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Original Article

A Typological Perspective of Artistic Tendencies in the Field of Persian Classical Music in the 21st Century

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Abstract

The present article tries to make a study on the panorama of Persian classical music in contemporary Iranian society, proposing an original anthropological-ethnomusicological typology of its varied artistic tendencies. For this purpose, it reminds, first of all, some of the most important phenomenon or facts in the history of Persian classical music in the twentieth century. Then, it identifies and categorizes the characteristics of seven big contemporary tendencies among the most active and influential ones in the domain of Persian classical music, in the form of a continuum. The essential criterion of distinction of these tendencies in this article is the position of each of them with respect to the heritage of the Qājār musical tradition. The article shows that none of these seven big tendencies is occupied with the questions like revivification of Persian pre-Qājār music or enrichment of the today's classical practice by referring to historical sources or the musical traditions of neighboring cultures, such as Turkish-Ottoman and Arabic traditions. However, from 2005, a new and growing "neoclassical movement" is born in the Persian classical panorama, which corresponds to an eclectic opening towards neighboring musical cultures and to an intention of reviving the lost elements of ancient Persian music in the contemporary practice.

Keywords

Persian/Iranian Classical Music • Radif • Tradition • Musical Tendency • Continuum • Improvisation • Metric / Non-Metric Composition and Interpretation

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Same as Turkish culture and many others, Persian culture also owns a so-called “classical” music which is generally distinguished by some evident characteristics from other old musical genres of the country, called folkloric or “regional” (in Iran: *musiqi-e navâhi* or *mahalli*). The role and status of Persian or Iranian classical music (*musiqi-e kelâsik-e irâni*) –which was rather known, not long ago, under other titles as “Iranian traditional music” (*musiqi-e sonnati-e irâni*) or “Iranian authentic music” (*musiqi-e asil-e irâni*)– in today Iranian society is quite comparable with those of *türk sanat mûsikîsi* in Turkish society; which is very logical because these two traditions, Persian and Turkish-Ottoman, had very strong historical ties at least from the 13th century till the 18th century, and they shared (and still share although less) almost a same musical system.² But today, perhaps a little unlike the case of *Türk sanat mûsikîsi*, the title of “Persian classical music” can no longer specify unique and particular repertoire, aesthetic, style, and way of musical thought. In fact, today, unlike 30 years ago, what is presented in Iran and all around the world under the title of Persian “classical” or “traditional music”, in a way belongs to a very broad set of artistic tastes and tendencies which certainly share a number of traditional elements, but which are sometimes contrasted considerably by their other determinant elements.

The present article tries to make a new study on the panorama of Persian classical music in contemporary Iranian society, proposing an original anthropological-ethnomusicological typology of its varied artistic tendencies. But before entering into such typology, it is essential to remind rapidly some of the most important phenomenon or facts in the history of Persian classical music in the twentieth century, because, of course, certain tendencies of our days are directly or indirectly the results or the continuities of these phenomenon and facts.

Some Historical Key Points

Regarding history of Persian classical music in the twentieth century, let’s remember that it is marked by at least five critical phenomena. Here, we cite only these five phenomena in chronological order and we propose also some reading-key examples: (i) The Occidental movement embodied by ‘Alinaqi Vaziri (1887-1979) starting from 1919: Vaziri was seeing the way of progress of Persian musical system in its adaptation with “European scientific music” (cf. Khâleqi, 2002, Vol. II; Sepantâ, 2003, pp. 175-212; Vaziri, 2004; etc.). (ii) The appearance of a “radio style” after 1940, known today rather under the title of Golhâ³: This appellation comes from the title of a series of musical programs created by and for the radio, spreading a certain “romanticism” distinctly far away from the traditional aesthetic of Qâjâr epoch (1789-1925). This style was largely influenced by the movement of Vaziri, especially with regard to the use of orchestra and

² For a study devoted to the historical and technical links between Persian and Turkish-Ottoman musical traditions, cf. Mohafez, 2016.

³ Literally “flowers”.

harmonization in the western way (cf. During, 2010, p. 76; Fatemi, 2013, pp. 68-73, 131-133; Nettle, 2009, pp. 254-258; Zonis, 1998, pp. 197-201; etc.).⁴ (iii) The movement of *The Center for Preservation and Propagation of the Iranian Traditional Music (Markaz-e Hefz va Eshâ'e-ye Musiqi-e Sonnati-e Irâni)* in the 1970s: Initiated by Dariouche Safvate, it was mainly a return to *radif*⁵ and to the Qâjâr classical style. Creation of this center has made it possible to train a good number of young musicians (considered today as the masters) by the last representatives of the Qâjâr tradition (cf. During, 2010, pp. 76-78; Miller, 2005, pp. 65-92; Mosayyebzâde, 2014; etc.). (iv) Radical change in the country's cultural politics with a set of constraints imposed by the Islamic regime on the musical life in Iran after the 1979's revolution (cf. Adelhâ, 1991, pp. 23-40; During, 1984, pp. 11-31; 1992, pp. 135-164; 1995, pp. 115-144; 2010, pp. 94-105; Youssefzadeh, 2002, chap. VI; etc.): It should be recalled that some of these constraints are still in place in 2017 even under the actual government called "moderate". Here are few ones: The prohibition of female solo singing in public (concert, CD, etc.); The mechanism of censorship concerning the textual contents of music (for concert or CD); The organization for control and selection of musical activities (according to which any concert, CD, or musical publication must first be "evaluated" by *The Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance* in order to obtain an official authorization); The occasional cancellation of concerts already holding official authorizations by individuals who are called "autonomous elements" (*anâsor-e khodjush*) and who can take action on the implicit request of an extremist authority; The requirement to hide (by means of decorations, flowers, edited images, etc.) the musical instruments in programs on national television; The systematic absence of material and official support of musicians (with the exception of few governmental orchestras such as the Tehran Symphony Orchestra, which was however suspended during the last presidential years of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad); The absence of governmental organizations susceptible to systematically create jobs for a large number of musicians and music graduates of universities; etc. These 37 years of constraints have influenced different aspects of the musical professions in Iran, which in itself requires a specific and deep study. But this problematic is ultimately linked to the general context of the functioning of Iranian society since the Islamic revolution: By limiting certain individual and social freedoms, the political system always tries to impose a lifestyle imagined as "Islamic" which cannot be fully accepted by a large number of people. Thus, by contrast, people in question continue to live in a kind of "permanent cultural resistance" against the decisions of the political system. (v) The huge wave of young people passionate on Persian classical music after the revolution: A phenomenon which comes, to some extent, from the suspension or even the prohibition of almost any other type of music, in particular Pop music, in the early

4 In the recent years, the entirety of the musical programs of Golhâ is put on line by Jane Lewisohn on the following site: www.golha.co.uk

5 Persian classical music of Qâjâr epoch was essentially based on the different instrumental and vocal versions of a model repertoire called *radif* which contains predominantly a great number (hundreds) of non-metric sections (*gushe*-s). Among these *gushe*-s and also on the margin of these versions of *radif*, the Qâjâr tradition contained a number of metric pieces (*qata'ât-e zarbi*) of different types; *châhârmezrab*, *reng*, *pishdarâmad*, *tasnif*, and *zarbi*.

years of the revolution. Two examples to show the magnitude of this phenomenon, which can also be considered as one of the consequences of the “cultural resistance” mentioned previously: Relying on the number of copies of a *setâr* playing method published in 2001, Jean During estimated the number of *setâr* apprentices/players at 20,000; it means “at least fifty times more than in the past” (During, 2010, p. 44). Another estimation, according to the number of sold copies of another method, in 1996, evaluates the number of pupils/players of *setâr* as 40,000 (cf. Bâbâyi & Khâniki, 2015, pp. 179-180).

