

# **Incorporating Classical Persian Performance Practice into the Delivery of Modern Compositions for Classical Guitar**

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Incorporating Classical Persian Performance Practice into the Delivery of Modern Compositions for  
Classical Guitar

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## **Thesis Statement of Originality**

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I certify that the intellectual content of this thesis is the product of my own work and that all the assistance received in preparing this thesis and sources have been acknowledged.

Majid Amani

June 27, 2022

## **Abstract and Keywords**

Persian classical guitar repertoire falls largely into two categories. The first is a collection of early works by Persian composers that reflects European compositional styles and rarely show signs of the modes and melodic gestures associated with Persian traditional repertoire (*radif*) or folk music. A more recent trend incorporates the sounds and spirit of Persian classical music in two distinct ways: a) pieces that apply thematic material derived from Persian music, and b) pieces inspired by the improvisational aesthetics of Persian music. The main question this thesis seeks to answer is: “How can we bring performance practices associated with classical Persian music into the delivery of modern compositions based on Persian music?” In this thesis, I draw out of the literature specific sites of agency in Persian music performance practice, including but not limited to ornamentation, melodic phrasing, various types of melodic and rhythmic variation, and intonation. Through a comparative study of recordings, I then map out the wide range of approaches to performance this agency yields and ponder how the spectrum of practices documented in this analysis might inform the delivery of five pieces written for the classical guitar: *Khorasani* and *Nava* by Mehrdad Pakbaz, *Five Persian Miniatures* by Dušan Bogdanović, *Nam* by Carlo Domeniconi, and my own composition for flute and guitar, *Le Yarei*. The lecture recital submitted as my major creative work presents stylisations of these compositions that draw on the findings of my performance practice analysis.

### **Keywords:**

Classical Guitar, Persian classical music, *radif*, Performance Practice, Modern Composition, Agency, stylisation

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...غرض نقشیست کز ما باز ماند  
که هستی را نمی بینم بقای  
گلستان سعدی

“...The design is a picture, which may remain as a memorial of me  
For I cannot foresee any long continuance of this existence”

Sadi, *Gulistan*

“In Iran not even inconsistency is consistent!”

Ella Zonis, *Persian Classical Music; an Introduction*

“..the internal structure of the *radif*, the relationship of its various versions, past and present, and its relationship to improvisation and composition show us a rich and yet unified musical system balancing authority and freedom. It is a system not unlike the grand designs of Persian carpets, their motifs recurring in repetition and variation, their colors blending gradually or set off from each other with sharp borders, abstract designs alternating with vestiges of natural forms, the dominant motifs in large medallions, the ornamental tones in the tiny designs. And not unlike the magnificent miniatures of Iran, appearing insignificant from a distance, comprehended only through detailed and repeated scrutiny.”

Bruno Nettl, *The Radif of Persian Music: Studies of Structure and Cultural Context*

To the memory of the musicians and scholars who passed away during the years that I was working on this project:

Bruno Nettl (1930-2020)

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## Notes on Transliterations

There is no standard way of spelling Persian words using the English alphabet. Persian letters, specifically vowels, have been transliterated in various ways in English sources. In some cases, names of musical pieces have been spelled in different ways even in a single source. In this thesis I used the most common forms of Persian names found in English sources. In cases when words appeared differently in a text, I did not change their forms when quoting or when referring to them in the notes or references. Following are some frequently used letters in this thesis and their pronunciations in Persian:

u: as in Blue

e: as in Blend

i: as in Austin

ch: as in charm

q: similar to the French r

r: as fully pronounced in Spanish

## Glossary of Technical Terms

### ***Radif:***

A collection of melodies of Persian classical music regularly categorised in twelve modal branches (seven *dastgahs* and five *avazes*) to serve as a repertoire or/and model melodies for improvisation

### ***Dastgah:***

A set of melodies in a specific modal range usually containing a *Daramad* (prelude) as an introduction to the modal range and cadential figures, and a series of melodies within different parts of a similar mode. The melodies usually share similar cadential patterns.

### ***Avaz:***

A supplementary *dastgah* within a certain *dastgah* which usually has its own unique tonal range and contains a set of pieces with similar modal and tonal identity. In Persian music, the *dastgahs* of *Shur* and *Homayun* have such supplementary sections: *Abu'ata*, *Afshari*, *Bayat-e Turk*, and *Dashti* are derivatives of *Shur*, and *Isfahan* is a derivative of *Homayun*.

### ***Gusheh:***

The individual melodies in the traditional repertoire of Persian music, *radif*. These melodies function as set pieces for the repertoire or/and model melodies for improvisations.

### ***Koron:***

The accidental for flattening of a pitch by a microtone

### ***Sori:***

The accidental for raising a pitch by a microtone

### ***Eshareh:***

A note played gently after the main note of a melody by means of slurs as an ornament

### ***Riz:***

Frequent downward and upward plucking of a note similar to tremolo

### ***Dorrab:***

A short fast tremolo

## Notation Symbols

u Upward *eshareh*: Softly playing the higher diatonic note after the main note by means of slurs

d Downward *eshareh*: Softly playing the lower diatonic note after the main note by means of slurs

dr *Dorrab*: A short accented tremolo

♯ *Koron*: Slightly higher than flat

♭ *Sori*: Slightly lower than sharp

↑ Upward Strum: Strum multiple strings by right index finger towards the higher strings.

↓ Downward Strum: Strum multiple strings by right index finger towards the lower strings.

# Introduction

Scholarly discussions of Persian music theory and practice have evolved significantly over the course of almost a century. Early modern studies developed during the first decades of the twentieth century employed a comparative approach to the study of Persian music in which the parameters of Persian music practice were mapped out in relation to Western musicological concepts. These studies, undertaken by renowned Iranian musicians, endeavoured to establish a framework for thinking about and discussing Persian music that would facilitate its dissemination on the international stage. These pioneering scholarly works were followed by a turn in Persian music studies that sought to highlight difference with Western music, rather than similarities, by focusing on how the unique modes and intervals in Persian music are best understood through the work of medieval music scholars of the Islamic world. Recent studies evince a more phenomenological approach in which the experience of performing Persian music and embracing the idiosyncratic delivery of traditional repertoire is foregrounded. Aspects of performance practice introduced in these recent studies are the basis of my investigation into the diversity of expression in Persian music. These works introduce concepts of improvisation, personal style, timbral diversity, rhythmic irregularity, and wide-ranging approaches to ornamentation that beg a mapping of recorded artefacts and an illumination of individual solutions.

In my thesis, I analyse the features of performance outlined above through a study of selected recordings made by masters of Persian music. I explore the idiosyncrasies in Persian masters' approaches to tuning and tempo, rhythm, dynamics, ornamentation, phrasing and articulation, and the use of the lower open string as a drone in performances of different genres within Persian classical music. I discuss the crucial role of tempo rubato in the context of unmeasured pieces of Persian music and explain how performers display significant freedom in shaping melodic motifs through expansion and compression. This agency in the execution of rhythm is reflected in turn in the numerous ways in which melodic figures are varied rhythmically in performances of measured pieces.

In this thesis I also address the contemporary state of classical guitar performance in Iranian society by proposing some methods for stylising classical guitar repertoire based on Persian melodies and aesthetics through the incorporation of performance practices mapped out in my analytical chapter. This approach is inspired by the work of Iranian classical guitarist and composer, Mehrdad Pakbaz, discussed in Chapter Four. Taking my lead from Pakbaz's stylisation of his composition, *Khorasani* from the album *Dialogue* (2006) I present an experimental approach to performance in this DMA thesis in which I apply Persian ornamentation, phrasing and articulation techniques, special effects, and improvisatory

thinking to modern guitar compositions. Features used in my performances include slurs as a governing force for achieving a sense of legato in phrases, frequent use of the ornament *eshareh*, use of microtones in reference to the Persian musical sources drawn on in the modern compositions, and improvised melodic and rhythmic variations of particular musical figures.

## Chapter One – A Short Primer on Persian Classical Music

The present format of Persian classical music (*radif*) was developed during the Qajar period (1785-1925)<sup>1</sup>. In *A New Approach to the Theory of Persian Art Music* (2001) Dariush Talai explains that “[t]he main intention of creators of the *radif* was to create an organised repertory for Persian music” by bringing a range of traditional Persian musical works together into a single collection<sup>2</sup>. The Farahanies, a family of musicians, are credited for popularising this collection of works through their use of *radif* as a pedagogical tool in the final decades of the nineteenth century. The first official version of *radif* was published in 1963 by the Iranian Ministry of Culture and Art.<sup>3</sup>

The musical works grouped under the title *radif* explore seven different pitch collections referred to as *dastgahs* (*Shur*, *Segah*, *Nava*, *Homayun*, *Chahargah*, *Mahur*, and *Rast-Panjgah*) and five semi-independent smaller pitch collections derived from the *dastgahs* referred to as *avazes* (*Abu’ata*, *Afshari*, *Bayat-e Tork*, *Dashti* (all derivatives of *Shur*) and *Isfahan* (a derivative of *Homayun*)).<sup>4</sup> Each *dastgah* and *avaz* is associated with a number of melodic gestures named *gushehs*, which articulate specific intervallic content. It is the *gushehs* that provide models for realising the pitch collections of the *Dastgahs* grouped together as musical works in the *radif* collection. Simply put, performing works from the *radif* collection requires musicians to extemporise on “melody models” as they navigate a predetermined ordering of *gushehs* within particular *dastgahs*.<sup>5</sup> The following figures illustrate the modes for each *dastgah* based on Vaziri.

---

<sup>1</sup> Hormoz Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 5. [This publication is based on Farhat’s PhD dissertation at UCLA submitted in 1965.]

Note: The term “Persian Classical Music” is frequently used by scholars in the discussion of Persian music theoretical system. The term specifically refers to the system of *radif* and *dastgahs* in Persian music. Persian music in a more general meaning also includes folk melodies used in different regions of the country. Therefore, the term “Persian classical music” in this thesis always refers to the system of *radif* and *dastgahs*.

<sup>2</sup> Talai, *A New Approach to the Theory of Persian Art Music*, 11.

<sup>3</sup> This was Musa Marufi’s (1889-1965) version of *Radif* for *tar*, a Persian plucked string instrument: Musa Marufi, Mehdi Barkeshli, *Radif-e Haft Dastgah-e Musiqi-e Irani* (Tehran, Honar-ha-ye Ziba-ye Keshvar, 1963).

Talai, *A New Approach to the Theory of Persian Art Music*, 11.

<sup>4</sup> Ella Zonis, *Persian Classical Music: An Introduction*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1973), 44.

Note: In Persian language *Avaz* means “song”.

<sup>5</sup> “The pieces that constitute the repertoire of Persian traditional music are collectively called the *radif*. To be sure, these are not clearly defined pieces but melody models upon which extemporisation takes place.”

Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*, 21.

Figures 1-1 to 1-6: Modes provided for seven Persian *dastgahs* by Ali-Naqi Vaziri<sup>1</sup>:

*Shur*:<sup>2</sup>



*Mahur and Rast-Panjgah*:<sup>3</sup>



*Homayun*:<sup>4</sup>



*Chahargah*:<sup>5</sup>



*Segah*:<sup>6</sup>



*Nava*:<sup>7</sup>



---

<sup>1</sup> Ali-Naqi Vaziri, *Theori-e Musiqi*, (Tehran: Safi-Ali-Shah, Fifth Edition, 2017).

Note: This book was first published in 1934.

<sup>2</sup> Vaziri, *Theori-e Musiqi*. 98.

<sup>3</sup> Vaziri, *Theori-e Musiqi*. 137, 213.

<sup>4</sup> Vaziri, *Theori-e Musiqi*. 158.

<sup>5</sup> Vaziri, *Theori-e Musiqi*. 176.

<sup>6</sup> Vaziri, *Theori-e Musiqi*. 191.

<sup>7</sup> Vaziri, *Theori-e Musiqi*. 200.

Some *gushehs* include specific rhythmic patterns while others are non-metric and more subject to alteration in rhythmic interpretation. Most of the rhythmic *gushehs* derive their rhythmic structure from the meter of Persian/Arabic poetry. For Example, the rhythmic idea of *Kereshmeh*, a *gusheh* performed in different *dastgahs*, is the combination of duple and triple meters that echoes the rhythmic figure known as *Mojattas-e Mosamman-e Makhboun-e Mahzouf* in the Persian/Arabic prosody system.<sup>1</sup> Figures 1-7 to 1-10 illustrate the *Kereshmeh* rhythmic figure in notation, Persian poetry, and *radif*.

Figure 1-7: *Kereshmeh* rhythmic figure



Figure 1-8: An excerpt from a poem by Hafez (1315-1390) containing the *Kereshmeh* rhythm

حجاب چهره‌ی جان می‌شود غبار تنم  
خوشا دمی که از این چهره پرده بر فکنم<sup>2</sup>

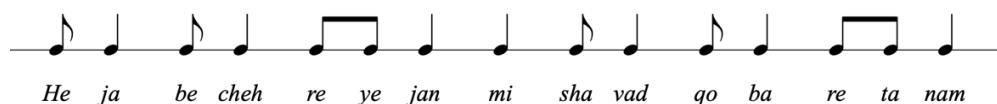
Transliteration:

*Hejab-e chehre-ye jan mishavad ghobar-e tanam*  
*Khosha dami ke az in chehre parde bar fekanam*

Translation:

The dust of my body is the veil of the true beloved face  
O happy that moment when from off this face, the veil I cast<sup>3</sup>

Figure 1-9: Rhythmic alignment of the poem with *Kereshmeh* rhythmic figure



<sup>1</sup> "Ghazaliat-e Hafez: Ghazal no. 342", Ganjoor, accessed December 15, 2021, <https://ganjoor.net/hafez/ghazal/sh342>.

<sup>2</sup> Hafez Shirazi, *Divan-e Hafez* (Tehran: Atolie-ye Honar, 2006), 266.

<sup>3</sup> "Diwan Hafez", Digital Humanities, Universitat Leipzig, accessed December 15, 2021. <http://divan-hafez.com/?fn=28>.

