مه سکه ن شیران
عیران عیران عیران بوعی با مسکانی عیران
چاوت گه لازیه چندو کیشی نه سیران
cawt galavēža jiva ke ši astērān

Translation: Iran has been regarded as lion’s den in this song which as a shiny star guides other stars.

1.14. Life and Death: they are two contrasting elements that have attracted human thinking during the history. There is no nation that has not narrated these two concepts. Life and death have been the main theme of different Kurdish songs and lots of questions have been proposed in this regard. The following song has such a theme.

وه هه نوی مردنه راوی کردن
Va haloî mrdna rrãvî krdn
راوه به تائی من هه هات که نه مردم
Râv ba táli mn ahât ka amrdm
مردنی نه هنده سووک و سان
Mrdnê na hênda sook-u- sânan
سه ره کیژاون هه زاران زان
Sarî gêžävnazarânzânâ

Translation: The death eagle was chasing me. It is a death that no knowledgeable person can identify.

1.15. Protest: a significant part of cultural concept of Kurdish music has been allocated to protest. Some Kurdish songs protest against the time, existence, and life which are similar to Khayyam complaints. Other protests refer to disorders, oppression, sufferings and the imposed poverty which Kurdish people have fought against it: especially where it fight against oppressors is very significant so that lots of famous songs have addressed this issue such as (zalem: oppressor), (Sakala=cry=yell). One of the first words or writing devices in the modes is the term (Havar) which means “yells” and is the symbol of protest (complaint).

1.16. Joy and Excitement: in spite of the difficulties and distresses that Kurdish people have experienced during the history, vitality, hope and invitation to joy has been one of the dominant concepts in Kurdish music. The songs (basteha) which are rhythmic and cheerful and are
accompanied by dance (Halparke) are of the most significant solutions Kurdish people use to react to these problems.

1.17. Love and the Lover: Love for life, nature, virtual love (lover) and real love is significant in Kurdish music system. The music which represents love for lover is very rich and refreshing. Describing lover and her beauty is one of the basic themes of Kurdish music which has been manifested in (basteha) songs.

1.18. Grief and Sorrow: Grief and sorrow is represented in all kinds of Kurdish music especially modes. This grief appears in love songs when the lover and beloved are separated due to cultural and social reasons. Mainly one of the reasons of this grief in Kurdish music is this. Most Kurdish love stories have a tragic end such as Mamaw va Zin and Las and Khazal. This grief in an invitation to thought and brainstorming rather than silence and passivity because creativity is prominent in that. Grief and sorrow has become a theme in music and are regarded as a criterion to distinguish bad music from good music by the audiences.

1.19. Kurds and Kurdistan: the terms Kurd and Kurdistan are so sacred among Kurdish people that are frequently used in their songs. People swear to it and are ready to sacrifice their lives for it.

Translation: He addresses Kurdistan region and says: you have been my hometown for thousands of years and I have grew up in your mountains and fields.

2. The role of natural-ecological elements in traditional Kurdish music: in ecological anthropology, natural environment is one of the most important elements of culture so that people’s compatibility with environment is emphasized in defining culture. Natural environment plays an important role in Kurdish music and it is use as a key theme in most modes and songs.

2.1. Nature: Kurdistan has two different types of climate: on the one hand, we observed areas such as Uraman which is completely mountainous, and people are constantly faced with difficulties of winter and summer. This region has its own culture and its own type of music. Certainly, music has been affected by the environment and even the singer voice and his intonation have been affected by that and have taken a unique form which cannot be found anywhere.

The famous singers in this region have tiny and twisting intonation. It seems that they want to show twisting roads of its high mountains. Those intonations are also symbols of partridge voice which is abundant in this region. Uraman music is fast because the cold weather demands this. It is performed collectively not individually because mountainous environment requires more cooperation. It is accompanied by clapping to bring joy and happiness for people in reaction to the problems. Of course its sad content gives it a special beauty which represents bitter history (life) of Kurdish people such as Siah Chamane and its various types. On the other hand, we are encountered with areas which are a combination of plains and mountains and are tropical such as Kermanshah and Karkuk which have a quiet and individual songs (music) called Horeh.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION:

Tourism anthropology is associated with sociology, development researches, and behavioral psychology. Anthropology and sociology are two sides of a coin. Both of them study qualitative aspects of tourism, anthropology studies perceptions and desire in the individual and sociology
analysis these perceptions and desires in a group (community). These two disciplines study identity, distinctiveness and sense of place. They investigate their motivations, views, reactions and their interactions with local people and they also study the effects of tourism on a place and its residents. Tourism anthropology and sociology study acculturation, originality, identification and consumption theory in tourism and its practices (Paeizi, 1392).

People love music and enjoy listening to music and they want to become familiar with the music of different regions and the local music makes the region a relatively permanent tourist attraction. Those who travel to Azarbaijan how can see Ashighha and hear their music? or those who travel to Kurdistan, how and where can listen to Kurdish music and watch Kurdistan dance? Revival of local music in some way improves the economic conditions of the region residents. Attracting domestic tourists, and foreign tourists, providing job opportunities, introducing the region and its culture through music and preventing from destructive effects of alien culture are among the positive effects of local music.

Holding certain festivals such as ancient voices and introducing local music and Iranian ancient music to people can be effective. Kurdish music is one of the richest traditional music in Iran. Socio-cultural structure of Kurdish people is such that throughout the changing history, among natural, cultural, social, economic, racial, religious, historical, and epic concepts it has emphasized on those concepts (themes) which play a significant role in people’ lives. They have emerged in different modes.

Below are some suggestions to introduce the original Kurdish music and attracting tourists from all around the country (Iran).

1. Active presence of traditional and local Kurdish music groups in internal and external festivals and media. so that not only introduces Kurdish music of ancient Iran but also show the potentials of this kind of music.
2. Holding traditional and local music festivals in the presence of other ethnic groups.
3. Providing certain facilities such as hotels and concert halls and play grounds for kids near the tombs of the great poets and singers who might have been forgotten and maintaining them in a way that looks beautiful artistically.
4. Using the influence of NGO to hold multifunctional tours with cooperation of different music groups in the province and the country.
5. Using organizations such as music house and music NGO and music association because of their knowledge to identify the music talents in different provinces.
6. Providing the tourists with special services in religious holidays such as the mission of the holy prophet (peace be upon him).

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Diversity in the Traditional Musical Kurdish Themes and the Tourist Attraction