The consequences and the evolutions of these five phenomena have mainly had the effect that, today –in a complex socio-political context where the clash of nationalism, traditionalism, Sufism, Islamism, atheism, anarchism, postmodernism, and globalism creates an unpredictable amalgam even by sophisticated expertise– we are faced to a very impressive diversity of tendencies and tastes in the field of Persian classical music. Obviously, these tendencies effect different changes and transformations in the aesthetic, style, repertoire, pedagogy, and ultimately the very function of music today in relation to the classical tradition of the nineteenth century.

Continuum of Persian Classical Music in Contemporary Artistic Tendencies

From our point of view, it is possible to identify at least seven big current tendencies among the most active and influential ones in the domain of Persian classical music, in the form of a continuum. Here, the essential criterion of distinction is that of the position of each of them with respect to the heritage of the Qâjâr tradition. Of course, concretely, there is no fixed border that would clearly separate certain currents from the others. It is possible that a concert or a musical production, which can be categorized under one of these seven currents, also shares a certain number of characteristics with one or more other currents; more importantly, the existence of artists whose lines of thought and practical approaches cannot be defined within the exclusive framework of one of these tendencies. The case of these artists could be theorized at midway between two currents, or as a particular combination of certain characteristics of two or more tendencies. Here is our continuum of seven most important currents or tendencies:

I. Radifo-centrism. At the extreme right⁶ of the continuum, there is the most conservative tendency in the matter of *radif* and the Qâjâr repertoire. Here, *radif* is nearly considered as the sacred Word of Persian music, and Qâjâr master’s recordings are almost the only secondary sources recommended to be listened and imitated in addition to *radif*. This position, which could be called “*radifo-centrism*”, is a radicalization of the movement of *The Center for Preservation and Propagation of the Iranian Traditional Music* (Markaz). It is, to a great extent, thanks to the efforts of this tendency that the practical survival of the heritage of *radif* is now assured, despite the transformations of the socio-political context.

⁶ Our concept of “right” and “left” has nothing to do with its equivalent in the Iranian or any other political context. It is merely a schematization to facilitate understanding.

The masters of the *radifo*-centrism, among them the *santur* player Majid Kiâni (b. 1941)⁷ seems today to be one of the most famous representatives, have often made their own recording of the integral of a version of *radif*, and this recording constitutes the main object of their teaching as a pedagogical reference repertoire. This teaching method is mainly realized orally, whereas here the use of Western notation is rare and fills rather the optional function of memory aid. In the pedagogy in question, as well as in the artistic creations of this tendency, the metric pieces, even those of the Qâjâr tradition such as *tasnif*-s, *reng*-s, *pishdarâmad*-s, etc. occupy only a marginal place.

Solo improvisation based on *radif* (*bedâhe-navâzi bar asâs-e radif*), which translates into practice as a sort of re-execution of *radif* with limited spontaneous variations, constitutes here the most artistic form of Persian classical music. This is what Jean During identifies as a first type of improvisation:

Literal performance of *radif* as taught or recorded by a transmitter, with a possible degree of variation (During, 2010, p. 254).

In *radifo*-centrism, musical creations that use an instrumental ensemble, even an ensemble of purely traditional instruments⁸, are not strongly encouraged. Here, instrumental music is as important as vocal music, but in *radifo*-centrism tendency, it is rare to give an important place to the composition of new works, or even to any personal innovation, for example, the introduction of new *gushe*-s⁹ in the re-executions of *radif*.

The authorities of *radifo*-centrism often rely on a persuasive rhetoric to teach and propagate their ideas, one of the foundations of which is as following: the aesthetics and singular norms of Persian classical music, which are effectively condensed in *radif*, have not undergone radical changes from the previous centuries to the present day. Thus, *radifo*-centrists usually oppose all kinds of historical studies, which affirm any discontinuity in the transmission of the “great musical tradition” inherited from the Persians.¹⁰ To defend their ideas against other currents, for example the more modernist currents, the *radifo*-centrists resort to writings, like four works of Majid Kiâni (*cf.* Kiâni, 1989, 1998, 2004, 2014).

II. Improviso-centrism. More towards the center of our continuum, there is another tendency, again derived from the movement of the CENTER (Markaz). Protagonists of this tendency have, to some extent, some opinions in common with

7 Cf. Jean During's remarks on the role of Majid Kiâni in During (2010, pp. 89-90). On how this musician thinks the tradition, *cf.* During (1994, p. 319).

8 Today's Persian instruments of the classical domain are: *târ*, *setâr*, *santur*, *'ud*, *kamânche*, *ney*, *qânun*, *robâb*, *tombak*, *dâyere*, *daf*, etc. For more information, *cf.* During (2010, pp. 107-155).

9 As we mentioned before, the *gushe*-s are the little melodic sections that form *radif*.

10 During the courses of Majid Kiâni, we heard some criticisms addressed to Jean During and Sasan Fatemi who had begun to emphasize historical ruptures of Persian music. Kiâni also wrote an article explicitly attacking J. During on this subject (*cf.* Kiâni, 2003, pp. 72-75). However, some students of Kiâni detached themselves from his ideas after defending them (*cf.* For example, Tavakkoli, 2003). For a new detailed study analyzing this historical discontinuity, *cf.* Mohafez (2016, chapter I).

radifo-centrists, including their pedagogical principles. But the difference here is that they consider that the apogee of the art of Persian classical music is found in improvisations enriched by spontaneous inspirations and personal expressions, and not only in variable reproductions of the *gushe*-s of *radif*. According to the artists and the contextual situation, the improvisations they appreciate correspond to the second type or the third type of improvisations categorized by Jean During: “Performance based on *radif*, in which the sequences are always identifiable or nameable. Whether it is a *radif* master or an ordinary musician, the performer puts there his personal touch” (During, 2010, pp. 254-255). Or: “Performance in which only some elements are recognizable, identifiable and nameable. This level of improvisation is that of the artists having forgotten some *gushe*-s and many details of *radif*, but having memorized some technical features, brief motifs, structures of development, and a certain number of melodies in a more or less precise form” (During, 2010, p. 255). But even at this last level, almost in the same way as *radifo*-centrists, we are not looking for flexibilities in melodic progressions, non-stereotyped modulations, complex rhythms, substantially original melodies, etc.

The acknowledged and influential contemporary authority of the tendency in question, which we will call “*improviso*-centrism”, was the *târ* and *setâr* player Mohammad-Reza Lotfi (1947-2014). Insist on “the improvised and spontaneous character of Persian music” led Lotfi and his disciples to a new approach to the concept of the classical concert. Not only Lotfi sometimes entered on the stage without even having firstly decided the modes in which he would improvise, but he carried with him a book of poetry, Hafez, Sa’di, etc., in order to choose, by chance (*tof’âl*), by flipping the book in front of the public, a text appropriate to his spiritual condition of the moment (*hâl*)¹¹ to sing it. This approach, that is to say the accompaniment of instrumental playing by an amateur vocal of an instrumentalist and not of a singer during an improvisation, recalls somehow the way of some religious bards (for example in the *zeker*-s of Ahl-e Haqq), but does not belong at all to the classical Qâjâr style.