**Figure 1-10: A simplified notation of the opening of the *gusheh Kereshmeh* in the *dastgah* of *Nava* in the *radif* of Mirza Abdollah<sup>1</sup>:**



*Zanguleh* is another example of a rhythmic *gusheh*. The exact rhythm of *Zanguleh* is rarely found in Persian poetry, yet its component parts align with the Persian/Arabic prosody system as *Ramal e Mosamman e Makhboun e Mahzuf*.<sup>2</sup> Figures 1-11 to 1-14 illustrate *Zanguleh* rhythmic figure in notation, Persian poetry, and *radif*.

**Figure 1-11: *Zanguleh* rhythmic figure**



**Figure 1-12: An excerpt from a poem by Hafez**

گل‌عزاری ز گلستان جهان ما را بس  
 زین چمن سایه‌ی آن سرو روان ما را بس<sup>3</sup>

Transliteration:

*Gol'ezari ze golestan e jahan ma ra bas*  
*Zin chaman saye-ye an sarv e ravan ma ra bas*

Translation:

From the world's rose-garden, one rose of cheek is for us enough  
 From this sward, the shade of the moving cypress, the true beloved, is for us enough<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Based on: Dariush Talai, *Radif Analysis* (Tehran: Ney, 2016), 205.

<sup>2</sup> "Ghazaliat e Hafez, Ghazal no. 268", Ganjoor, accessed December 15, 2021, <https://ganjoor.net/hafez/ghazal/sh268>.

<sup>3</sup> Hafez Shirazi, *Divan-e hafez*, 208.

<sup>4</sup> "Diwan Hafez", Digital Humanities, Universitat Leipzig, accessed December 15, 2021. <http://dynamiclexicon.com/hafez/res.php?word=marge&language=eng>.

Figure 1-13: Rhythmic alignment of the poem with *Zanguleh* rhythmic figure

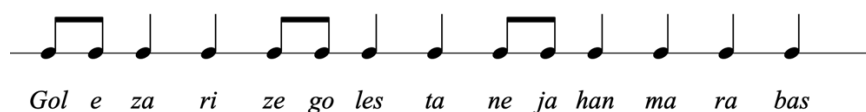


Figure 1-14: A simplified notation of the opening of the *gusheh Zanguleh* in the *avaz* (sub-*dastgah*) *Bayat e Turk* the *radif* of Mirza Abdollah<sup>1</sup>



It is important to note that performers exert considerable agency in determining the rhythmic realisation of unmeasured *gushehs*.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, in the context of *radif* – the so called “official” or “scholarly” version of Persian music – it is common for composed monophonic pieces to be performed between interpretations of the *dastgahs*. The most common composition types used to bridge *dastgahs* are *Pish-Daramad* (a unison overture performed by a group of musicians), *Tasnif* (a vocal work performed by a singer and an instrumental performer/ensemble in unison), *Reng* (a rhythmic instrumental dance piece) and *Chahar-Mezrab* (a fast rhythmic piece intended to display the virtuosity of the performer).<sup>3</sup> An excerpt from *Reng-e Shahr-Ashoub* is illustrated in Figure 1-15.

Figure 1-15: A simplified notation of the opening of *Reng-e Shahr-Ashoub*, in the *dastgah* of *Shur* in the *radif* of Mirza Abdollah<sup>4</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on: Talai, *Radif Analysis*, 112.

<sup>2</sup> “When a musician plays the unmeasured pieces of the *radif*, he has extensive freedom, for a fluid unmeasured line allows almost unlimited rhythmic leniency, or *rubato*, the tempo and the lengths of the pauses being completely subject to his immediate feeling.”

Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 127.

<sup>3</sup> Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*, 119.

<sup>4</sup> Based on: Talai, *Radif Analysis*, 33.

While scholars largely agree on the broad strokes of how *gushehs* and *dastgahs* function within the *radif* collection, considerable disagreement has long plagued Persian music scholarship around the perceived strengths and weaknesses of this musical system. In Chapter Two, I map out this debate while highlighting some unifying common ground – i.e., the fact that performer agency in Persian music has long been celebrated as a unique and important aspect of Persian music delivery. Points of view on performer agency extend from those who laud the flexible tuning and flexible interval sizes performers use, to those who showcase the rhythmic invention that spins out through the realisation of free melodic figures. In recent literature, discussions of agency have shifted to a broad meditation on the improvisatory aesthetics that seem to anchor performances of Persian music.

This broad consideration of agency, inventiveness, and improvisation informs the experimental performances of classical guitar works submitted as the major creative work for this Doctor of Musical Arts.

## Chapter Two – An Overview of Literature

Three main dimensions are considerable in the literature on Persian music practice: theory, improvisation, and technique. Different and even contradictory approaches to Persian music theory and performance technique can be found in the scholarship on Persian music, from Western-oriented descriptions of Persian music as a modal system to phenomenological studies focused on the experience of performing Persian music – the latter tending to centralise *radif* as the cornerstone of Persian music making. Recent studies have focused increasingly on the idiosyncrasies at play in performances of Persian music. These idiosyncrasies include shifting intervals, flexible rhythmic figures, free ornamentation, and melodic alteration, among other performance choices that appear to vary from performer to performer and performance to performance. In this literature review, I trace out how the scholarly discussion of Persian music has shifted over the course of the twentieth century from studies seeking to define and illuminate its parameters to studies that seek to highlight and celebrate its wide-ranging possibilities.

The sources considered in this chapter were published after the so-called scholarly version of Persian music, *radif*, was established by the Farahanies in the first years of the twentieth century. The Farahanies applied their *radif* as a pedagogical toolkit to teach the basics of Persian music performance to many students, including many of the most famous Persian musicians of the twentieth century. Some of these national figures, such as Saba and Marufi published their own “narration” or versions of *radif* decades later which has resulted in widespread recognition and acceptance of the *radif* system across Iran.<sup>1</sup>

It should be noted that *radif* is a fairly new label for traditional Persian music. Until the late nineteenth century, *Maqamat* was the common system used to categorise Persian modes. Indeed, according to Barkeshli, from the eleventh to the nineteenth century Persian modes were given a variety of different labels by interested scholars, including *Maqamat* (modes), *Avazat* (Songs/melodies), *Shoab* (branches), and *Tarakib* (compositions).<sup>2</sup> The *Maqamat* system was transformed over time into the more complicated *radif* system and its attendant modal collections, now referred to as *dastgahs*. The twelve *Maqams*, according to Barkeshli, are *Oshaq*, *Nava*, *Bousalik*, *Rast*, *Araq*, *Isfahan*, *Zir-Afkand*, *Bozorg*, *Zanguleh*, *Rahavi*, *Hosseini*,

---

<sup>1</sup> For example:

Musa Marufi and Barkeshli, *Radif-e Haft Dastgah-e Musiqi-e Irani*.  
Abolhasan Saba, *Radif-e Ostad Abolhasan Saba* (Tehran: Mahoor, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> Marufi and Barkeshli, *Radif-e Haft Dastgah-e Musiqi-e Irani*, 29.

and *Hejazi*.<sup>1</sup> These names are woven through the system of *radif*, sometimes appearing as titles for various *dastgahs*, and sometimes as the title of particular *gushehs*.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. 1. Establishing Persian Music's Parameters (1934–1963)

The first modern studies of *radif* were produced by Vaziri (1934) and Khaleqi (1937). These monographs utilise Western scales and modes to describe the pitch collections bound up in the *radif* collection.<sup>3</sup> This critical bent at times crowds out the discussion of how Persian musicians conceived and thought through the deployment of their musical system. As a result, Vaziri and Khaleqi's analyses point more frequently to what Western listeners might perceive as deficits in the music under examination than to what Persian performers might think of as the music's strength.

Consider for instance Khaleqi's claim that Persian melodies are "unfortunately" simple and never harmonised.<sup>4</sup> Khaleqi's emphasis on a Western evaluative framework is plain here: harmonisation and chromaticism serve as the benchmarks against which measurements of musical complexity are made. This thinking appears again in Khaleqi's critique of the lack of modulation in Persian music. While in the performance of Persian music it is common to move from one *dastgah* or *gusheh* to another, Khaleqi reads this movement as the realisation of a cliché which results in a repetitive, unimaginative performance (he uses, as his example, the common modulation from the main mode of *Mahur* to the mode of *Delkash* in the same *dastgah*).<sup>5</sup>

In Khaleqi's view, Western techniques of development in which modulation to a variety of tonal areas takes place function more effectively in allowing "true" creativity to unfold.<sup>6</sup> To this end, Khaleqi endorses new ways of modulating during the performance of Persian music, such as moving from the *Dastgah* of *Shur* to *Chahargah*, *Segah* to *Mahur*, or *Homayun* to *Segah*,

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<sup>1</sup> Marufi and Barkeshli, *Radif-e Haft Dastgah-e Musiqi-e Irani*, 29-31.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Radif* of Mirza Abdollah, notated by Talai, *Oshaq* is a *gusheh* appearing in the *dastgahs* of *Nava* and *Rast Panjgah*. *Bousalik*, *Zirafkand*, and *Bozorg* are documented as *gushehs* respectively in the *dastgahs* of *Nava*, *Mahur*, and *Shur*. *Zanguleh* is the rhythmic *gusheh* common between the *dastgahs* of *Bayat e Tork*, *Mahur*, and *Rast Panjgah*. *Rahavi*, retitled as *Rohhab*, appears as a *gusheh* in the *dastgahs* of *Shur* and *Segah*. *Hejazi*, titled as *Hejaz*, is presented as a *gusheh* in the *dastgah* of *Abu'ata*. *Hosseini* is not included in the *Radif* of Mirza Abdollah but appears as *agusheh* in the *dastgah* of *Shur* in the *Radifs* of Aqa Hosseinqoli and Marufi.

<sup>3</sup> Vaziri, *Theori-e Musiqi*.

Ruhollah Khaleqi, *Nazari be Musiqi*, (Tehran: Safi-Ali-Shah, 2015)

Note: This book was first published in 1937.

<sup>4</sup> Khaleqi, *Nazari be Musiqi*, 230.

<sup>5</sup> Khaleqi, *Nazari be Musiqi*, 228.

<sup>6</sup> Khaleqi, *Nazari be Musiqi*, 228.

instead of defaulting to common modulations (*Mahur to Isfahan* and *Homayun to Shur* for example).<sup>1</sup>

In turn, both Khaleqi and Vaziri mount critiques of the temperaments used in Persian music performance. Khaleqi, for instance, believes that the “basic” difference between the two systems – and perhaps the weakness of the lesser-known musical system (i.e. Persian music) – is the use of microtones<sup>2</sup>. He emphasises the need to standardise the temperament of these microtones in order to make Persian music, in his view, as systematic as Western classical music.<sup>3</sup> This claim runs in parallel to Vaziri’s suggestion that a 24-quarter-tone scale should serve as the basis for a Persian music theory in which the Western whole-tone scale is divided into four equal parts.<sup>4</sup> Taken together with Khaleqi’s suggestion that the invention of an instrument capable of playing all 24 quartertones systematically would make Persian music “complete,” one begins to see an attempt in early Persian music scholarship to homogenise the traditional idiosyncratic nature of microtone delivery in the pursuit of a Western ideal.<sup>5</sup>

A similar critical bent can be seen in the way Khaleqi and Vaziri attempt to illuminate *dastgahs* as scales rather than collections of motivic gestures. By using the French word *Gamme* (scale), Vaziri and Khaleqi infer a tonic and scale for each *dastgah* (these scales consist of two tetrachords separated by a whole tone). The inference of a tonic in this imagined system gives rise to the use of terms such as “dominant,” “sub-dominant,” and “leading tone” in Khaleqi and Vaziri’s writing. For instance, in discussing a cadence in the *dastgah* of *Shur*, both Khaleqi and Vaziri consider the common cadence formula, *Bal-e Kabutar* (the wings of pigeon) which juxtaposes the phrases of different *gushehs* from the *dastgah*, to be a sub-dominant to tonic cadence:<sup>6</sup>

Figure 2-1: *Bal-e Kabutar* cadence in the *dastgah* of *Shur*, according to Vaziri<sup>7</sup>



In parallel with the publication of their then revolutionary ideas about Persian music, Vaziri and Khaleqi composed sets of pieces combining tonal harmony with Persian melodies. They

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<sup>1</sup> Khaleqi, *Nazari be Musiqi*, 228, 229.

<sup>2</sup> Khaleqi, *Nazari be Musiqi*, 75.

<sup>3</sup> Khaleqi, *Nazari be Musiqi*, 74-75, 97.

<sup>4</sup> Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*, 9.

<sup>5</sup> Khaleqi, *Nazari be Musiqi*, 78.

<sup>6</sup> Vaziri, *Theori-e Musiqi*, 104-106

Khaleqi, *Nazari be Musiqi* 97-110.

<sup>7</sup> Vaziri, *Theori-e Musiqi*, 106.

harmonised and orchestrated melodies from *radif* for Western ensembles and wrote music based on triadic harmony and major/minor scales for Persian instruments.<sup>1</sup> Examples include a series of etudes – a new concept for Persian music – and the orchestral works “*Nimeh Shab*” (Midnight) and “*Kharidar-e To*” (Your Devotee) by Vaziri, and “*Shab-e Javani*” (The Youth Night), “*Va’de-ye Sahar*” (The Dawn’s Promise), “*Ah-e Sahar*” (Dawn’s sigh) by Khaleqi.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the Western bent of some of his work, Vaziri’s role in expanding knowledge about traditional music in Iran, both as a musician and pedagogue, is undeniable. Vaziri was one of the first musicians to notate aspects of Persian *radif*. He created the words *koron* and *sori* for the two different types of quarter-tones in Persian music; *koron* for the flattening of a pitch by a microtone, and *sori* for the raising of a pitch by a microtone.<sup>3</sup> In turn, he outlined three main pitch types for each Persian mode: the most repeated (*Shahed*), the variable (*Moteqayyer*), and the stopping note (*Ist*). Vaziri’s terminology continues to serve as the basis for Persian music theory studies today.<sup>4</sup>

Yet Vaziri’s work has been important in another way as well. In addition to introducing terminology to help performers navigate their extemporisations of *gushehs*, Vaziri emphasises crucial non-Western aesthetics in his argument that a performer’s feelings should ground the interpretation of rhythm, tempo, and phrasing in Persian music. That is, Vaziri considers the performer’s agency to be an essential ingredient in the authentic delivery of *radif* and discourages the writing out of free melodies in a measured way. In Vaziri’s view, putting the free melodies of *radif* into musical meter would result in unnecessary accents on the main beats of the measures.<sup>5</sup> This assertion stands in contrast to his attempt to Westernise the pitch collections of *radif*, highlighting an important theme later scholars would develop further.