Unlike the *radifo*-centrists, *improviso*-centrists are generally more open to listening to the post- Qâjâr sources, such as recordings of the Golhâ radio style. This is probably why, on one hand, they appreciate much more the metric pieces of Qâjâr and post-Qâjâr repertoires, and on the other hand, they reserve long parts of their concerts or CDs for metric improvisations based on the usual rhythms, 6 beats, 4 beats, 2 beats, and rarely fast 5 beats or 7 beats. This practice, which in this form did not exist in the classical Qâjâr style, was invented and widely developed in the Golhâ radio style.¹²

In *improviso*-centrism, musicians do not usually oppose the use of traditional ensembles as well as the composition of new pieces. Lotfi himself, for example,

¹¹ To know more about the concept of *hâl*, cf. During (2010, pp. 289-296).

¹² However, the artists of Golhâ did not use the 5 and 7 beats rhythms, even in fast tempos.

composed and recorded with his ensemble Sheydâ, several “revolutionary songs” in the years of 1979 on cassettes of Kânun-e Châvosh (Châvosh association).¹³ But, as the program of all the albums and the concerts of this current shows, these means, that is to say the composition and the orchestral expression, are used only to create introductions, interludes and/or conclusions around one or more principal improvisations.

In the same way that *radifo*-centrists, *improviso*-centrists also rely on writings to defend and propagate their ideas: About fifteen issues of the yearbook *Ketâb-e Sâl-e Sheydâ*, published in Iran since the 1990s under the supervision of Lotfi, constitute a main written source to better know the ideas of this tendency.

III. *Vocalo-centrism.* More towards the center of the continuum, there is the greatest tendency of present-day Persian classical music which can be designated as the “*vocalo-centrist*” tendency. Many researchers have emphasized Iranians’ indefectible attachment to the poetry and dominance of non-metric singing on any instrumental interpretation (*cf.* During, 2010, pp. 277-289; Miller, 2005, pp. 157-222). Even today, the main motive of interest or attraction for Persian classical music, with regard to the general public, lies in the poetic aspect of this music. In a concert or CD, the general public seems to listen first to the meaning of poems (although the pronunciation of certain singers like M. Shajarian is not always very clear) and seems to evaluate first the voice and the singing style, which automatically puts the singer at the center of all attentions by giving him the greatest importance. In today’s *vocalo-centrism*, poetry is considered as an endless source of musical inspirations, and the climax of Persian music is to sing the poetic masterpieces in non-metric style, with beautiful voice and by raising a challenge: Combining the text with the melody, which is overloaded with sophisticated vocal ornaments (*tahrir-s*)¹⁴, in a most appropriate *dastgâh*¹⁵ or *âvâz*¹⁶, but so that pronunciation and poetic sense are perfectly rendered.¹⁷

It is today Mohammad-Reza Shajarian (b. 1940) who reigns in the domain of classical singing, without really any close rival. In *vocalo-centrism* today, we are not very attached to a particular vocal *radif*, like that of ‘Abdollah Davâmi or that of his pupil Mahmud Karimi. In fact, although this kind of old sources, as well as the recorded performances of

13 To know more about the social effect of this association, *cf.* Bâbâyi & Khâniki, 2015.

14 To know more about the technical and aesthetic characteristics of Persian *tahrir-s*, *cf.* During (2010, pp. 233-235).

15 A *dastgâh* is a multimodal complex, which starts with a particular mode and ends with the same mode. The name of each *dastgâh* is taken from the name of this basic introductive-conclusive mode. A *dastgâh* can contain until six-seven internal modes who intervenes according to a predetermined and fix order. The *radif*, in its most complete versions, has seven *dastgâh-s*.

16 An *âvâz* also is a multimodal complex who works exactly like a *dastgâh* except that the internal modes of an *âvâz* are less numerous than any *dastgâh* (two or three internal modes maximum). The *radif*, in its most complete versions, has six *âvâz-s*. In the Iranian theory, most of the *âvâz-s* are considered as “derivatives” of *dastgâh-e Shur* (the relative equivalent of Turkish *makam usşak*).

17 Since at least the twentieth century, the adequacy of the text and of the ethos of the musical mode is considered by some sources as an important science of Persian music, especially in the *Bohur ol-Alhân* of Forsat ol-Dowle Shirâzi (1996), which is probably the most quoted. Today’s singers often claim to seek and respect this adequacy, but without being able to explain it by technical criteria.

Qâjâr masters, are taught orally as the bases of learning, the ultimate pedagogical model in many cases is curiously the recorded songs of Shajarian himself; songs which are thus amply copied and imitated, in terms of content as well as technique, by the majority of the singers of different generations. Although he is also trained with the masters like Nur ‘Ali Borumand and ‘Abdollâh Davâmi, Shajarian is not a direct emulator of the Markaz’s movement. As Shajarian’s autobiographical information confirms (*cf.* Shajarian, 2004), his style of singing is, on one hand, structured in the atmosphere of *radif* and the aesthetics of the great Qâjâr singers like Tâherzâde and Eqbâl Âzar, and, on the other hand, influenced by the Golhâ’s radio aesthetics, because Shajarian began his career in Tehran on the radio, alongside the great figures of this current such as Ahmad ‘Ebâdi. This is why Shajarian himself, as well as all the *vocalo*-centrists who follow his path, are often open to styles more or less distant from the tradition of the nineteenth century. At the same time, and unlike the earlier mentioned currents, today’s *vocalo*-centrism is much less concerned with theoretical and historical issues, such as the question of the continuity of style and elements of Persian classical music during the past centuries.

The content of Shajarian’s vocal improvisations, especially from 1980 to 2000, is based on a personal approach of the same type as *improviso*-centrists, which is not the case for most of today’s young singers whose case is rather in the framework of the first type of improvisation proposed by During (2010, p. 254) but by applying a decisive change for the model: Literal performance of Shajarian songs as recorded or taught by himself or by a transmitter of his style, with a certain degree of variability. Note that some of these variations are automatically generated by the adaptation of new poems on the modeled songs of Shajarian. However, some young singers, like Mehdi Emâmi, avoid consciously the imitation of certain norms of “*Shajarianism*” in order to achieve an aesthetically more personal style. But these are exceptional cases.

In today’s *vocalo*-centrism, including the case of Shajarian himself, it is even permissible to sing, without even asking questions, with a symphonic orchestra playing old or contemporary Iranian compositions arranged by a type of the 18th century’s European-style harmonization. Moreover, most of the current young singers, such as Homayoun Shajarian (Mohammad-Reza’s son), Mohammad Mo’tamedi, Alirezâ Qorbâni, Sâlâr ‘Aqili, Mehdi Emâmi, etc., also participate in non-traditional but mediated musical occasions to make themselves better known to the general public. Here are two examples for these occasions: Singing in almost pop arrangements of the credits of television series, or singing in Western-type operas commissioned on religious or national themes such as *The Opera of ‘Ashurâ*¹⁸ and *The Opera of Mowlavi* (Both composed by Behzad ‘Abdi).

¹⁸ This kind of order is one of the rare cases where the political system supports a musical project.

Shajarian has recently shown some interest in popular idioms. Long after his period of collaboration with H. Alizadeh and K. Kalhor in the early 2000s –musicians who represent a certain modernity in their artistic approach– he has organized big concerts out of Iran with the participation of some young musicians who produce only a sort of Iranian “World Music”; a fusion music interpreted, in this case, by instruments invented by Shajarian himself.