Parviz Mahmoud’s *A Theory of Persian Music and its Relation to Western Practice* (1957)<sup>6</sup> is another noteworthy text for three reasons: First, this work is one of the first studies on Persian music to be written in English, and it has therefore served as a gateway text into Persian music for a range of non-Persian scholars. Second, the monograph paints a picture of the state of Persian music performance at the mid-point of the twentieth century. And third, as a national figure, and one of the first Persian avant-garde composers, Mahmoud’s perception of Persian

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<sup>1</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 186-194.

<sup>2</sup> Ali-Naqi Vaziri, *Dastour e Jadid e Tar* (Tehran, Mahoor, 2020).

Note: This book was first published in 1936.

Ruhollah Khaleqi, *Asar-e Ostad Ruhollah Khaleqi: Tanzimat* (Tehran, Mahoor, 2019).

Ruhollah Khaleqi, *Asar-e Ostad Ruhollah Khaleqi: Tasnifat* (Tehran, Mahoor, 2019).

<sup>3</sup> Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*, 26.

<sup>4</sup> Talai, *A New Approach to the Theory of Persian Art Music*, 12-13.

<sup>5</sup> Vaziri, *Theori-e Musiqi*, 91-92.

<sup>6</sup> Parviz Mahmoud, “A Theory of Persian Music and its relation to Western Practice” (PhD diss., University of Indiana, 1957).

music and its potential to inform a range of compositional approaches foreshadows the compositional turn discussed in Chapter Four of this thesis.

On one hand, Mahmoud's work can be understood as endeavouring to find common ground between Persian and Western classical music in terms of how intervals are used, how melodic development occurs, and how the sonic building blocks of tonic and mode are assembled. On the other, Mahmoud's work is committed to showcasing the difference between Persian and Western classical music by focusing on how approaches to realising intervals, modes, and melodies differ. This approach of highlighting both difference and overlap in Mahmoud's text works to develop a theory of Persian music based on a unique set of logics while simultaneously demonstrating how Persian music might be brought into productive dialogue with other forms of music making.<sup>1</sup>

This aim comes across clearly in Mahmoud's discussion of the importance of building a healthy relationship between Persian music and Western classical music. He begins this discussion by outlining the challenges of this relationship, arguing that Persian music has been distorted "under the influence of Western music" by "unaware" performers due to the lack of a proper theoretical system rooted in Persian culture<sup>2</sup>. In Mahmoud's view, a lack of musical illustrations in treatises on Persian music by early theorists and the disappearance of Persian culture more broadly under the strong influence of the West have collided in the problem of a separation of theory from practice. Contemporary Persian music, as Mahmoud heard it in the 1950s, was held captive to "the worst kind" of Western music broadcast by radio and television.<sup>3</sup>

Yet Mahmoud was able to see productive areas of exchange. In particular, Mahmoud admired the way Western music theory is organised into a lingua franca that most Western performers understand and believed that certain technical concepts in Western music theory might be usefully rearranged as the building blocks of a culturally appropriate Persian music theory. As Mahmoud writes:

...to safeguard their national heritage they [Persians] must try to find some theoretical basis for it [the music]. To find this basis... in the first place they must be acquainted with today's musical technic, that is, Western theories of music.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mahmoud, "A Theory of Persian Music and its relation to Western Practice," 160-161.

<sup>2</sup> Mahmoud, "A Theory of Persian Music and its relation to Western Practice," 5.

<sup>3</sup> Mahmoud, "A Theory of Persian Music and its relation to Western Practice," 5.

<sup>4</sup> Mahmoud, "A Theory of Persian Music and its relation to Western Practice," 5.

Mahmoud did not approve of putting Persian modes into the format of Western scales but did consider the systematic theories associated with Western classical music to be good models for a well-structured theory of Persian music.

Realising the *dastgahs* in personal ways was, in turn, fundamental in Mahmoud's vision for ensuring that a Persian voice remained in Persian music performance. Mahmoud considered the *dastgahs* to be the "true" and "authentic national music" of Iran and "if correctly performed... a high type of art music".<sup>1</sup> He claimed that the *dastgah* performer is "the true representative of the national music" who "handed down to future generations his aural tradition":<sup>2</sup> Mahmoud thus emphasised the role of performers in preserving the tradition of Persian music. He believed:

...through the centuries he [*Radif* player] was actually the one who kept alive his traditional art. Without these performers the present Persian *Dastgahs* would not even exist...<sup>3</sup>

In short, Mahmoud's view of the diversity of approaches at play in the delivery of Persian music was that through the celebration of individual agency, a united aesthetic approach to Persian music performance might emerge.<sup>4</sup>

Mehdi Barkeshli's (1963) study of Persian music's intervals and modes represents a genuine turn in Persian music scholarship from the use of comparative methodologies to a more Persian centric approach. Barkeshli argues that a disregard for the art of music in Islamic culture has limited Persian music to monophony. This is not a drawback in Barkeshli's view, but an opportunity for "amazing" embellishments of melodic line to occur.<sup>5</sup> Barkeshli illuminates this idea by drawing attention to a range of unique melodic development features in Persian music, including the use of microtones, the use of flexible fretting, the use of a vast array of ornaments, and a variety of approaches to intonation and phrasing.<sup>6</sup> Barkeshli's work thus foregrounds the agency of performers when teasing out Persian music's aesthetic core.

This focus on Persian music's aesthetic difference continues in Barkeshli's challenge to the use of Western concepts in Persian music theory. To this end, Barkeshli considers the tetrachord, not the scale, to be the main melodic frame of Persian music. In arguing this point, Barkeshli claims that the Arabic names for the four fingers on the left hand were once the basis for the

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<sup>1</sup> Mahmoud, "A Theory of Persian Music and its relation to Western Practice," 3 and 85.

<sup>2</sup> Mahmoud, "A Theory of Persian Music and its relation to Western Practice," 3, 4.

<sup>3</sup> Mahmoud, "A Theory of Persian Music and its relation to Western Practice," 4.

<sup>4</sup> Mahmoud, "A Theory of Persian Music and its relation to Western Practice," 83.

<sup>5</sup> Marufi and Barkeshli, *Radif-e Haft Dastgah-e Musiqi-e Irani*, 4.

Note: The paragraphs on this source refer to Barkeshli's introduction to the *radif* collected by Marufi. Therefore, only Barkeshli is credited in the text.

<sup>6</sup> Marufi and Barkeshli, *Radif-e Haft Dastgah-e Musiqi-e Irani*, 4.

names given to particular intervals in medieval Arabic and Persian treatises.<sup>1</sup> Barkeshli then points out that Western scholars' measurements of Persian intervals are often unreliable due to the imprecise fretting of the case study instruments. After presenting intervallic measurements from medieval source texts produced by the scholars Al Farabi (872-950) and Jorjani (1340-1414), Barkeshli develops his own historically informed measurements of Persian intervals. In addition to highlighting the importance of idiosyncratic performance in Persian music, Barkeshli's work therefore takes the additional step of marking out empirical differences between Persian and Western music by challenging the theory of a 24 equal quarter-tone system and the application of Westernised temperament as modelled by Vaziri.

## **2. 2. Uncovering Individual Agency in Persian Music Performance (1965 – Present)**

Mahmoud's focus on how *dastgahs* are realised in performance, and Barkeshli's Persian centric approach echo in the scholarship produced about Persian music during the following decades. These explorations extend from Farhat's (1965) mapping out of how Persian modes are applied in performance, to Zonis's (1973) discussion of what improvisational techniques in Persian music look like, to Tsuge's (1974) investigation of the rhythmic aspects of Persian *avaz*, to Nettle's numerous works published between 1970 and 1992 that document idiosyncratic approaches to Persian music performance.<sup>2</sup>

Farhat's (1965) exploration of how the relationships between characteristic notes and melodic borders in *radif* serve as the basis for the art of improvisation in Persian music marks the beginning of this scholarly turn. Figure 2-2 illustrates an example of Farhat's analysis of the characteristics of Persian modes.

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<sup>1</sup> Marufi and Barkeshli, *Radif-e Haft Dastgah-e Musiqi-e Irani*, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*.

Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*.

Gen' ichi Tsuge, "A Study of the Rhythmic Aspects in Classical Iranian Music" (PhD diss., Wesleyan University, 1974).

Bruno Nettl, *The Radif of Persian Music: Studies of Structure and Cultural Context* (Champaign, Illinois: Elephant & Cat, 1992).



Thus, aspects that are integral to performing, such as rhythmic interpretation and articulation, remain untouched in both his discussion of different *dastgahs* and his transcriptions of performances. The following figure is an example of Farhat’s analysis of melodic development in Persian music that showcases different possibilities of approaching modal material in an introduction (*Daramad*) to a performance in the *dastgah* of *Shur*.

Figure 2-5: Two formulae as foundations for improvisation in *Daramad* of *Shur*, based on Farhat<sup>1</sup>



In the example above, two general formulas are presented for structuring an improvisatory introduction to the *dastgah* of *Shur* through *Daramad*. Both introduce the main tetrachord, reach the highest pitch of the melody gradually, and return to the Finalis or “the note of repose and conclusion”.<sup>2</sup>

Farhat’s exploration of *Radif* highlights the inherent flexibility of the system in other ways as well. That is, in addition to highlighting how characteristic notes are approached and emphasised in a variety of ways, Farhat points to the importance of extemporising with the concept of melodic range in mind rather than the concept of scale. In his view, in contrast to Western classical and Indian classical music cultures, “scale” is not utilised in creative processes in Persian music. Thus, the term can be misleading in the context of Persian music, and performances conceptualised around scales would lead to “artificial and irrelevant” performances<sup>3</sup>:

Most Persian modes, in their elemental forms, can be expressed within a tetrachord or a pentachord. In some cases as many as seven or more tones are needed to convey the mode adequately. The octave is not significant. In certain modes a range of pitches beyond the limits of an octave is needed, as in the higher octave some notes are different from what they are in the lower octave.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*, 28.

<sup>2</sup> Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*, 24.

<sup>3</sup> Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*, 16.

<sup>4</sup> Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*, 16.

In turn, Farhat champions the idiosyncratic delivery of intervals in Persian music. In parallel to Barkeshli, Farhat points to medieval sources in his description of what intervals should roughly sound like but cautions readers against relying on Barkeshli's fixed interval interpretation of these sources. Instead, in Farhat's view, "the fluidity and flexibility of Persian intervals" resists standardisation.<sup>1</sup> In support of this claim, Farhat puts forth evidence that the delivery of "neutral tones" (intervals larger than the semitone but smaller than whole tone) varies among different musicians between 125 and 170 cents.<sup>2</sup>

Farhat's depiction of Persian music performance anchors much of the recent scholarly discussion of the genre. The "flexibility" Farhat points out in his discussion of intervals is considered by Zonis (1973) to be a key characteristic of Persian music performance practice. Zonis investigates the rules and techniques that govern the delivery of this flexible, improvisatory material. She believes that there is no "always" in the practice of Persian music, and prefer to use the terms "generally", "the typical", and "frequently." Her main focus is on the realisation of *radif* and she considers any study that omits the subject of improvisation to be "incomplete":<sup>3</sup> In her critique of earlier work, Zonis writes:

One solution to the problem of analyzing an improvised music is to set aside the complete performance and study the material used as a basis for improvisation... A quite formidable literature exists concerned solely with the theory of Persian music. Unfortunately, though, once Persian theorists have set aside the performance, they seldom return to it. The actual performance remains unexamined and often incomprehensible.<sup>4</sup>

Building on these comments, Zonis explains that the term "performer" contains a different set of attachments in Persian music than in Western music. She writes:

Classical Persian music is improvised, the musician being at once performer and composer. Hence, each performance of the same *Dastgah*, even by the same performer, is expected to be different. In performances where the player is before a small group of friends, the improvisation is partially controlled by glances and verbal suggestions between the performer and his audience. Because of this subtle communication the mood of the listeners determines the character and often the form of the player's improvisation.<sup>5</sup>

In Zonis' view understanding the artistic power of Persian music therefore requires the development of a "theory of practice" – a theory capable of illuminating the processes through which *radif* is converted to performance.<sup>6</sup> The bulk of Zonis' work is dedicated to fleshing this

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<sup>1</sup> Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*, 13 and 15.

<sup>2</sup> Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*, 15-16.

<sup>3</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 42.

<sup>4</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 42.

<sup>5</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 14.

<sup>6</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 98.

theory out through the exploration of three categories: repetition, ornamentation, and centonisation or “the joining together of recognizable motives.”<sup>1</sup>

In relation to the first of these, Zonis considers repetition to be “a decorative feature extremely characteristic of Persian visual arts” which is also applied to performances of Persian music.<sup>2</sup> Repetition in music can be sequenced or it can manifest as the exact reiteration of a phrase or motif. Another common type of repetition used in Persian music is octave transposition. Repetition with difference in Persian music is the most common kind of repetition – what might be referred to as elaboration (rhythmic fluctuation and/or melodic modification) – allowing for the conjuring of a multitude of variations based off a single phrase.

Ornamentation is another feature of Persian arts in general that Zonis sees embedded in Persian music performance. As Zonis writes, in Persian and Islamic visual arts “everything...is lavishly enlivened with ornaments” as “an essential part of fine craftsmanship, without which a work is incomplete.”<sup>3</sup> In the realm of music, Zonis claims “one may almost say that not a single note is left unornamented” and explains the difference between Persian and Western concepts of ornamentation as follows:

Some ornaments important in Western music are not found in Persian music. For example, because the melodic movement in Persian music is so diatonic, nonstructural passing notes are not used. Also those ornaments whose function depends on strict metric regularity - divisions of a basis time unit, suspensions, appoggiaturas- are absent.<sup>4</sup>

In other words, in Persian music, the overall atmosphere of the mode is not expected to be changed through the addition of ornamentation. There is no space for chromaticism. Leaps larger than a fourth or constant octave transposition in a way that affects the character of the *dastgah* or *gusheh* are avoided.<sup>5</sup> According to Zonis, common ornaments in Persian music instead fall into the categories of trills, strums, and grace notes.<sup>6</sup>

...Every note longer than an eighth note is strummed, and if a note is not strummed, it is trilled. Strums and trills are so common that they are not indicated by special signs in the notation but are understood by the player.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 109.