In this regard, it should be noted that Shajarian is one of the very rare contemporary authority of Persian classical music to have constructed new instruments and to have made them play in his concerts and albums; an initiative which could have opened up a field of research and questioning about the timbres and sounds of lost ancient Persian instruments (like Fikret Karakaya’s projects in the case of Turkey), but these essays do not aim at reconstructing the old instruments such as *chang*, *shâhrud*, *sheshtâr*, *robâb*, *musiqâr*, etc.: Shajarian’s lutes reproduce, to great extents, forms, timbres, and models of the present *târ* and *setâr*, while his viols are new adaptations of *kamânche*, violin, viola, cello and double bass. These experiments, initiated by the current leader of the *vocalo*-centrist tendency, show once again that in the aesthetic and artistic problematic of today, the main concern of some is to introduce alto and bass timbres rather than interest in research and historical issues.¹⁹

IV. Golhâ tendency. With the disappearance of the last representatives of the style known as “sweet-playing (*shirin-navâzi*)” (cf. During 2010, p. 76), “radiophonic (*râdiyoi*)”, “the age of the violin (*asr-e violon*)” (cf. Fatemi, 2013, p. 71) or Golhâ, especially after the death of the *ney* master Hasan Kasâ’i (d. 2012) and the *târ* master Jalil Shahnâz (d. 2013), this style which had emerged in the 1940s and had marked instrumental performance, vocal aesthetic and orchestral metrical composition by its so-called “romantic” character, disappeared more than ever under the emergence of other currents.

In fact, the tendency of Golhâ type that we place it at the center of our continuum incorporates two aspects: One traditional, the other orchestral western way. In its more traditional aspect, instrumental improvisations in solo, duo, trio, and even quartet are as important as instrumental-vocal improvisations (*sâz o âvâz*). All these improvisations, presented under a softened and characteristic aesthetic, are less based on a particular *radif*, than on a repertory of the hyper-known melody-types of the Qâjâr inheritance. What Jean During categorizes as the fourth type of improvisation is to some extent observable in the Golhâ style:

At the last stage, the traces of *radif* are practically reduced to modal patterns, scales, and an ornamental style. Often, we cannot specify this or that passage is connected to which *gushe*. The typically Iranian character of these improvisations appears only in intervals, scales, ambitus and ornamentations, some symmetry, and some typical rhythmic formulas principally in 6/8. (During, 2010, p. 255)

¹⁹ To know more about the instruments of Shajarian and his demonstration of instruments in Paris cf. During (2013).

However, even at this fourth and last stage, the general melodic-modal style of *radif* is totally present: There is still a big absence of flexibility in melodic progressions (*seyr-s*), unexpected modulations, complex rhythms, substantially original melodies, and so on.

As already mentioned, the non-metric singing in the Golhâ style, of which Gholâm-Hoseyn Banân (d. 1986) was the symbol,²⁰ is continued, to a certain extent, by the “*Shajariânists*”, while the instrumental improvisations in the Golhâ style, notably the idea of long improvisations on 2, 4, and especially 6 beats rhythms, is now more or less taken up and appreciated by *improviso-centrists*, especially the “*Lotfistes*”.

As for its more western aspect, the Golhâ genre also contains compositions on the usual Iranian rhythms of the nineteenth century, but often interpreted on slow tempos with classical or contemporary poems (and very rarely with modern poems called *she'r-e now*) and with polyphonic arrangements (based on European harmony of the eighteenth century). These compositions are written for a symphonic orchestra, which also incorporates a number of classical Iranian instruments. Here, in the continuity of the Vaziri movement, the elements of the European orchestra and polyphony impose themselves as legitimate, even inevitable.

At present, this compositional and orchestral aspect of Golhâ music is considered as a kind of “light music” by most of other tendencies, especially by *radifo-centrists* and *improviso-centrists*, but also by certain “modernists” like “*Alizadists*” (of which we shall speak right after the Golhâ tendency). However, the Golhâ tendency continues to survive, mainly in the context of the activities of a “symphonico-traditional” orchestra called *melli* (national) directed for many years by Farhâd Fakhreddini (b. 1937), a specialist in the interpretation of emblematic and nostalgic compositions of the Golhâ style, whose apogee was reached by the works of Ruhollâh Khâleqi (d. 1965).

Finally, it should be remembered that after the theoretical essays of Vaziri (*cf.* 2004), then Khaleqi (*cf.* 2006), there are few modern theoretical works dealing with the ideas of the Golhâ period. The book by Hoseyn Dehlavi, *Peyvand-e She'r va Musiqi (Combination of Poetry and Music)* (Dehlavi, 2000), and the recent treatise of Farhâd Fakhreddini, *Hârmoni-e Musiqi-e Irâni (Harmony of Iranian Music)* (Fakhreddini, 2015) are the only notable examples that can be cited.

V. ‘Alizadism. For a long period after the revolution, the tendency led by the *târ* and *setâr* player Hossein Alizadeh (b. 1951 and trained in the Markaz) could be considered, by his so-called “innovator and modernist” characteristics as the extreme left of the continuum of Persian classical music. However, Alizadeh posits himself, on one hand, as a holder of the tradition (with his own recording of the integral of *radif* and the publication of a written method for *târ* and *setâr* in four volumes) and, on

²⁰ For a documentation of the repertoire sung by Banân, *cf.* Âqâyipur (2015).

the other hand, he went so far as to compose fusion film music and even symphonic atonal pieces. This is what Jean During notes in his pages about the phenomenon of “*Alizadism*” (During, 2010, pp. 91-93).

What essentially distinguishes *Alizadism* from *radifo*-centrism, *improviso*-centrism and *vocalo*-centrism is its preoccupation for innovation in the Qâjâr tradition. Throughout his career, Alizadeh made attempts to innovation on several axes, which were immediately modeled and widely imitated by his disciples and sympathizers. Here are some of these axes: (i) Taking deliberately distance from the reproduction of the *gushe*-s of *radif* and also from the known melody-types of the Qâjâr tradition, either in his improvisations or in his compositions. (ii) Taking relatively distance from the support on improvised and spontaneous character of Persian music, to go towards creations more programmed and previously elaborated. (iii) Give more importance to instrumental music. (iv) Integrate new sound colors into the playing of *târ* and *setâr*, for example, by using intensity contrasts in phrasing and also a sort of “narrative-expressive-impressive tendency”. (v) Give much more importance to the composition of new metric pieces on the usual rhythms, also on the 5 and 7 beats *aksak* rhythms. (vi) Give more importance to the traditional orchestra and arrangement of instrumental lines. (vii) Exploiting melodic-rhythmic ideas of regional music of Iran, especially from Khorâsân, Azerbaijan, and Kurdistan. (viii) Develop a kind of polyphony with four voices, more compatible with Persian music, based on counterpoints and canons rather in fourths and fifths, the best example of which seems his album *Râz-e Now* (Alizadeh, 1998).

To these points, it must be added that Alizadeh is the only authority of Iranian post-Qâjâr classical music who invented and proposed (first in the same album *Râz-e Now*, then in the album *Zemestân Ast* (Alizadeh, 2001), with the participation of Shajarian, a new mode or maqâm, called maqâm-e Dâd o Bidâd. As this name reveals, it is a combined mode mixing in a particular way the mode Dâd of the *dastgâh* Mâhur with the mode Bidâd of the *dastgâh* Homâyun, which recalls the way in which Turkish-Ottoman musicians proceeded to invent new *murekkeb makamlar*.²¹ Curiously, this is the Alizadeh’s only innovation attempt, which has not been modeled and imitated, until now, by his sympathizers.