<sup>2</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 105.

<sup>3</sup> A. H. Christie, “Islamic Minor Arts,” in *The Legacy of Islam*, ed. Thomas Arnold and Alfred Guillaume (Oxford: Oxford, 1952), 112, quoted in Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 108.

<sup>4</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 109.

<sup>5</sup> Farhat considers the melodic movement of all *Dastgahs* and *Gushehs* “overwhelmingly diatonic”. About the melodic movement in the *Dastgah* of *Shur* he writes:

“No leaps larger than a perfect 4th are made. Most leaps of 4ths actually occur between the end of one phrase and beginning of another.”

Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*, 28.

<sup>6</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 109.

<sup>7</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 109.

Zonis in turn frames centonisation in her study as a common quoting technique in which the features of the main *gushehs* of a *dastgah* are realised during the expansion of a melody, usually in the context of ending formulas.

In addition to the categories of repetition, ornamentation, and centonisation, Zonis drills down into the broader concept of rhythmic irregularity in Persian music in her study. Since Persian music contains large unmeasured passages, Zonis claims that there is “almost unlimited rhythmic leniency” in rubato playing, and that performers inform their delivery of rubato passages through their perception of the moment.<sup>1</sup> In Zonis’s view, the two factors of rhythmic articulation of the phrase and rhythmic execution of the ornaments “are weakly defined by tradition”, as they are not precisely represented in the notations of Persian music and are only learnt by rote.<sup>2</sup> In fact, many existing notations of Persian music, specifically those of the unmeasured melodies, present general relations in the rhythmic content including the long and short components without providing the exact ratios. Many of those details are still being taught by repetition and memorisation in the presence of a master without being explained or taught within a documented method.<sup>3</sup>

Gen’ ichi Tsuge’s research into the rhythmic aspects of Persian *avaz* (1974) attempts to decode some of the rhythmic relationships outlined in Zonis’s work. Tsuge’s method emphasises the tight relationship between poetry and music in Iran by bringing to the fore the fact that the first writer on the rhythmic aspects of Islamic music, Al Khalil Ibn Ahmad (d. 791), was himself credited as the inventor of the Arabic prosody system. Persian poetry also applies the Arabic prosody system since the Arab invasion in the seventh century influenced Persian language in many respects.<sup>4</sup> Tsuge points to the flexibility in the execution of words and syllables, and its effect on the music, to prove the idea that Persian non-metric vocal music resists exact notation.<sup>5</sup> Tsuge in turn reminds the reader of the diversity in rhythmic representation of Persian melodies found in the notated *radifs*. The differences between these versions of *radif* include note-values applied, phrasing ideas, and measurements.<sup>6</sup>

A significant piece of data that Tsuge adds to the literature is an analysis of the execution of rhythmic figures in real time. As an example, according to his investigation, in the figure of a dotted note followed by a shorter note, the shorter note is most likely to be “an inflection of the

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<sup>1</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 127.

<sup>2</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 127.

<sup>3</sup> “Iranian musicians do not isolate this branch of theory [theory of practice], and they do not teach it formally. In fact, in the literature improvisation is hardly mentioned except for some of the more practical problems, such as realization of the ornaments from Western notation. Indeed, most of the theory of practice comes to an Iranian intuitively. Because music in Iran is still mainly taught by rote (with the aid of printed instruction books), the student simply absorbs the compositional procedures without being aware of them as such.” Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 98.

<sup>4</sup> Tsuge, “A Study of the Rhythmic Aspects in Classical Iranian Music” 3.

<sup>5</sup> Tsuge, “A Study of the Rhythmic Aspects in Classical Iranian Music,” 17.

<sup>6</sup> Tsuge, “A Study of the Rhythmic Aspects in Classical Iranian Music,” 60-109.

first rather than a note in itself”.<sup>1</sup> He in turn points out the dependency of the shorter note to the treatment of the longer note.<sup>2</sup> According to Tsuge, the long note can be “held long as much as is desired in context.”<sup>3</sup>:

It may be re-written as a combination of a double-dotted eight-note plus thirty-second note..., or one of an undotted-eight-note plus a sixteenth-note... It does not actually matter.<sup>4</sup>

Another noteworthy concept that comes out of Tsuge’s analysis is what he refers to as the technique of “compression-relaxation”.<sup>5</sup> In the non-metric parts of Persian vocal music, which is mostly improvised, the singer uses shorter rhythmic components at the opening of the phrase to buy more time for the application of longer notes and the inclusion of embellishments halfway through the piece. In this particular moment of the performance, when the voice is free from the words and syllables, according to Tsuge, the music becomes more independent.<sup>6</sup>

Bruno Nettl (1992) follows suit in his study of how the rules and techniques associated with improvisation in Persian music are negotiated during performance. Nettl acknowledges that the musical material of Persian music and options for its realisation in performance had been set out by Farhat and Zonis but argues for the importance of extending this conversation into an investigation of what idiosyncratic delivery in Persian music performance actually looks like. His comparison of various improvised performances of different *dastgahs* reveals that factors such as region, media (instrumental vs vocal), instrument, performer’s age, occasion, and the *dastgah* selected, impact the choices Persian music masters make during performance.<sup>7</sup>

In charting out such variation, Nettl narrows in on intonation as a key area in which individual performers assert individual voices. Difference between the size of intervals results in different intonations, particularly when comparing fretted instruments such as tar and setar with fretless instruments like Kamancheh. Nettl argues that in previous studies of Persian music this matter was seen as being less significant than the melodic idiosyncrasies that emerged between performers performing the same works. He affirms the importance of bespoke melodic realisation in yielding “identifying mark[s]” but considers intonation to be the key area in which individuality is asserted.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Tsuge, “A Study of the Rhythmic Aspects in Classical Iranian Music,” 102.

<sup>2</sup> Tsuge, “A Study of the Rhythmic Aspects in Classical Iranian Music,” 102-103.

<sup>3</sup> Tsuge, “A Study of the Rhythmic Aspects in Classical Iranian Music,” 101.

<sup>4</sup> Tsuge, “A Study of the Rhythmic Aspects in Classical Iranian Music,” 101-102.

<sup>5</sup> Tsuge, “A Study of the Rhythmic Aspects in Classical Iranian Music,” 164.

<sup>6</sup> Tsuge, “A Study of the Rhythmic Aspects in Classical Iranian Music,” 164-165.

<sup>7</sup> Nettl, *The Radif of Persian Music*, 42, 54-55.

<sup>8</sup> Nettl, *The Radif of Persian Music*, 98.

And yet despite the ways Persian music opens up space for the assertion of individuality, Nettl concludes that the bones of the *radif* system ensure that a degree of unity always underpins Persian music performances. He writes:

...the internal structure of the *radif*, the relationship of its various versions, past and present, and its relationship to improvisation and composition show us a rich and yet unified musical system balancing authority and freedom. It is a system not unlike the grand designs of Persian carpets, their motifs recurring in repetition and variation, their colors blending gradually or set off from each other with sharp borders, abstract designs alternating with vestiges of natural forms, the dominant motifs in large medallions, the ornamental tones in the tiny designs. And not unlike the magnificent miniatures of Iran, appearing insignificant from a distance, comprehended only through detailed and repeated scrutiny.<sup>1</sup>

In his numerous publications from 1976 to 1991, Jean During leans into the idea of a grand Persian art aesthetic, of which music is just a single component. In his article “Music, Poetry and the Visual Arts in Persia,” During compares characteristics of Persian music practice with Persian architecture, miniature, and poetry in order to highlight what he views as a series of unifying aesthetic principles. Emphasising a “sophistication” and “finesse” in the clarity of Persian miniatures, During illuminates a parallel sort of clarity in Persian music conjured through the “refinement of timbers, the “dominance of high register”, and the realisation of “sophisticated sonorities.”<sup>2</sup> Metal strings play an important role in conjuring this aesthetic, as their constitution yields a more “natural timbre,” in During’s view, than Arab instruments that utilise silk or gut strings.<sup>3</sup> In turn, During makes comparisons between the incredible detail found in Persian visual arts with the persistent application of *riz* (tremolo) in the execution of long notes in Persian music, wrapping these two approaches together conceptually in the phrase “Horror of silence.”<sup>4</sup>

In During’s view, in Persian arts, subject matter anchors artistic practice but presentation differs considerably. As During writes:

There are always the same figures, and in poetry the same metaphors which are endlessly repeated, but modulated, rearranged and redistributed with sufficient originality to produce what Plato considered as the mark of Art: Diversity in uniformity, multiplicity in unity, and vice-versa.<sup>5</sup>

In explaining how this approach manifests in music, During provides the following list of melody modification techniques:

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<sup>1</sup> Nettl, *The Radif of Persian Music*, 168.

<sup>2</sup> Jean During, “Music, Poetry and the Visual Arts in Persia,” *The World of Music* 24, no.1 (1982): 78.

<sup>3</sup> During, “Music, Poetry and the Visual Arts in Persia,” 86.

<sup>4</sup> During, “Music, Poetry and the Visual Arts in Persia,” 78.

<sup>5</sup> During, “Music, Poetry and the Visual Arts in Persia,” 80.

Giving measure to nonmeasured phrases, or vice-versa; modifying the tempo or the measure; playing in an ornate or a spare manner; filling out the melodies by repetition and addition of motifs, liaisons, embroidering, etc.; paraphrasing everything while leaving the melody identifiable, etc.<sup>1</sup>

During's focus on "diversity in uniformity" echoes in Talai's *A New Approach to the Theory of Persian Art Music* (1993). Talai begins this work by arguing for the importance of not separating out Iranian art musical styles from folk music practices.<sup>2</sup> According to Talai, Persian folk music and the *dastgahs* share the same rules in terms of how modes are realised in performance and illuminating the general shape of these rules reveals the extent of Persian music uniformity.

For instance, Talai emphasises the role the tetrachord plays in structuring Persian modes. Emphasis on the tetrachord in the study of Persian music is not a new approach. In medieval treatises "the tetrachord corresponds to the physical space on the neck of plucked-string instruments" and serves to anchor the terminology used in theoretical discussion.<sup>3</sup> Yet other unifying conventions can also be discerned. In his 2016 analysis of *radif*, Talai claims that Persian melodies are developed in a similar way to spoken language. Not only are most of the phrases used in music based on Arabic/Persian poetry rhythms, but they simultaneously frequently follow poetic forms. Talai, for instance, notes that question and answer forms are common in Persian music performance. As Talai notes, these forms can unfold through a dialogue between two instruments, a "call and response" between a singer and an instrumentalist, or within a solo performance through a change in register or sonority.<sup>4</sup>

In relation to utilising question and answer forms in solo performance, Talai identifies four different effective techniques: performing the same phrase on different strings, changing the right hand position and its distance from the bridge, alternating between a bright, clear tone colour and a dark tone on the Ney (a Persian wood wind instrument), and alternating between playing on a single string and simultaneously strumming open strings on a tar or setar.<sup>5</sup>

Talai also identifies unifying approaches to rhythm in performance of non-metric melodies that he groups into the categories of "popular" and "artistic". He considers the treatment of the long and the short syllables as exact ratios of 2 to 1 as a popular approach. On the other hand, in an artistic interpretation, the short syllables are played shorter and the long syllables are subject

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<sup>1</sup> Jean During, Zia Mirabdolbaghi, and Dariush Safvat, *The Art of Persian Music* (Washington, DC: Mage Publishers, 1991) 92.

<sup>2</sup> Talai, *A New Approach to the Theory of Persian Art Music*, 13.

<sup>3</sup> Talai, *A New Approach to the Theory of Persian Art Music*, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Talai, *Radif Analysis*, 36.

<sup>5</sup> Talai, *Radif Analysis*, 36.

to a greater extent to the performer's spontaneity, often flexibly ornamented or played along with more than one pitch.<sup>1</sup>

More recent work by Miller explores the idiosyncrasies of Persian performance practice by highlighting how masters of Persian music have discussed its aesthetics. In *Music and Song in Persia* (1999), Miller illuminates the rhetoric of Persian master Dariush Safvat (1928-2013) introducing into the discourse on Persian music performance practice the concepts of mood, symmetry, nuance, and balance.<sup>2</sup> According to Safvat, attuning to mood is fundamental to the successful delivery of a performance.<sup>3</sup> Attunement to mood – or *Hal* in Persian language – allows the performer to present their own feelings and understanding of the music at a given moment.<sup>4</sup> It is a mystical, emotional concept which requires humility, love of others, and the rejection of pressure to perform in a particular way (i.e. to be a “showman”).<sup>5</sup> The concept of symmetry guides performance in a similar manner. Symmetry, for Safvat is the exercising of restraint in performance – the avoidance of unnecessary changes – which may decrease “excitement” but which will work to increase experiences of “calmness”.<sup>6</sup> In support of his reading of the importance of symmetry, Miller cites Safvat's claim that excitement can be “spiritually harmful,<sup>7</sup> and therefore, the performer has to perfect himself spiritually to “reflect the divine light” instead of solely “selling” himself or his art.<sup>8</sup>

A focus on restraint continues in Miller's discussion of “nuance” and “curve” based on master Safvat. While Safvat believes that “no single note remains the same from beginning to end”<sup>9</sup> in Persian music, he also stresses the fact that such inflections should always be “subtle” in order to avoid unpleasant changes in the dynamic.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, he suggests that the “curve” shape of all changes in Persian music should be pursued gently, except when a performer intentionally wants to change their audience's “mood”.<sup>11</sup>

Most recently, Nooshin has developed a set of scholarly works that celebrate agency in the performance of Persian music and highlight the possibility of radical transformations in the genre that might grow out of performer experimentation. In *The Processes of Creation and Recreation in Persian Classical Music* (1996), Nooshin writes:

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<sup>1</sup> Talai, *Radif Analysis*, 38-42.