A little like Shajarian, Alizadeh also has shown in recent years, a certain attraction for the “*publico*-centrist” tendency, by organizing spectacular concerts intended for the grand public and proposing repertoires whose contents are much less appreciable even by a good number of *Alizadists*. Let’s evoke here one of his last “great concerts” (*concert-e bozorg*) in Tehran in 2014, where half of the program was devoted to the interpretation of Azerbaijani folk songs and melodies, arranged for mixed voices and

²¹ It does not seem that Alizadeh adopted this idea on the basis of the Turkish-Ottoman tradition.

a set of Persian classical instruments to which must be added *nâqârâ*, *daf*, and also Azerbaijani *târ*, the latter played by Alizadeh himself.²²

Alizadeh, like protagonists of *vocalo*-centrism and Golhâ, was not very productive at the theoretical level. However, he has expressed his ideas in numerous interviews. Here, we will cite only the one produced by Mohsen Shahrnâzdâr, published in the format of a book (Alizadeh & Shahrnâzdâr, 2004).

VI. Folklorism. As Jean During (2010, pp. 81-83) observed, Hossein Alizadeh is not the only classical Iranian musician to turn occasionally to regional music of Iran to renew his inspiration. But today, there are many musicians who seek to integrate regional musical elements into the classical genre or who attempt to merge some classical elements with folk styles. Thus, obviously, there is a desire to mix classical and folklore: Either through a folklorisation of classical music or through a classicization of folklore. Of course, in both cases, these creations depend less on *radif* and on the Qâjâr classical inheritance than all the mentioned tendencies. So we can talk about this current as a kind of “folklorism”.

A first example is the “half Persian, half Kurdish” concerts of famous Kâmkâr family in which the musicians usually sing Kurdish folk songs while accompanying their voices with classical instruments (apart from *daf*) played in more or less classical styles.

Another edifying example is found in the albums of Shahram Nazeri (b. 1950), such as *Mahtâb-ru* (Nazeri, 1992), *Heyrâni* (Nazeri, 1996), et *Âvâz-e Asâtir* (Nazeri, 2000). This famous singer, identified initially as a classical singer, regularly uses his technique, his style and sometimes his classical phrasing to sing metric compositions and non-metric pieces inspired by Kurdish folk and/or rituals music but also by Persian classical tradition; a repertoire mainly accompanied by Kurdish *tanbur* in solo or in ensemble.

In the case of the *kamânche* and *setâr* player Keyhan Kalhor (b. 1963), the accents and the expression are strongly influenced by certain regional music. It is a desire to use these regional influences in a classic playing, to realize the fusion between classical and folk idioms. His album *Night, Silence, Desert (Shab Sokut, Kavir)* (Kalhor, 1998) was a great success and made Keyhan Kalhor known to the general public: Shajarian sings there the classical Dashti mode by imitating a Khorâsâni accent and style, with the accompaniment of Persian classical instruments. But there is also the famous *dotâr* master Haj Qorbân Soleymâni (d. 2008), interpreting a Khorâsâni mode in the middle of a series of metric pieces and non-metric songs, arranged almost in the form of a classical suite. In other projects, Kalhor lets dialogue his *kamânche*, as a representative of the Persian classical style (because he plays with a classical technique and sound aesthetic),

²² It should also be noted that Alizadeh invented, before Shajarian, two new lutes which are called Sallâne and Shurangiz, and which have not been able to spread considerably in society, as the case of instruments of Shajarian.

with some non-Iranian instruments: with Anatolian *baghlama* of Erdal Erzincan, and with Indian *sitar* of Shujaat Husain Khan. Thus, in the first two cases, Kalhor merged the Persian classical style with a folkloric music (Khorâsân and Anatolia), while in the third he dialogues with a classical musician from India.

Another more popular form of folk-classical fusion, appears in the video clips of the Rastâk band: Here some young instrumentalists and singers play well known folk songs from the four corners of Iran, from Gilan to Bushehr and from Baluchistan to Lorestan, but by arranging them mainly for the Persian classical instruments. In the case of each song, they add a number of regional instruments, such as *sornâ*, *dohol*, *qopuz*, etc., which adds to the classical texture a certain typical sonorous color of the concerned region.

The fundamental point is that the concerts and albums of all these artists are mainly given and distributed in the capital and some major cities. Indeed, the productions of Kalhor, Rastâk, Shahram Nazeri and Kâmkâr-s are aimed more at listeners of Persian classical music than at listeners of regional music. Remember that the musicians such as Kamakars, Nazeri and Kalhor are originally known, in many artistic circles, as representatives of Persian classical style. Consequently, these types of fusion of classical-folk, print their influences on taste, aesthetics, and repertoires of young musicians and listeners of the classical domain much more than those of regional music.

VII. Publico-centrism. Finally, at the extreme left of our continuum, we must talk about a new tendency, which fluctuates, at the border of classic and modern urban pop.²³ Here, *radif* and the Qâjâr repertoire, in their original form, have no place: We remain within the general modal framework of the traditional *dastgâh*-s and *âvâz*-s (even the western major and minor) and we are inspired only by the very well-known materials of the Qâjâr tradition, in order to adapt continually the contents of musical creations to demands of the general public. This is why we call this tendency as “*publico-centrism*”.

Here, we are in the industrial manufacture of cultural products. The artists of this current are hyperactive: They record several albums by year and perform very regularly in concert. In their creations, they try to be very “modernist”, even “deconstructivist”. From gestural to repertoire and from instrumentation to advertising, they constantly seek to surpass others by introducing more “unexpected” and “spectacular” initiatives each time.

Here, the demonstration of technicality is translated rather at the level of excessive instrumental speed and singing of melodies and *tahrir*-s, which rise in the highest possible registers. This is one of the prerequisites of this style. As these creations are aimed to the Iranian general public, vocal music often dominates instrumental

23 To know about different aspects of Iranian urban light music from the Safavids until today, cf. Fatemi (2013; 2015).

playing. The improvisation, here, is almost marginal and the repertory of each creation consists rather of metric pieces, previously composed, than of non-metric parts. The rhythm and the metrical ostinatos, on which are superimposed from time to time non-metric lines, are here an essential recipe. But curiously, we do not seek to exploit more complex rhythms than the current *aksak* rhythms (that is to say fast 5 and 7 beats). The questions of non-typical modal diversification and new compositional forms do not attract these artists either. The most important point is that here fusion and hybridization are not only legitimized, but they are the indispensable means of globalizing of Persian music (*jahâni kardan-e musiqi-e irâni*); which is apparently the manifesto of this tendency. Obviously, this kind of fusion has more economic success compared to any other classic tendency in Iran.

According to the quoted manifesto, as can be heard in the discourse of the artists of this tendency, Persian music did not make itself known on the international scenes like Indian, Arabic, African music, etc. It is therefore necessary to bring it out of Iran to dialogue with the “cosmopolitan musical idioms”. So here we even hope to win a prize in the Grammy awards and it is with a certain pride that we envisage a participation of the famous international fusion musicians in the Iranian projects.