<sup>2</sup> Lloyd Clifton Miller, *Music and Song in Persia: The Art of Avaz* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1999) 20.

<sup>3</sup> Dariush Safvat, *Mystical Aspects of Authentic Iranian Music* (New York: Center for Traditional and Spiritual Music of the East, 1985) quoted in Miller, *Music and Song in Persia*, 20.

<sup>4</sup> Safvat, *Mystical Aspects of Authentic Iranian Music*, quoted in Miller, *Music and Song in Persia*, 20.

<sup>5</sup> Safvat, *Mystical Aspects of Authentic Iranian Music*, quoted in Miller, *Music and Song in Persia*, 23.

<sup>6</sup> Safvat, *Mystical Aspects of Authentic Iranian Music*, quoted in Miller, *Music and Song in Persia*, 21.

<sup>7</sup> Safvat, *Mystical Aspects of Authentic Iranian Music*, quoted in Miller, *Music and Song in Persia*, 21.

<sup>8</sup> Safvat, *Mystical Aspects of Authentic Iranian Music*, quoted in Miller, *Music and Song in Persia*, 25.

<sup>9</sup> Safvat, *Mystical Aspects of Authentic Iranian Music*, quoted in Miller, *Music and Song in Persia*, 21.

<sup>10</sup> Safvat, *Mystical Aspects of Authentic Iranian Music*, quoted in Miller, *Music and Song in Persia*, 21.

<sup>11</sup> Safvat, *Mystical Aspects of Authentic Iranian Music*, quoted in Miller, *Music and Song in Persia*, 21.

The mark of a good performer... is the ability to exercise creativity within the structural framework of the *radif*. Whilst there are musicians, sometimes referred to as *radif navaz* [*Radif* player], who may play the *radif* “note-for-note” in performance as a set piece, this is rather unusual, and is regarded as a very different activity from improvisation. Such renditions are certainly not as highly valued as improvised performances. It should also be noted that improvising musicians themselves vary in the degree of closeness of their performances to the musical material of the *radif*.<sup>1</sup>

Nooshin focuses on the importance of individuality in performance and reminds her readers of the fact that the processes of delivering Persian music were at one point closely aligned with the *Maqam* system in Arabic and Turkish music, systems in which a great degree of extemporisation is recognisable.<sup>2</sup> For Nooshin, a performer’s individual thinking and educational background are showcased in performance.<sup>3</sup> In her recent work, *Iranian Classical Music: the Discourses and Practice of Creativity* (2016), Nooshin examines how individual thinking and educational background come together in “contemporary developments in Iranian classical music performance” in which a “growing interest in exploring new ideas around improvisation” is evident. As an example, Nooshin points to the album “All of You” (2010) by Amir Eslami (b.1971) and Hooshyar Khayam (b.1978), an improvisatory recording featuring ney, Persian woodwind, and the piano, in which the material from Persian music is mixed with the performers’ individual ideas about music in general, linked to their experiences as composers interested in a range of music genres.<sup>4</sup> Seeking possibilities to further the creative work beyond *radif*, they have included Western concepts of harmony and polyphony, as well as new instrumental techniques in their “new approach to improvisation”. Nooshin labels this “compositional thinking” to distinguish it from the “traditional thinking” utilised in traditional performance practice.<sup>5</sup>

The overview of Persian music studies in the twentieth century presented in this chapter has revealed that early scholarship on Persian music utilised Western-oriented approaches in order to unpack Persian modal systems in an international language. Realising the risk to cultural traditions such an approach posed, a second wave of scholars turned toward discussion of the unique features of Persian music that could not be explained in Western terms. As the conversation about Persian music idiosyncracies developed, scholars have focused increasingly on those who perform Persian music and how they think through their performances. While a range of excellent case studies have been conducted, scope remains for digging deeper into how performance choices are executed at a technical level and what a mastery of Persian

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<sup>1</sup> Laudan Nooshin, “The Process of Creation and Recreation in Persian Classical Music” (PhD diss., University of London, 1996), 75.

<sup>2</sup> Nooshin, “The Process of Creation and Recreation in Persian Classical Music,” 77.

<sup>3</sup> Nooshin, “The Process of Creation and Recreation in Persian Classical Music,” 167.

<sup>4</sup> Laudan Nooshin, *Iranian Classical Music; the Discourses and Practice of Creativity*, (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2016), 162-172.

<sup>5</sup> Nooshin, *Iranian Classical Music*, 162-166 and 175.

musical technique might mean for performers playing music across a range of genres. Technical issues such as the execution of ornaments, the application of dynamics, the use of particular articulations, phrasings, plucking and strumming, vibrato, and agogics are rarely mentioned in existing scholarship. These are the devices that conjure, as master Safvat puts it, the “nuance” of melodic lines.<sup>1</sup> In the next chapter, I seek to extend the discussion of agency in Persian music performance illuminated here by analysing how these musical events manifest in a range of recordings and give rise to the wide variety of performance practices that colour Persian music performance.

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<sup>1</sup> Safvat, *Mystical Aspects of Authentic Iranian Music*, quoted in Miller, *Music and Song in Persia*, 21.

## Chapter Three – Mapping out Technical Approaches in the Recordings of Persian Music

Although, as Zonis confirms, “formidable literature exists” on Persian music theory, there is much to be done in the arena of documenting Persian music performance practice.<sup>1</sup> The bulk of existing studies on performance practice in Persian music have focused on the content selected during improvisation. Less discussion has been given over to performing techniques in delivering the selected content. Given the importance of performer agency in the discourse surrounding content selection surveyed in Chapter Two, focusing on individual interpretations of rhythm, tempo, and phrasing in Persian music will likely yield even deeper knowledge of how individuals craft idiomatic performances as a matter of course in Persian music performance.

In this chapter, I catalogue a range of approaches to different aspects of Persian music performance, including the various ways different types of ornaments are realised and the phrasing possibilities associated with the various *gushehs*. In documenting these practices, I have considered recordings in two categories: first, recordings of traditional Persian music to serve as a general resource for stylisations of indirectly inspired Persian themed repertoire; and second, recordings of traditional Persian music that realise material referenced in the classical guitar repertoire I have submitted as the major creative work for this DMA.

### 3. 1. Recordings<sup>2</sup>

In *The Radif of Persian Music*, Nettl describes his study of Persian music recordings as an attempt to discover how the melodic material of *radif* is selected and organised in performance.<sup>3</sup> In contrast to Nettl’s focus on the selection of *gushehs* in performances of Persian *dastgahs*, my aim is to catalogue the myriad ways selected content is realised in performance and to map the various techniques of interpretation that have been deployed in the delivery of Persian melodies. Many studies on Persian music have framed the *radif* as if it were the only, or the primary, organising force in Persian music. Yet the repertoire of Persian classical music is in fact a collection of melodies from different cultural sources. As this study aims to consider Persian music as a whole, I have examined the delivery of melodies across a range of recordings that include both performances of *radif* and performances of Persian folk

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<sup>1</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 42.

<sup>2</sup> Links to sample recordings are provided in the footnotes after introducing each recording.

<sup>3</sup> Nettl, *The Radif of Persian Music*, 46.

music. In turn, as this study ultimately seeks to identify a range of interpretive options classical guitarists might draw on when endeavouring to infuse their performances with a Persian performance aesthetic, I have cast a wide net over the masters of Persian music by considering recordings made by four different generations of performers. The following overview of the recordings analysed in this thesis situates this data within historic frames of reference while simultaneously flagging the uniqueness of individual performance approaches.

### 3. 1. 1. Persian Classical Music:

#### Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani, Tar (1905)

- Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani, *Tar: Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli*, Mahoor, 2013, compact disc.<sup>1</sup>

Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani (1853-1916), son of Aqa Ali-Akbar Farahani (1820-1862), was one of the establishers of *radif* along with his brother, Mirza-Abdollah Farahani (1843-1918). His tar performance was recorded for the first time in the 1890s.<sup>2</sup> A few recordings of his performances from 1905 to 1912 can be found on the Mahoor Institute of Culture and Arts label.

Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli's recordings showcase the stylistic features of performance popular among the first generation of Iranian *radif* players, including powerful strums, continuous and extremely fast *riz* (tremolos), relatively high pitch tuning, formidable technical ability, and limited dynamic range.<sup>3</sup>

#### Soleyman Ruh-Afza, Tar (1959)

- Musa Marufi, *Radif of Seven Dastgahs of Iranian Classical Music*, Performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza, Mahoor, 2009, compact disc.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani, *Tar: Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli*, Mahoor, 2013, compact disc.

Note: Performances in this album are recorded in 1905, 1906, and 1912 in Tehran and Paris.

"Tar: Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli," Mahoor, accessed December 20, 2021,

<https://mahoor.com/fa/cd/14-%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B3%DB%8C%D9%82%DB%8C-%DA%A9%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%DB%8C%DA%A9-%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86%DB%8C/585-%C3%A2q%C3%A2-hoseyn-qoli,-t%C3%A2r>.

<sup>2</sup> "Hosainqoli, Aqa," Encyclopaedia Iranica, last modified March 23, 2012,

<https://iranicaonline.org/articles/hosaynqoli-aqa>.

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that the limited dynamic range could be a limitation of the early recording technology. Speed problems are also present in such recordings which may affect stylistic features. However, limited dynamic range is also noticeable in many contemporary recordings of Persian music.

<sup>4</sup> Musa Marufi, *Radif of Seven Dastgahs of Iranian Classical Music*, Performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza, Mahoor, 2009, compact disc.

This studio recording is based on the first official notated version of all seven *dastgahs* published in 1963, performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza (1900-1995), a student of Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani and Darvish Khan (1872-1926).<sup>1</sup>

It should be noted that as the first comprehensive recording of *radif*, this performance serves as a standard model and a pedagogical and analytical version of Persian classical music repertoire. All the following recordings of *radif* in fact have the same function and therefore are not pure improvisatory performances. For this reason, they have the intention of preserving the melodic formulae and modes, which distinguishes them from the recordings of the first generation of Persian masters who performed their versions of Persian melodies for artistic purposes in an improvisatory performance.

### **Ali-Akbar Shahnazi, Tar (1962)**

- Ali-Akbar Shahnazi, *The Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Radif*, Mahoor, 2003, compact disc.<sup>2</sup>

Ali-Akbar Shahnazi (1897-1994) was the son of Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani and a virtuoso tar player. He recorded the entire *radif* of Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli and taught many highly regarded Persian musicians of the twentieth century.<sup>3</sup>

Some aspects of Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli's style of playing, such as a continuous forte and plucking with strong and spontaneous accents, are also present in the recordings of his son Ali-Akbar Shahnazi. In addition to similarities to Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani's recordings, Shahnazi's style welcomes numerous technical features including an exceptionally wide range of nuance, tone colour contrast between phrases, and special features such as glissando, doubling specific notes of the melody in thirds, and staccato playing on short notes. His recordings also provide examples of rhythmic expansion in the performance of Persian music.

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Note: This recording was first published in 1963.

"Radif e Haft Dastgah-e Musiqi-e Iran," Mahoor, accessed December 20, 2021,

<https://mahoor.com/fa/cd/15-%D8%A2%D8%AB%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A2%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2%D8%B4%DB%8C/431-radif-of-seven-dastg%C3%A2hs-of-iranian-classical-music>.

<sup>1</sup> "Ruhafza, Solayman," Encyclopaedia Iranica, Last modified July 20, 2009,

<https://iranicaonline.org/articles/Ruhafza-solayman>.

<sup>2</sup> Ali-Akbar Shahnazi, *The Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Radif*, Tehran: Mahoor, 2003, compact disc.

Note: The performances in this album were recorded in 1962.

"The Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Radif," Mahoor, accessed December 20, 2021,

<https://mahoor.com/fa/cd/15-243/آموزشی-آثار-the-âqâ-hoseyn-qoli-radif>.

<sup>3</sup> "Shahnazi, Ali akbar," Encyclopaedia Iranica, Last modified December 10, 2010,

<https://iranicaonline.org/articles/shahnazi-ali-akbar>.

### **Nur-Ali Borumand, Tar (1975)**

- Ostad Nur- 'Ali Borumand, *The Radif of Mirza Abdollah for the Tar and Setar*, Mahoor, 2006, compact disc.<sup>1</sup>

Nur-Ali Borumand (1905-1977) was one of the most influential Persian musicians of the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> He was a student of Darvish Khan, a tar and setar player, a scholar, and a professor at The University of Tehran. Borumand's complete recording of the *radif* of Mirza-Abdollah on tar in 1975 is considered to be an authentic and trustworthy version of Persian *radif* due to his conservative outlook.<sup>3</sup> Limited dynamic range, accented phrase endings, consistent tone colour and touch are features of his style of playing. Borumand frequently emphasises the characteristic pitches of each mode by means of accent and tenuto. This quality makes his recording an important resource for understanding the theoretical aspects of Persian music.

### **Hossein Alizadeh, Tar (1992)**

- Hossein Alizadeh, *Radif Navazi, Radif of Mirza Abdollah according to Nur-Ali Borumand*, Mahoor, 1992, compact disc.<sup>4</sup>

Hossein Alizadeh (b. 1950) is one of most influential Iranian contemporary musicians. In addition to having a successful career as a composer, he is a virtuoso tar and setar player. He studied with some of the most respected masters of Persian music including the two previously mentioned masters, Ali-Akbar Shahnazi and Nur-Ali Borumand.<sup>5</sup> Alizadeh recorded the *radif* of Mirza Abdollah in 1992 based on Borumand's recording of 1975.

With elements similar to both his teachers, Alizadeh's recording stands between the two recordings of Shahnazi and Borumand in its functional use of the lower open string and planned nuance changes. However, many similarities between Borumand and Alizadeh's renditions are due to their common source of Mirza Abdollah's *radif*. Other features of Alizadeh's style include significant ornamentation (i.e. frequent use of *dorrah* and *eshareh*), and his soft touch,

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<sup>1</sup> Nur- 'Ali Borumand, *The Radif of Mirza Abdollah for the Tar and Setar*, Mahoor, 2006, compact disc.

Note: Note: This recording was first published in 1975.

"The Radif of Mirza Abdollah," Mahoor, accessed December 20, 2021.