The fusion and hybridization within this current seem to know no limit: We can color a non-metric *sâz o âvâz* by using a kind of occidental polyphony but subjectively “iranized”; a polyphony played by a Western string quartet, a Spanish guitar, a Turkish *sâz* and of course a series of percussions ranging from *tombak* to few African drums, as was the case in a concert by ‘Ali Qamsari and Homayoun Shajarian. We can make a “dialogue” between Persian classical singing and flamenco singing, where the first one imitates substantially the vocal techniques of the latter, supported by a totally multicultural instrumental ensemble, as was the case in a concert of Mohammad Mo’tamedi and Rosario La Tremendita. We can invite to sing a poem of Mowlânâ according to the traditional vocal technique in a composition arranged in hard rock style and executed with electric guitars and drums, as is a video clip of Homayoun Shajarian and Sohrâb Pournâzeri (one of the sons of a well-known folklorist musician, Keykhosrow Pournâzeri). We can bring together foreign instrumentalists with their violins, percussions, etc., to accompany some light Persian songs containing a certain number of classical elements, as is the case with all Hafez Nazeri’s projects with his father Shahram Nazeri. And, as a final example, we can compose a resolutely pop Persian song, sung by a classical voice and arranged for piano and Western strings on which a *setâr* gives from time to time a traditional color, as in the famous piece, *cherâ rafti*, of Tahmures Pournâzeri (other son of Keykhosrow Pournâzeri) and Homayoun Shajarian, that amaze the “modern youth” of the country, at least in the concerned video clip.

The problem with this last tendency is that the involved artists often do not consider their music as pop but claim what they are doing are only innovations in the pure tradition of Persian classical music. Reading a few words from Hafez Nazeri (about whom we discussed earlier) in an interview on an Iranian website, illustrates sufficiently our purpose:

[...] When my CD [titled *Nâgofte/Untold*] came out, we spoke of it as the work number one of classical music of the world; the work in which were present 42 winners of the Grammy awards; the work for which we spent 5,000 hours. [...] 70,000 copies of this CD have sold, and maybe only ten people among them have understood this music. [...] Some have already said that this CD belongs to the New Age genre, while this CD is published by Sony Classical Records. The bosses of world music have said that this work should be published in the classical category. [...] Wait two years to see what changes I will make in the Iranian space. [...] Everyone thinks that my works are modern, but I know by heart all the songs of the ancients. I assure you that I am the only person who can perform word by word of the songs of Tâherzâde, Amirqâsemi, Nakisâ, Eqbâl Âzar, and so on. [...] Many musicians believe that innovation in Persian music is the equivalent of acrobatics on stage. But you cannot discover new things in the tradition unless you know its depths.²⁴

For the Iranian general public, these “classical” musicians play, to a certain extent, the role of pop superstars like Jennifer Lopez, Shakira, etc., and Iranian “*losânjelesi*”²⁵ stars like Googoosh and Ebi. These latter cannot perform in concert, under any circumstances, in Iran under the Islamic Republic. However, it must be remembered that from the second decade of the installation of the Islamic regime, a kind of pop music “made in Iran” came into being (*cf.* During, 2010, pp. 36-37; Tonekâboni, 2014). Stylistically, this music is very similar to *losânjelesi* music, but more or less manipulated at the level of texts, in order to be authorized, or even supported by the regime and under the pretext of facing what the regime calls “cultural invasion” (*tahâjom-e farhangi*). Although “the Iranian power and its supporters have no interest in integrating music into their definition of identity” (During, 2010, p. 302), this regime is not unaware of the impact that music, in the general sense, can have in propaganda of its ideologies. Curiously, although it may seem contradictory to the anti-Occidentalism of the Islamic regime, in the last 37 years after the revolution, it was rather this music, “pop made in Iran” but also Western classical music, which were chosen for political and religious propaganda. The textual manipulation in question has made that since the 1990s, a whole new repertory of pop music and classic Western music styles, of which the examples are abundant, emerged in Iran. The themes as well as the texts, objects of public commissions are for example: “Praise to the Saints of Shi’ism”, “Glorification of the Islamic Revolution”, “Support to the Palestinian People”, etc. It is also interesting to note that in recent years, a

²⁴ The interview done by Soheylâ Sadiqi and ‘Alirezâ Bahrâmi, available on: <http://musiceiranian.ir/85126-nazeri-119.html>

²⁵ It is a rather dancing pop music style, developed mainly in Los Angeles by the Iranian pop stars exiled following the Islamic revolution.

whole new style of *maddâhi* (religious praise) has emerged whose ethos and melodic-rhythmic aesthetics are strongly influenced by these pop music made in Iran and *losânjelesi* music, obviously in order to further attract the youth of the country.

For this reason of propaganda among others, pop music made in Iran, has never been able to reach the phenomenal popularity that *losânjelesi* music has in the Iranian society. Therefore, the need for true superstars of light music, which is understandable by everyone and accessible within the country, is still strongly felt despite the media omnipresence of the new pop singers in Iran. Here, it is important to emphasize that Persian classical music, in an attitude of indifference and resistance to the preferences of political power, has remained for the entire population in general as a trans-political and trans-religious national reference. It is one of the rare cultural phenomena that could be remained, to a large extent, intact from manipulations by the authorities. This is why, as Jean During rightly says: “By choosing to practice this art, we rank immediately ourselves on the side of the population who does not play the game of the regime, although there are evidently exceptions or people who manage to play a double game” (During, 2010, p. 302). Thus, the social need to hear superstars of entertainment music within the country on one hand, and, on the other hand, the beloved national status of classical musicians, which we have just described, contributed to the emergence of the *publico*-centrist tendency in the register of Persian classical music.

The fact that some pioneers of *publico*-centrism, as we have mentioned, are the descendants of some masters of Persian classic genre, is also interesting to note. As Mohammad Musavi says, being the child of a classical authority can help to make known a new music in the general public. The paradox is that this new music (of the sons of this or that *ostâd*) has no longer any affinity with the classical music of their famous fathers. But the popularity acquired thanks to the advantages and notoriety of the fathers, facilitates for these young musicians the negation of the “popular” aspect, and legitimizes them to present their music as “avant-garde” and “innovating”. Their strategy is to attract a whole new audience, but allows the latter, who until now followed the classical music of their fathers, to go towards a sort of light music while making them believe that they are still part of the elite music lovers; In other words, that the public does not realize that this new music is no longer an elite music (*cf.* Musavi, 2014, pp. 233-235).

In the case of the *publico*-centrist tendency, much more than in the others, there is a confusion of musical genres. The main cause is to be sought above all in the dogmatic cultural policies and the systematic censorship of the current regime. Jean During pointed out in the conclusion of his panorama of *Musiques d’Iran*:

The most moderate judgment on official music policy cannot ignore the responsibility of censorship in the confusion that currently affects musical practices. To remove the traditional

music from the imbroglia where it fell, it is useless to multiply the distinction, to distribute genres on a scale of aesthetic and technical values, to enlighten the public or to proscribe mixtures and amalgams. No, from a pragmatic perspective, the chances of its survival relates to a cultural policy free from all religious and moralist dogmatisms. That we open the gates of the most unrestrained pop, techno, hard rock, and other trash metal, as well as *losânjelesi*, oriental cabaret, rap, let the young and old dance on the air which they like, that all expressions are allowed, and very quickly the selection will be made of itself and everything will be put in place. Everyone will find what they are looking for where it should be, and musicians of neo-traditional obedience will no longer be forced to respond to all the confused demands of the public. (During, 2010, pp. 103-104).