<https://mahoor.com/fa/cd/15-360/آثار-آموزشی-the-mirzâ-abdollah-radif>.

<sup>2</sup> "Borumand, Nur- Ali," Encyclopaedia Iranica, Last modified December 15, 1989,

<https://iranicaonline.org/articles/borumand-nur-ali-b>.

<sup>3</sup> "Borumand, Nur- Ali," Encyclopaedia Iranica.

<sup>4</sup> Hossein Alizadeh, *Radif Navazi: Radif of Mirza Abdollah according to Nur-Ali Borumand*, Mahoor, 1992, compact disc.

"Radif Navazi, Tar," Mahoor, accessed December 20, 2021,

<https://mahoor.com/fa/cd/15-389/آثار-آموزشی-radif-navâzi>.

<sup>5</sup> "Biography," The Official Website of Hossein Alizadeh, accessed December 20, 2021,

<https://www.hosseinalizadeh.net/biography/>.

which stands in opposition to the two recordings of Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli and Shahnazi. However, by using a wide range of tone colours and dynamics, Alizadeh is able to effectively create a variety of textures throughout his performances.

### 3. 1. 2. Persian Folk Music:

- Various Artists, *Regional Music of Iran 5: Hasht Behesht: A Selection of Iranian Regional Music*, Collected by Hossein Hamidi, 2004, compact disc.<sup>1</sup>
- Sohrab Mohammadi, “Ha Laylana Laily va Le Yarei,” on *Epics in Iranian Folk Music*, Mahoor, 2014, compact disc.<sup>2</sup>

In an article published in 2018, Golfam Khayam describes the diversity of musical cultures in Iran in the following way:

Persian Music is an ambiguous term applying to a large spectrum of music without anything necessarily in common other than being in the territory of the country...Ethnic music of each region is influenced by neighboring countries, depending on where the region is located. Therefore, a diversity of instruments, performance practices, and even languages/dialects is associated with the border regions. Yet, it is unclear where a certain music initiated at first, because of the country’s larger borders in the past (from Anatolia to China) and gradually most provinces separated throughout history.<sup>3</sup>

This quote reveals the challenges associated with mapping the totality of performance practices and theories bound up in the term “Persian music.” Persian classical music’s references to and roots in folk music have been pointed out in multiple studies. Two of the selected classical guitar pieces presented in this DMA thesis, *Five Persian Miniatures* by Dusan Bogdanovic, and my composition for flute and guitar, *Le Yarei*, are inspired by Iranian folk music.

Bogdanovic’s *Miniatures* are “a free expression of the composer’s inspiration with” both Iranian classical music, folk dances and the instrumental music of Balouchistan in southeast Iran.<sup>4</sup> In addition to melodic and rhythmic similarities to the music of neighboring countries Afghanistan and Pakistan, Balouchi music shares instruments, such as rubab, soroud,

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<sup>1</sup> Various Artists, *Regional Music of Iran 5: Hasht Behesht: A Selection of Iranian Regional Music*, Collected by Hossein Hamidi, Mahoor, 2004, compact disc.

“Hasht Behesht,” Mahoor, accessed December 20, 2021, <https://mahoor.com/fa/cd/16-61/موسیقی-نواحی-ایران-16-61-hasht-behesht>.

<sup>2</sup> Sohrab Mohammadi, “Ha Laylana Laily va Le Yarei,” Track 15 on *Epics in Iranian Folk Music*, Mahoor, 2014, compact disc.

“Epics in Iranian Folk Music,” Mahoor, accessed December 20, 2021, <https://mahoor.com/fa/cd/16-593/موسیقی-نواحی-ایران-16-593-epics-in-iranian-folk-music>.

<sup>3</sup> Golfam Khayam, “Tradition and Synthesis,” in *Tradition and Synthesis: Multiple Modernities for Composer-Performers*, ed. Dusan Bogdanovic and Xavier Bouvier (Levis, Quebec: Doberman-Yppan, 2018), 39-40.

<sup>4</sup> Dusan Bogdanovic, *Ravi: Music of Dusan Bogdanovic*, performed by Golfam Khayam, Doberman-Yppan, 2011, compact disc.

tanbourak, and benjo with these neighbouring cultures.<sup>1</sup> Although Balouchi rubab is a plucked string instrument like the tar and setar, it possesses high register sympathetic strings that allow for a range of different sonic possibilities. Some features of the music of Balouchistan include the continuous presence of a drone, particularly on the doneli, the Balouchi woodwind instrument; frequent upward trills; and the juxtaposition of musical approaches between melodic and percussive instruments in the dance music performed with the dohol and sorna, in which the sorna performs free melodies full of embellishments and tempo rubato while the dohol performs fixed patterns. Some of these techniques are used in *Five Persian Miniatures*. Some selected recordings of various genres of Balouchi music collected by Hossein Hamidi under the title of *Hasht Behesht: A Selection of Iranian Regional Music* contain examples of the features mentioned here. These features will be further discussed in the overview of *Five Persian Miniatures* by Bogdanovic presented in Chapter 5.

My composition *Le Yarei* for flute and guitar, is inspired in turn by the musical practices of the Kurmanj people of Khorasan in north-eastern Iran. The techniques of this region are on display in a pre-recording by Sohrab Mohammadi (1937-2020) on a recording of the Kurmanji folk song, *Le Yarei*, on dotar. This performance is published in an album including recordings from various parts of Iran collected by Mohammad-Reza Darvishi under the title *Epics in Iranian Folk Music* (2014). The most important of these techniques are particular right hand strums and the use of the left-hand thumb on the lower string. On dotar, the two-stringed instrument, downward strums with the back of the right-hand fingernails alternate with the upward strumming of the back of the thumb nail. At almost no point is a single string plucked on its own. This differs from the right-hand techniques of tar and setar, and the Balouchi rubab in which the melody is played on one string while occasionally accompanied by the lower open or sympathetic strings. The left-hand thumb, always positioned next to the middle finger, creates a fifth or fourth parallel harmony – depending on the tuning of the two strings – by gripping the lower open string at a position next to the middle finger. This polyphonic quality is unique to the dotar.<sup>2</sup> The microtone used on the dotar, though limited to the first fret, is one

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<sup>1</sup> Sabir Badalkhan, “Baluchistan,” in *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music: Volume 5, South Asia: The Indian Subcontinent*, ed. Alison Arnold (New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 2000), 783.

<sup>2</sup> Although the left hand thumb is occasionally used also on tanbur, a plucked string instrument common in some provinces the west of Iran such as Kermanshah, Lorestan, and Kurdistan, the complex polyphonic quality in dotar playing -specifically in Turkish and Turkman culture- is not found on any other instruments in Iran. In the article *Polyphony in Persian Music*, Mohammad Taghi Ma’soudieh lists only Khorasan dotar, Turkman dotar (tamedeireh), and Lorestan dotar (tamireh) as examples of polyphonic instrumental music in Iran:

Mohammad Taghi Ma’soudieh, “Polyphony in Persian Music,” *Honarha-ye Ziba*, no. 4 (1998): 95.

In the *Encyclopedia of the Musical Instrument of Iran*, Darvishi specifically mentions that the left hand thumb does not have any role in the creation of melodic lines on tanbur, but only provides different pedal notes on the lower open string:

Mohammad Reza Darvishi, *Encyclopedia of the Musical Instruments of Iran, Vol 1: Chordophones in Regional Music* (Tehran: Mahoor, 2001), 333.

of the main pitches of every Kurmanji song and is an essential ingredient of the mode. The microtone functions as a downward leading tone for the first open string, considering the fact that the first open string is most of the time the main note of the mode. Another notable feature found in Sohrab Mohammadi's recording is the significant differences between the instrumental and the vocal versions of the melody. By means of rhythmic variations and ornamentation, Mohammadi presents a more complex version of the music in his singing in comparison to the basic melody presented on the dotar. I will refer to this recording in the discussion of *Le Yarei* for flute and guitar in Chapter 5.

### 3. 2. Technical aspects

My analysis of the performance practices demonstrated across the range of recordings discussed above is organised into the following categories: Tuning and tempo, rhythm, dynamics, ornamentation, phrasing and articulation, and use of lower open strings.

#### 3. 2. 1. Tuning and Tempo

Traditionally the pitch level of Persian instruments does not fit into a fixed system: performers make decisions about tuning when considering the mode, the voice range of a particular singer and/or their own mood.<sup>1</sup> Although strings are mostly tuned in perfect fourths, fifths, and octaves, the exact frequencies are decided by individual performers. This is an occasion where the role of *Hal* (mood) – mentioned in the rhetoric of Master Safvat in Chapter Two – is crucial.<sup>2</sup> Tuning differences are documented in the transcriptions of recordings of Persian music presented in the appendices to this thesis. The tuning of the tar in the selected recordings surveyed above ranges from A4: 413 Hz to A4: 476 Hz (see table 7 in appendix 5).

Performers exert similar agency over selections of tempo. This is particularly evident in measured pieces realised by different performers. For example, there is a 60 bpm difference between Borumand and Shahnazi's performance of *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Nava* (see table 5 in appendix 4).

A general approach amongst the performers surveyed in this thesis is to avoid any sort of tempo rubato in the performances of measured pieces. On the other hand, tempo rubato is generously

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<sup>1</sup> "...these tunings [of setar strings] are subject to change, since in some cases, the significance of certain notes in some *dastgahs* or *avazes* determines the type of tuning."

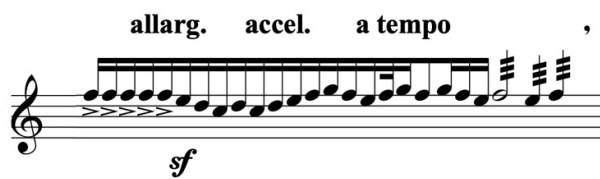
Hossein Alizadeh, *An Interactive Setar Course* (Tehran: Mahoor, 2013), p. 4, ebook.

<sup>2</sup> "...The very essence of the music manifests itself delivered from the usual interference of the human personality."

Safvat, *Mystical Aspects of Authentic Iranian Music*, quoted in Miller, *Music and Song in Persia*, 22

used as a technique for dramatisation in unmeasured pieces. In turn, a common feature in the performance of unmeasured pieces is the use of accelerando followed by a rallentando when approaching the repetition of a single note. Allargando is used mostly with sforzando in passages of short and fast notes. Allargando in some performances is applied simultaneously with strongly accented and/or staccato notes. Below are examples of such approaches in a number of recordings.

**Figure 3-1: Use of allargando with accented notes followed by accelerando, *gusheh Araq*, performed by Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani<sup>1</sup>**



**Figure 3-2: Use of allargando with staccato, *gusheh Araq*, performed by Shahnazi<sup>2</sup>**



**Figure 3-3: Use of accelerando followed by allargando with staccato, *gusheh of Araq*, performed by Borumand<sup>3</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani, “Dastgah-e Mahur, Araq,” Track 2 on *Tar: Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli*, Mahoor, 2013, compact disc.

<sup>2</sup> Ali-Akbar Shahnazi, “Dastgah-e Mahur, Araq,” Track 37 on *The Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Radif, CD 2*, Tehran: Mahoor, 2003, compact disc.

<sup>3</sup> Nur- ‘Ali Borumand, “Dastgah-e Mahur, Araq,” Track 27 on *The Radif of Mirza Abdollah for the Tar and Setar, CD 4*, Mahoor, 2006, compact disc.

Figures 3-4 and 3-5: Use of accelerando in the passages of short fast notes, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, Ruh-Afza<sup>1</sup>



### 3. 2. 2. Rhythm

Rhythmic patterns found in Persian music are mainly derived from Persian poetic rhythm, and like Persian/Arabic prosody, rhythmic content can be short, long, very long, and extremely long in duration, all subject to a particular performer's interpretation.<sup>2</sup> Talai points to two different approaches to rhythm in performance of unmeasured melodies: the popular approach in which long and short syllables are performed in the exact ratio of 2 to 1, and the artistic manner in which long syllables are subject to the performer's taste and flexibly ornamented.<sup>3</sup> Jean During refers to this phenomenon as the "relative length and stress" in rhythm in Persian music.<sup>4</sup>

Another significant and complex approach that arises in the survey of performances undertaken in this thesis is the use of rhythmic expansion. This device is utilised in both unmeasured and measured pieces but is more recognisable in measured pieces due to the existence of an imaginary bar line. Tsuge labels this technique "compression-relaxation".<sup>5</sup> An example is when the downbeat is performed with a delay, followed by a slight accelerando to compensate for the changed timing. This approach is used extensively by Ali-Akbar Shahnazi. Another example is, as Tsuge describes in his observation on Persian Avaz (singing), "to squeeze the

<sup>1</sup> Musa Marufi, "Dastgah-e Mahur, Chaharpare or Chaharbaq," Track 21 on *Radif of Seven Dastgahs of Iranian Classical Music*, CD 6, Performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza, Mahoor, 2009, compact disc.

<sup>2</sup> Talai, *Radif Analysis*, 54.

<sup>3</sup> Talai, *Radif Analysis*, 39-41.

<sup>4</sup> Nettl, *The Radif of Persian Music*, 39-49.

<sup>5</sup> Tsuge, *A Study of the Rhythmic Aspects in Classical Iranian Music*, 164.

syllables closely together at the beginning of a phrase”, then to fill the remaining long syllable with embellishments.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. 2. 3. Dynamics

In “Music and song in Persia”, Miller presents the following quote from Master Safvat about “nuance”:

Nuance, in its European sense, does not exist in authentic Iranian music. We never play one part loud and the next one soft. In Iranian music, this nuance instead exists in each single note. In other words, no single note remains the same from beginning to end. The main notes of a melody are usually played with more stress and soften as they continue. Ornamental notes, on the other hand, are always played softly. This change of sound should be very subtle, lest it become unpleasant to the ear.<sup>2</sup>

This ambiguous definition of “nuance” gives rise to more questions about the nature of dynamics in the performance of Persian music than it answers. The fact that almost none of the existing notated versions of *radif* contain dynamic signs adds to this mystery. It is true that since repetition is a common technique in melodic development in Persian music, phrases, motifs, and even single notes hardly “remain the same” throughout a performance. There are always changes through the addition of ornaments or the use of lower open strings. However, this has little to do with the realisation of dynamic difference and more to do with melodic variation.

The survey of selected recordings in this thesis demonstrates that dynamic range is limited in performances of Persian music. Three out of the five selected performers do not apply any noticeable dynamic changes in any of their recordings. Shahnazi’s recordings on the other hand demonstrate use of a wide range of dynamics and two out of the four selected recordings made by Alizadeh, a student of both Shahnazi and Borumand, adopt a similar approach.<sup>3</sup> In turn, the prevalence of dynamic change can also be understood as something that is dependent on the particular genre of Persian music. For example, in the traditional duo performance of *Saz va Avaz* (playing and singing), the player reduces the dynamics significantly when accompanying the singer in the background.

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<sup>1</sup> Tsuge, *A Study of the Rhythmic Aspects in Classical Iranian Music*, 164.

<sup>2</sup> Safvat, *Mystical Aspects of Authentic Iranian Music*, quoted in Miller, *Music and Song in Persia*, 21.

<sup>3</sup> Specifically, *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Nava* and *Chahar-Pareh* in *Abu’ata* are performed with a wide range of dynamics by Alizadeh.

### 3. 2. 4. Ornamentation

In one of the very few sources to discuss the particularities of ornamentation in Persian vocal and instrumental music, Ali Kazemi outlines the following techniques of ornamentation: *tekyeh* (very short appoggiatura/briefly muting or lightly touching the string with the left hand on a higher fret after playing the main note)<sup>1</sup>, various types of *naleh* or *malesh* (vibrato/bending), various types of *riz* (tremolo), *riz-eshareh* (trill), various types of *dorrab* (short fast tremolo including a downward and an upward plucking followed by an accented downward plucking), *kandan* (left hand only slurs), various types of *eshareh*, *laghzeh* (glissando), various types of muting, *shalal* (a fast tremolo including an upward and a downward plucking followed by an upward and an accented downward plucking on one beat), and *gazesh* (mordent).<sup>2</sup>

*Eshareh* is one of the most common yet complicated techniques of ornamentation in Persian music. The word *eshareh* in Persian means to mention something very briefly. This ornament is performed with an extremely light left-hand touch. What makes this specific type of ornament unique and challenging to notate is its rhythmic function in relation to the main melody notes. Unlike other types of ornaments such as appoggiatura or mordents, *eshareh* is played after the main note. In his *radif* analysis Talai explains the execution of the three main types of *eshareh* used in Persian music performance in the following way:

Figures 3-6 to 3-13: Different *esharehs* according to Talai<sup>3</sup>

Figure 3-6: Upward *Eshareh*: Notation



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<sup>1</sup> In his notation of the *radif* of Mirza Abdollah, Jean During explains this technique as “light appoggiatura” and leaves it for the performer to choose to play the higher note either on an interval of a second or a third.

Jean During, *Radif-e Mirza Abdollah* (Tehran: Mahoor, 2006), 9.

<sup>2</sup> Ali Kazemi, “Arayeh be Masabeh-e Onsori Sakhtari dar Musiqi-e Dastgahi-e Iran,” *Honarha-ye Ziba* 17, no. 2 (2012): 6.

Different types of plucking techniques on Persian plucked string instruments are sometimes accompanied by left hand ornaments. In *An Interactive Setar Course*, Hossein Alizadeh lists some of these techniques as: *pezhvak* (Trill with one pluck), *tak-riz* (Down pick and tremolo), *hap-riz* (Up pick and tremolo), *dorrab-riz* (*dorrab* and tremolo), *kandeh-riz* (*kandeh* and tremolo), *kaman-riz* (*kaman* and tremolo).

Alizadeh, *An Interactive Setar Course*, 15.

<sup>3</sup> Talai, *Radif Analysis*, 55.

Figure 3-7: Upward *eshareh*: Execution



Figure 3-8: Downward *eshareh*: Notation



Figure 3-9: Downward *eshareh*: Execution



Figure 3-10: Up-down *eshareh* (mordent): Notation



Figure 3-11: Up-down *eshareh* (mordent): Execution



Figure 3-12: Down-up *eshareh* (mordent): Notation



Figure 3-13: Down-up *eshareh* (mordent): Execution



The first type is unique to Persian music, and the second is similar to a mordent in Western classical music. Talai also introduces other types of *eshareh* common on the setar and the tar that can only be performed by means of a plectrum or specific right-hand strumming technique. It is possible to perform these embellishments on the classical guitar in homophonic contexts, yet challenges arise when attempting to incorporate this practice into the polyphonic textures of the works I have recorded for this thesis. I have included upward and downward *esharehs* in my transcriptions of the recordings. Since various symbols have been used by scholars in the notation of Persian music, for the sake of simplicity, I used u for upward *eshareh* and d for downward *eshareh* in my transcriptions:

Figures 3-14 and 3-15: Notation of *eshareh* in this thesis

Upward *eshareh*



Downward *eshareh*



A specific occasion for the use of upward *eshareh* is the context of cadential formulas in unmeasured pieces, such as *Araq* in the *Dastgah* of *Mahur*. Performers across the four selected recordings of *Araq* realise cadential formulas in this way:

Figures 3-16 to 3-19: Use of upward *eshareh* in cadential passages in *Araq*

Figure 3-16: Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani

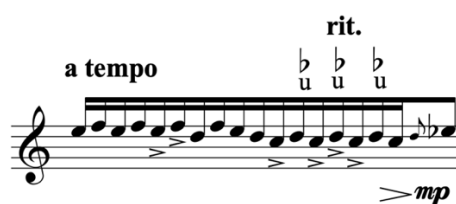


Figure 3-17: Ruh-Afza<sup>1</sup>



Figure 3-18: Shahnazi



Figure 3-19: Borumand



Use of upward *eshareh* also commonly emerges in rapid downward passages of short notes, as demonstrated in all four selected performances of *Chahar-Pareh* in *Abu'ata*:

Figures 3-20 to 3-23: Use of upward *eshareh* in fast downward passages, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Abu'ata*

Figure 3-20: Ruh-Afza<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Musa Marufi, "Dastgah-e Mahur, Araq," Track 38 on *Radif of Seven Dastgahs of Iranian Classical Music*, CD 6, Performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza, Mahoor, 2009, compact disc.

<sup>2</sup> Musa Marufi, "Avaz-e Abu'ata (Dastan-e Arab), Chaharbaq or Chaharpare," Track 32 on *Radif of Seven Dastgahs of Iranian Classical Music*, CD 2, Performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza, Mahoor, 2009, compact disc.

Figure 3-21: Shahnazi<sup>1</sup>



Figure 3-22: Borumand<sup>2</sup>



Figure 3-23: Alizadeh<sup>3</sup>



### 3. 2. 5. Phrasing and Articulation

Phrases in both measured and unmeasured pieces of Persian music often end with an accent and/or staccato:

Figures 3-24 and 3-25: Ending phrases with accents and staccato, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Abu'ata*, Shahnazi



<sup>1</sup> Ali-Akbar Shahnazi, "Avaz-e Abu'ata, Chaharpareh," Track 44 on *The Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Radif, CD 1*, Tehran: Mahoor, 2003, compact disc.

<sup>2</sup> Nur- 'Ali Borumand, "Avaz-e Abu'ata, Chahar-pareh," Track 40 on *The Radif of Mirza Abdollah for the Tar and Setar, CD 1*, Mahoor, 2006, compact disc.

<sup>3</sup> Hossein Alizadeh, "Avaz-e Abu'ata, Chahar-Pareh," Track 44 on *Radif Navazi: Radif of Mirza Abdollah according to Nur-Ali Borumand, Disc 1*. Mahoor, 1992, compact disc.



However, my survey of recordings has revealed that not all players adopt this approach. Neither Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli nor Ruh-Afza adhere to this practice. In most of their performances, ending notes are articulated in a manner in which they are left to resonate until the sound naturally disappears.

Another significant quality of phrasing in Persian music is the use of occasional accents on particular beats and pitches. Not only are specific beats given accents based on the rhythmic structure of the piece, but depending on the mode, sometimes specific pitches are emphasised. Borumand, for example, consistently emphasises the E *koron* as the lowest pitch of the melody in his recording of the *gusheh Chahar-Mezrab* in the *dastgah of Homayun*.

*Riz* (tremolo performed by continuous upward and downward strums) on long notes and staccato on short notes is another tool used by Persian masters to articulate phrases differently. However not all the long notes bear *riz* and not all short notes are performed in a staccato manner: in short, performers tend to exercise a good deal of agency in determining when and where to place *riz*. The figures below show the symbol for *riz* in the transcriptions made for this thesis and the manner of its presentation in performances.

Figures 3-26 and 3-27: *Riz* (tremolo)

**Symbol in Transcriptions<sup>1</sup>**



**Performed**




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<sup>1</sup> In *An Interactive Setar Course*, Alizadeh uses T for *riz*. Alizadeh, *An Interactive Setar Course*.

*Riz* is also occasionally followed by an *eshareh*.<sup>1</sup> Examples of this pairing can be found in Borumand’s recordings of *Araq* (upward) and *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur* (upward), and in Ruh-Afza’s recording of *Chahar-Pareh* in *Abu’ata* (upward and downward) (See complete transcriptions in appendix 1).

Other articulation tools occasionally used by Persian masters include doubling the melody by a third as an additional elaboration technique, and the use of slurs, glissando, and vibrato.

Figure 3-28: Glissando as sound effect, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, performed by Shahnazi<sup>2</sup>



Figure 3-29: Use of glissando in phrasing, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, performed by Ruh-Afza



### 3. 2. 6. Use of the Lower Open Strings as Drone

The two lower open strings on the tar and setar are rarely used in melody playing but are frequently called on to produce a drone accompaniment to the melody played on the higher strings. In alignment with other aspects of Persian music, the use of this effect can vary from performance to performance and piece to piece. The use of lower strings falls into four categories: (a) as ornaments, (b) as complements to the rhythmic component, (c) as a way of emphasising particular beats and pitches, and (d) as a way of providing timbral contrast. When used as an ornament, the lower strings are plucked in a spontaneous way to embellish the notes they are placed on. Sometimes, especially in measured or semi-measured pieces, the lower strings are used to fill a rhythmic gap in the melody. The lower open strings are also

<sup>1</sup> This is different from the technique of *riz-eshareh* which produces the effect of trill.

<sup>2</sup> Ali-Akbar Shahnazi, “Dastgah-e Mahur, Moradkhani II,” Track 24 on *The Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Radif, CD 2*, Tehran: Mahoor, 2003, compact disc.

occasionally used for phrasing purposes by adding emphasis to important beats or pitches. Due to the tense and sometimes dissonant atmosphere these chords produce, a significant difference is noticeable between solo string sections and passages with added open strings. This change in character is used by Persian performers mostly in the performance of unmeasured pieces. An analytic transcription of *Araq* performed by Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani is illustrated in Figure 3-30 with focus on the use of lower open strings.

**Figure 3-30: Use of lower open strings: An analytic transcription of *Araq* performed by Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani**

Emphasising the important notes of the mode: C, G

For timbral contrast

For accentuation

As Embellishments

As embellishments

For Accentuation

It should be noted that the transcription of the lower open strings might not be thoroughly accurate in the example above due to frequent use of them throughout the performance. In many cases various open strings are frequently and spontaneously plucked and sustained. In some cases, the lower open strings seem to be touched even unintentionally. This quality makes it difficult to provide a precise notation. For the same reason lower open strings are not included in the transcriptions provided in this thesis. However, they are included on occasions where lower open strings have a more functional role in the phrases. Examples are *Araq* performed by Aqa Hosein-Qoli, Ruh-Afza, and Borumand, and *Chahar-Pareh* performed by Shahnazi (See Appendix 1).

### 3. 3. Case Studies

To have a wide range of examples, I chose three different types of pieces from Persian *radif*: 1) *Araq*, an unmeasured piece from *dastgah* of *Mahur*, 2) *Chahar-Pareh*, a piece that consists of both measured and unmeasured melodic material (categorized as semi-measured), and 3) *Chahar-Mezrab*, a thoroughly measured piece. The primary reason for choosing these pieces from numerous options were the possibility to compare the same *gushehs*. Although different *radifs* share a significant number of *gushehs*, none of them contain the same exact pieces. For example, *radif* of Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli performed by Shahnazi does not include the unmeasured *gusheh* *Neyshaburak* in the *dastgah* of *Mahur*, nor the measured *gushehs* of *Zarb-e Osul* and *Shahr-Ashub*. On the other hand, the recording by Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli include a limited number of pieces, and not all of them have specific *gusheh* titles. For the same reason, I did not include any recording of Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli in the examples of semi-measured and measured pieces.

#### 3. 3. 1. Four performances of the *gusheh Araq* in the *dastgah* of *Mahur*, as an example of an unmeasured piece

*Araq* is considered a *gusheh* or melody model in the *dastgah* of *Mahur*, although it is also a sub-*dastgah* in itself. *Araq* refers to a specific modal range in the *dastgah* of *Mahur*, and the *gusheh* named *Araq* is the introduction to this new register which is played an octave above the introduction of *Mahur*. Considering the *radif* of Mirza Abdollah as an example, *Araq* includes the *gushehs* of *Nahib*, *Mohayyer*, *Ashur-Avand*, *Esfahanak*, *Hazin*, *Kereshmeh*, and *Zanguleh*.<sup>1</sup> The recordings considered in this section include:

*Araq*, *dastgah* of *Mahur*, performed by Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani (1905)

*Araq*, *dastgah* of *Mahur*, performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza (1959)

*Araq*, *dastgah* of *Mahur*, performed by Ali-Akbar Shahnazi (1962)

*Araq*, *dastgah* of *Mahur*, performed by Nur-Ali Borumand (1975)

#### 3. 3. 1. 1. Performance possibilities

This study of selected recordings of *Araq* reveals a set of normative and divergent approaches to performance in the interpretation of the unmeasured sections of Persian music. Normative approaches include the expansion and compression of motifs through rubato playing. In the cadential passages of short fast notes, the use of allargando with strongly accented notes followed by an accelerando is the most common approach used by performers. Other

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<sup>1</sup> Talai, *Radif Analysis*, 408-416.

commonalities include minimal dynamic changes and the use of *riz* and *esharehs* on long and short notes respectively. *Riz* is executed most commonly with a slight delay at the beginning, followed by an accelerando. However, there are exceptions to the approaches to dynamics and ornamentation outlined above. For example, in Shahnazi's recording, almost every phrase ends with a diminuendo whilst new phrases begin fairly loud. There are also occasions in the recordings by Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani and Shahnazi where *riz* is played without a delay at the beginning and is followed by the use of *eshareh* on subsequent short notes.