Conclusion

In this article, we have sketched a picture of the various contemporary tendencies of Persian classical music, in the framework of a continuum extended between the Qâjâr heritage and Iranian world music. The considerable aesthetic, stylistic, theoretical, ideological and practical contrasts which are clearly observable between these tendencies, lead us to conclude that: Today, we can no longer speak of a single particular music under the general title of “Persian classical music” without specifying immediately its certain basic characteristics which are essential to distinguish its identity from other music presented under exactly the same general title. This is a very important point not only for scholars in the academic world, but also for organizers of concerts and festivals, for audio/video publishers, etc., all over the world who are interested somehow in the “Persian classical music”: It is very much possible that what they are programming in their festival or publishing on CD/DVD under the title of “Persian classical music”, be a pure World music, folklorized music, modernized music, Westernised music, or improvised music, and therefore not necessarily an old traditional music in the proper sense of the term.

But finally, it is essential to draw attention to the fact that none of these seven tendencies of Persian classical music, which have been discussed in this article, does not preoccupy the questions like revivification of Persian pre-Qâjâr music or enrichment of the today’s classical practice by referring to historical sources or the musical traditions of neighboring cultures, such as Turkish-Ottoman and Arabic traditions. However, from 2005, two ethnomusicologists, Jean During and Sasan Fatemi, through their writings and musical activities, attracted progressively the attention of a growing number of young Iranian musicians and musicologists on these issues; thus, recently, a very new “neoclassical movement” is born in the Persian classical panorama. This Iranian movement corresponds to an eclectic opening towards neighboring musical cultures –especially Turkish-Ottoman and Arabic musical cultures– and to an intention of reviving the lost elements of ancient Persian music –such as compositional forms and long rhythmic cycles– in the contemporary practice. For example, the author’s *‘Ajamlar* double CDs project (Mohafez, 2013),

which is in the continuity of this neoclassical movement, is an attempt to revive the “*acemler*” repertoire, notated and conserved in some old Ottoman manuscripts, through the prism of contemporary Persian aesthetics.²⁶

As this neoclassical movement is very young, it is a bit early to be able to formulate its definitive corpus of identity characteristics. However, in a previous study (Mohafez, 2016, pp. 373-388) we have already presented the current identity elements of this movement, as they are observable in the writings and creations of not many involved researchers and artists. It should be noted that, until now, the projects of the neoclassical movement are sometimes completely ignored, sometimes harshly criticized by a great majority of Iranian musicians, whether traditionalists or other obedience (*cf.* Mohafez, 2016, pp. 410-433). Thus, it is difficult to foresee the role that the neoclassical movement will play in the future of the Persian classical panorama, a panorama which evolves at a considerable speed, especially since the taste of many musicians is marked by the *publico*-centrism tendency.

But regardless of its future, the Persian neoclassical movement, even in its present state, can be considered as a relevant model for musicians of the cultures neighboring Iran: To learn more about certain aspects of their classical music, Turks, Azerbaijanis, Arabs, Tajiks, Uzbeks, and others, also have an interest in turning to Iran and listening sometimes to, at least, some more traditionalist tendencies of Persian classical music.

²⁶ Among other musical projects of this neoclassical movement, which contain new compositions in old style, we should mention the double CDs *Sarkhâne* (Fatemi, 2010), and the double CDs *Darâmad-e Dovvom* (During, 2012).

21. Yüzyıl Klasik Fars Müziğindeki Sanatsal Eğilimlerin Bir Tipolojisi

Arash Mohafez¹

Öz

Bu makale, çağdaş İran toplumunda Fars klasik müziğinin genel görünümü üzerine çeşitli sanatsal eğilimlerin özgün bir antropolojik-etnomüzikolojik tipolojisini sunmaktadır. Bu amaçla, ilk olarak, Fars klasik müziği tarihinin 20. yüzyıldaki en önemli görüngü ya da gerçeklerinden bazılarını değinilmiştir. Ardından Fars klasik müziği alanında en etkin yedi büyük çağdaş eğilim, bir süreklilik (İng. continuum) olarak tanımlanıp, sınıflandırılmıştır. Bu eğilimler arasındaki ayrımın en temel kriteri, her birinin Kaçar müzik geleneği mirasına göre konumudur. Çalışmamız ayrıca, bu yedi büyük eğilimden hiçbirinin, Kaçar öncesi Fars müziğinin yeniden canlandırılması yahut Türk-Osmanlı ve Arap gelenekleri gibi komşu kültürlerin müzik geleneklerine ya da tarihsel kaynaklara referans göstererek günümüz klasik müziğinin zenginleştirilmesi gibi meselelerle ilgilenmediğini ortaya koymaktadır. Diğer yandan, Fars klasik müziği panoramasına 2005 yılından itibaren, yeni ve büyüyen bir “neoklasik akım” eklenmiştir. Bu akım, komşu müzik kültürleriyle ilişkili eklektik bir açılım yapmak ve çağdaş uygulamada eski Fars müziğinin kaybolmuş unsurlarını yeniden canlandırmak niyetindedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Pers/İran Klasik Müziği • Radif • Müzik Gelenekleri • Müzikal Eğilimler • Süreklilik • Doğaçlama • Metrik / Metrik Olmayan Kompozisyon ve İcra

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Bu makale, çağdaş İran toplumunda Fars klasik müziğinin genel görünümü üzerine çeşitli sanatsal eğilimlerin özgün bir antropolojik-etnomüzikolojik tipolojisini sunmaktadır. Bu amaçla, ilk olarak, Fars klasik müziği tarihinin 20. yüzyıldaki en önemli görüngü ya da gerçeklerinden bazıları: 1919’da başlayarak ‘*Alinaqi Vaziri*’ tarafından somutlaştırılan Oksidentalist hareket; 1940 sonrası “radyo tarzı”nın ortaya çıkışı; 1970’lerde İran Geleneksel Müziği’nin Korunması ve Yaygınlaştırılması Merkezi (*Markaz-e Hefz va Eshâ’e-Ye Musiqi-e Sonnat-e Irâni*) Hareketi; 1979 devriminden sonra İslami rejimin İran’ın müzik hayatına dayattığı bir takım kısıtlamalarla ülkenin kültür politikasındaki radikal değişim; devrim sonrası Fars klasik müziğine karşı özellikle gençlerin tutku dalgası aktarılmaktadır.

Çalışmamız ayrıca, Fars klasik müziği alanında en etkin yedi büyük çağdaş eğilimi, bir süreklilik (İng. continuum) olarak tanımlayıp, sınıflandırmaktadır. Bu eğilimler arasındaki ayrımın en temel kriteri, her birinin Kaçar müzik geleneği mirasına göre konumudur:

- I. En uçta, *radif*² ve Kaçar repertuarındaki en muhafazakâr eğilim vardır. “*Radif-merkezcilik*” olarak adlandırılabilir olan bu tavır, İran Geleneksel Müziği’nin Korunması ve Yaygınlaştırılması Merkezi hareketinin radikalleşmesidir.
- II. Sürekliliğimizin merkezine doğru ilerlediğimizde, yine Merkez hareketinden türeyen bir diğer eğilim vardır. Fakat “doğaçlama-merkezcilik” olarak adlandıracağımız bu ikinci eğilimi savunanların farkı, Fars klasik müzik sanatının zirvesinin yalnızca *radif gushelerinin*³ çeşitli reproduksiyonlarında değil ayrıca kendiliğinden gelişen esinlenmeler ve kişisel ifadelerle zenginleştirilmiş doğaçlamalarda bulunduğunu ileri sürmesindedir.
- III. Yedi eğilimden üçüncüsü, “vokal-merkezci” eğilim olarak adlandırılabilir günümüz Fars klasik müziğinin en büyük eğilimidir. Günümüz vokal merkezciliğinde şiir, müzikal ilhamların sonsuz bir kaynağı olarak görülür ve Fars müziğinin doruk noktası, şiirsel başyapıtları metrik olmayan bir tarzda söylemektir.
- IV. Yedi eğilimin merkezinde, 1940’larda ortaya çıkan ve sözde romantik karakteriyle enstrümantal performansı, ses estetiğini ve orkestral metrik kompozisyonu öne çıkaran “Golhâ” eğilimi bulunmaktadır. Aslında Golhâ eğiliminin iki cephesi bulunur: bir yanda solo, düet, trio ve hatta kuartet biçimindeki enstrümantal doğaçlamalar ile enstrümantal-vokal doğaçlamalarını (sâz u âvâz) aynı derecede önemli sayan geleneksel görüş; diğer yanda ise on dokuzuncu yüzyılın bildik İran ritimleri üzerine kompozisyonlarla, ancak sık sık klasik/çağdaş şiirlerle yavaş tempolar üzerine ve çok sesli düzenlemelerle yorumlanan Batı tarzı orkestral görüş.

2 Kaçar dönemi klasik Fars müziği büyük ölçüde, *radif* denilen örnek repertuarın farklı enstrümantal ve vokal versiyonlarından oluşmaktaydı.

3 *Radif* içinde çok sayıda bulunan ve metrik olmayan küçük melodik bölümlere *gushe* denir.

- V. *Târ* ve *setâr* icracısı Hüseyin Alizadeh önderliğindeki bir diğer eğilim, “*radif*-merkezcilik”, “doğaçlama-merkezcilik” ve “vokal-merkezcilik” eğilimlerinden, Kaçar geleneğinde yenilikçilik ısrarı bakımından ayrılmaktadır. Alizadeh, kariyeri boyunca –örneğin ifadedeki keskin karşıtlıkları ve bir tür “öyküleyici-açıklayıcı-etkileyici eğilimi” kullanmakla *târ* ve *setâr* icrasına yeni ses renklerini entegre etmek gibi– öğrencileri ve sempatizanları tarafından hemen benimsenip yaygın biçimde taklit edilen çeşitli eksenlerde yeniliklere girişmiştir.
- VI. Altıncı eğilim, bölgesel müzik unsurlarını klasik türle bütünleştirmeyi veya bazı klasik unsurları halk tarzları ile birleştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Dolayısıyla, açıkça görüldüğü üzere, ya klasik müziğin folklorize edilmesi ya da folklorun klasikleştirilmesi yoluyla klasik ve folklorun bir araya getirilmesi arzulanmaktadır. Şüphesiz her iki durumda da, bu yaratımlar *radif* ve Kaçar klasik mirasına tüm o öteki eğilimlerden daha az bağımlıdır. Dolayısıyla, bu akımı bir tür “folklorizm” olarak tanımlayabiliriz.
- VII. Son olarak, klasik ve modern kent popunun sınırında dalgalanan yeni bir eğilimden bahsedilebilir. Burada, *radif* ve Kaçar repertuarının orijinal biçimlerine yer yoktur. Bu eğilimde, geleneksel *destgâh*’lar ve *âvâz*’ların (hatta Batılı majör ve minörün) genel makam çerçevesindeyizdir. Öyle ki müzikal eserlerin içeriğini halkın taleplerine her daim uyarlamak için Kaçar geleneğinin sadece çok iyi bilinen malzemelerinden esinlenilir. Bu yüzden bu eğilimi “halk merkezcilik” olarak adlandırabiliriz.

Dolayısıyla bu makale, Kaçar mirası ile İran dünya müziği arasında uzanan bir süreklilik çerçevesinde, Fars klasik müziğinin çeşitli çağdaş eğilimlerini aktarmaktadır. Bu eğilimler arasında açıkça görülebilen önemli estetik, biçimsel, teorik, ideolojik ve pratik zıtlıklar bizi, bugün, “Fars klasik müziği” başlığı altında, bu müziği aynı genel başlık altında sunulan diğer müziklerden ayırt etmek için gerekli olan bazı temel özelliklerini saymazsak, belirli bir müzik türünden bahsedemeyeceğimiz sonucuna götürür. Bu, yalnızca akademidekiler için değil, “Fars Klasik Müziği” ile bir şekilde ilgilenen, dünyanın her yerindeki ses/video yayıncıları, konser ve festival organizatörleri gibiler için de çok önemli bir husustur. Bu son saydığımız gruptaki kimselerin, “Fars klasik müziği” başlığı altında festivallerde sundukları yahut CD/DVD olarak yayınladıkları müziklerin saf bir Dünya müziği, folklorik müzik, modernize edilmiş müzik, Batılı müzik veya doğaçlamalı müzik olması çok muhtemeldir ve bu nedenle de bunlar tam manasıyla “geleneksel müzik” değildir.

Son olarak, Fars klasik müziğinin ele alınan yedi eğiliminden hiçbirinin, Kaçar öncesi Fars müziğinin yeniden canlandırılması yahut Türk-Osmanlı ve Arap gelenekleri gibi komşu kültürlerin müzik geleneklerini ya da tarihsel kaynakları referans göstererek günümüz klasik müziğinin zenginleştirilmesi gibi konuları içermediğine de dikkat

çekmek gerekmektedir. Ne var ki, 2005'ten bu yana, Jean Ettresi ve Sasan Fatemi adlı iki etnomüzikolog, yazıları ve müzik etkinlikleri aracılığıyla giderek artan sayıda genç İranlı müzisyenin ve müzikoloğun dikkatini bu konulara çekmiştir. Bu sayede, son zamanlarda Fars klasik müziğinde bir “neoklasik akım”ın doğduğunu gözlemleyebiliriz. Bu akım komşu müzik kültürleriyle, özellikle de Türk-Osmanlı ve Arap müzik kültürleriyle ilişkili eklektik bir açılım yapmak ve çağdaş uygulamada (kompozisyon formları ve uzun ritmik döngüler gibi) eski Fars müziğinin kaybolmuş unsurlarını yeniden canlandırmak niyetindedir. Örneğin, bu satırların yazarının bahsi geçen neoklasik akım içerisinde yer alan iki CD’li *Acemler* projesi, eski Osmanlı el yazmalarında rastlanan “acemler” repertuarını çağdaş Fars estetiği yorumuyla canlandırmaya yönelik bir girişimdir.

Bu neoklasik akım, daha emekleme aşamasında olduğundan, karakteristik özelliklerini kesin bir biçimde tanımlayabilmek için henüz erkendir. Şimdiye kadar, neoklasik akım içerisindeki projeler bazen tamamen görmezden gelinmiş, bazense gelenekselciler ya da diğer konformist müzisyenlerin büyük çoğunluğu tarafından sertçe eleştirilmiştir. Bu nedenle neoklasik akımın, özellikle müzisyenlerden çoğunun beğenisinin “halk merkezci” eğilimle belirlenmeye başlamasına bağlı olarak hissedilir bir hızla gelişen Fars klasik müziğinin geleceğinde nasıl bir rol oynayacağını öngörmek hayli güçtür.

Ancak gelecekte bağımsız olarak, Fars neoklasik akımı bugünkü hâliyle bile, İran’a komşu kültürlerin müzisyenleri için de yararlı bir model olarak düşünülebilir: Türklerin, Azerilerin, Arapların, Taciklerin, Özbeklerin ve başkalarının, kendi klasik müziklerinin belirli yönleri hakkında daha fazla bilgi edinmek adına İran’a yönelme ve kimi zamansa Fars klasik müziğinin daha gelenekselci eğilimlerine, en azından, kulak vermeleri gerekmektedir.

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