Avoiding silence in the space between long notes and phrases by means of tremolo, ornamentation, the plucking of lower open strings, and accenting phrase endings present as commonalities in the arena of phrasing. Some spontaneous accents in passages of repeated notes are in turn noticeable across the surveyed recordings. Spontaneity is also apparent in the use of lower open strings.

This case study of *Araq* provides a set of options for realising unmeasured passages of music in the performances submitted as the major creative work of this thesis. The use of allargando followed by accelerando in cadential passages and the use of ritardando with an accent or a staccato on the last note of a melodic phrase will serve as a guide for the shaping of rubato phrases. A cautious approach to dynamic variation will be utilised and use of *riz* will be considered, if technically possible, as a tool for embellishing long notes and avoiding silences between phrases and notes. The varied approaches to the use of *eshareh* both on the long and short notes surveyed above and the use of spontaneous accents of repeated notes will similarly be explored. A detailed analysis of the recordings is provided in Appendix 3.

### 3. 3. 2. Eight Performances of the *gusheh* of *Chahar-Pareh*, as an example of a semi-measured piece

The rhythmic component of *Chahar-Pareh* is based on a rhythmic figure in Persian and Arabic prosody containing a series of short and long syllables in the following order: Short, short, long, short, long. The notation will be as follows:

Figure 3-31: *Chahar-Pareh* rhythmic figure



A phrase from a sonnet by Hatef Esfahani (died 1783) featuring this rhythm is presented below. The rhythm is repeated in each line of this poem.

Figure 3-32: An excerpt from a poem by Hatf Esfahani containing the rhythm of *Chahar-Pareh*

چه شود به چهره‌ی زرد من، نظری برای خدا کنی  
که اگر کنی همه درد من، به یکی اشاره دوا کنی<sup>1</sup>

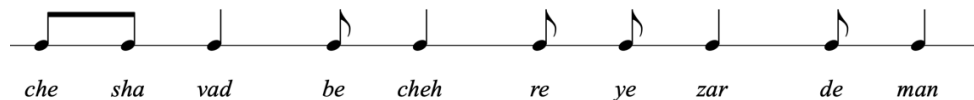
Transliteration:

*Che shavad be chehre-ye zard-e man, nazari baraye khoda koni*  
*Ke agar koni hame dard-e man, be yeki eshare dava koni*

Translation:

Why do you not look at my pale face for the sake of God?  
If you do so, you will heal all my pain in a blink of an eye!

Figure 3-33: Rhythmic alignment of the poem with *Chahar-Pareh* rhythmic figure



The melodic structure of the *gusheh Chahar-Pareh* consists of measured and unmeasured components. Performances typically begin with an articulation of metric ideas before progressing to unmeasured sections and then returning at the end to a final measured section. *Chahar-Pareh* resists consideration as a fully measured piece due to the existence of unmeasured sections throughout and significant pauses after each measured phrase. The recordings considered in this section include:

*Chahar-Pareh, dastgah of Abu'ata*, performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza (1959)<sup>2</sup>

*Chahr-Pareh, dastgah of Abu'ata*, performed by Ali-Akbar Shahnazi (1962)

*Chahr-Pareh, dastgah of Abu'ata*, performed by Nur-Ali Borumand (1975)

*Chahr-Pareh, dastgah of Abu'ata*, performed by Hossein Alizadeh (1992)

*Chahar-Pareh, dastgah of Mahur*, performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza (1959)

*Chahar-Pareh, dastgah of Mahur*, performed by Ali-Akbar Shahnazi (1962)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hatf Esfahani, *Divan-e Hatf Esfahani*, (Tehran: Sharq, 1970), 114.

<sup>2</sup> *Dastgah of Abu'ata* is derived from the *Dastgah of Shur*. Its main melodic register is a fourth above the main register of *Shur*. The *Gusheh of Chahar-Pareh* is played in the register of *Hejaz* in the mode of *Abu'ata*. Vaziri, *Theori-e Musiqi*, 111-113.

<sup>3</sup> *Chahar-Pareh* is presented in two separate tracks in Shahnazi's recording. Therefore I have specified the exact track when providing excerpts from this performance.

*Chahar-Pareh, dastgah of Mahur*, performed by Nur-Ali Borumand (1975)<sup>1</sup>

*Chahar-Pareh, dastgah of Mahur*, performed by Hossein Alizadeh (1992)<sup>2</sup>

### 3.3.2.1. Performance possibilities

A few consistent performance practices can be discerned in the data presented in this case study. Use of *accelerando* in passages of short fast notes in unmeasured sections of music is common across the surveyed recordings. Use of upward *eshareh* in descending melodic lines is another common performance practice that emerges in this analysis. In addition, clear and meaningful pauses between phrases are noticeable in almost all of the surveyed performances. These pauses vary in length, sometimes contributing to a semi-measured performance feel. Phrases mostly end with a brief *crescendo* (sometimes a *ritardando*) and an accent placed on concluding notes. Use of *riz* followed typically by an *eshareh* (upward and downward) on long notes emerges as yet another consistent performance practice. *Dorrah* is used occasionally on short notes to emphasise specific beats in each bar. Short notes with *dorrah* at times blend into long notes with *riz*, blurring the boundaries between notes. This approach produces a sense of *legato* in many of the performances analysed in this case study.

Inconsistency is also present in the performances analysed above. Importantly, two *different* phrasing approaches have been identified. One performance practice of *Chahar-Pareh* groups melodic material into musical cells of three beats, another groups melodic material into cells (or phrases) of seven beats. Those who undertake a three-beat approach tend to produce performances that are rhythmically freer by inserting significant pauses between long notes and adopting slow tempos. Those who undertake the seven beat approach utilise shorter pauses and apply these pauses between every second phrase. Within the seven-beat approach, other variations in performance practice are also evident. Two of the performers who utilise the seven-beat approach (Borumand and Alizadeh) emphasise the first and the fifth beat of each bar. Shahnazi, in contrast, tends to accent the third and the sixth beat of each bar.

Rhythmic variation of musical cells and phrases are also found across this case study with some performers imbuing recurring phrases with a great deal of rhythmic diversity and others adopting a rhythmically consistent approach.

Use of dynamics is in turn inconsistent across the recordings studied. In Ruh-Afza and Borumand's performances, dynamic contrast is not explored. In Shahnazi and Alizadeh's performances, significant dynamic contrast is pursued through sudden changes in dynamics

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<sup>1</sup> Nur- 'Ali Borumand. "Dastgah-e Mahur, Chahar-pare (Morad Khani)," Track 15 on *The Radif of Mirza Abdollah for the Tar and Setar, CD 4*, Mahoor, 2006, compact disc.

<sup>2</sup> Hossein Alizadeh, "*Mahoor, Chahar-Pareh*," Track 12 on *Radif Navazi: Radif of Mirza Abdollah according to Nur-Ali Borumand, Disc 4*. Mahoor, 1992, compact disc.

when moving from one phrase to another - conjuring a call and response effect. A range of approaches to using lower strings have also been identified.

This case study of *Chahar-Pareh* provides a set of options for realising motives and phrases in the Persian inspired works discussed in Chapter Five. The performance practices of imbuing repeated motives with different rhythmic characters, utilising *riz* and *dorrah* together to create a sense of legato, using terraced dynamics to imbue repeated phrases with an aesthetic of call and response and using *eshareh* to help articulate cadential passages will be key in rooting the melodic material of the works submitted in my creative work more deeply in the world of traditional Persian musical sounds and style. A detailed analysis of the recordings is provided in Appendix 3.

### 3. 3. 3. Eight performances of the *gusheh Chahar-Mezrab*, as example for a measured piece

*Chahar-Mezrab* is a fast and measured instrumental piece usually constructed in compound duple metre.<sup>1</sup> *Chahar-Mezrabs* are included in the instrumental versions of *radif*.<sup>2</sup> There are also independent compositions based on this form.<sup>3</sup> In the *radif* of Mirza Abdollah Farahani notated by Talai, four *dastgahs* including *Segah*, *Nava*, *Homayun*, and *Chahargah* contain *Chahar-Mezrab*. According to Farhat, there were a few *Chahar-Mezrabs* created in the nineteenth century, but the form only became firmly established as a popular form in the twentieth century.<sup>4</sup> *Chahar-Mezrab* is usually a part of traditional improvisatory performances. That is, solo instrumental improvisations usually begin with a measured composed piece (“*Pish Daramad*”) followed by an improvisatory unmeasured *Daramad* (introduction), a number of important *gushehs* and often the *Chahar-Mezrab* as a virtuoso measured piece.<sup>5</sup> The recordings considered in this section include:

*Chahar-Mezrab*, *dastgah* of *Nava*, performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza (1959)<sup>6</sup>

*Chahar-Mezrab*, *dastgah* of *Nava*, performed by Ali-Akbar Shahnazi (1962)<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*, 22.

<sup>2</sup> “Of all the measured pieces in a performance of classical Persian music, by far the most important is the *chahar mezarab*... Since it is the most brilliant and exciting part of the composition, the *chahar mezarab* provides an excellent opportunity for the player to demonstrate his virtuosity.”  
Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 131.

<sup>3</sup> “...the *chahar mezarab* is a genre between improvised and composed music. Many *chahar Mezarab*-ha are still improvised, but musicians also play those of other artists that have been published or recorded.”  
Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 134-135.

<sup>4</sup> Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*, 22.

<sup>5</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 102-103.

<sup>6</sup> Musa Marufi, “*Dastgah-e Nava, Chaharmezarab*,” Track 10 on *Radif of Seven Dastgahs of Iranian Classical Music*, CD 7, Performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza, Mahoor, 2009, compact disc.

<sup>7</sup> Ali-Akbar Shahnazi, “*Dastgah-e Nava, Chaharmezarab*,” Track 79 on *The Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Radif, CD 1*, Tehran: Mahoor, 2003, compact disc.

*Chahar-Mezrab, dastgah of Nava*, performed by Nur-Ali Borumand (1975)<sup>1</sup>

*Chahar-Mezrab, dastgah of Nava*, performed by Hossein Alizadeh (1992)<sup>2</sup>

*Chahar-Mezrab, dastgah of Homayun*, performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza (1959)<sup>3</sup>

*Chahar-Mezrab, dastgah of Homayun*, performed by Ali-Akbar Shahnazi (1962)<sup>4</sup>

*Chahar-Mezrab, dastgah of Homayun*, performed by Nur-Ali Borumand (1975)<sup>5</sup>

*Chahar-Mezrab, dastgah of Homayun*, performed by Hossein Alizadeh (1992)<sup>6</sup>

### 3. 3. 3. 1. Performance possibilities

This study of *Chahar-Mezrab* recordings illuminates a range of interpretive techniques, particularly in relation to how spaces between melodic gestures and phrases are filled with sound. A consistent practice across performances in this case study is to fill open spaces in the melody of *Chahar-Mezrab* by plucking the lower open strings or utilising downward *esharehs* (in the surveyed recordings, downward *esharehs* are consistently utilised after the *A koron* is played on the first fret of the second string of the tar). Idiosyncratic approaches include Borumand's emphasis on the characteristic notes of the mode and the quality of Shahnazi's touch, which creates timbral effects that in and of themselves seem to take up sonic space.

Such findings speak to the importance of ornamentation in Persian music, and specifically *eshareh*, as a functional musical feature. That is, ornaments bind the aesthetic of Persian music together by infusing into performance: 1. Constant sound; 2. A sense of continuous legato; and 3. Nebulous borders between melody notes. In the creative work submitted with this thesis, I draw on the techniques and spirit of ornamentation discussed in this case study as a way of bringing the seamlessness of Persian music performance into the delivery of Persian inspired works for guitar. A detailed analysis of the recordings is provided in Appendix 3.

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<sup>1</sup> Nur- 'Ali Borumand, "Dastgah-e Nava, Chahar-mezrab," Track 1 on *The Radif of Mirza Abdollah for the Tar and Setar, CD 5*, Mahoor, 2006, compact disc.

<sup>2</sup> Hossein Alizadeh, "*Nava, Chahar-Mezrab*," Track 1 on *Radif Navazi: Radif of Mirza Abdollah according to Nur-Ali Borumand, Disc 5*. Mahoor, 1992, compact disc.

<sup>3</sup> Musa MArufi, "Dastgah-e Homayun, Chaharmezrab," Track 1 on *Radif of Seven Dastgahs of Iranian Classical Music, CD 10*, Performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza, Mahoor, 2009, compact disc.

<sup>4</sup> Ali-Akbar Shahnazi, "Dastgah-e Homayun, Chaharmezrab," Track 2 on *The Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Radif, CD 3*, Tehran: Mahoor, 2003, compact disc.

<sup>5</sup> Nur- 'Ali Borumand, "Dastgah-e Homayun, Chaharmezrab," Track 31 on *The Radif of Mirza Abdollah for the Tar and Setar, CD 2*, Mahoor, 2006, compact disc.

<sup>6</sup> Hossein Alizadeh, "*Homayun, Chahar-Mezrab*," Track 30 on *Radif Navazi: Radif of Mirza Abdollah according to Nur-Ali Borumand, Disc 2*. Mahoor, 1992, compact disc.

## Chapter Four – Mehrdad Pakbaz and Opportunities for Styling Classical Guitar Repertoire

Although Western classical music was introduced to Iranian society in the second half of the nineteenth century, it took almost a century for the classical guitar to be embraced by Iranian musicians.<sup>1</sup> The Catalan classical guitarist, Ignacio Sole Aguilar moved to Iran in 1955 and founded a guitar program at Tehran Conservatory of Music in 1967.<sup>2</sup> Gradually a generation of classical guitarists grew up in Iran, including Joseph Urshalimi (b. 1942), Jamshid Mirfenderski (?), Abdollah Mafakher (?), Simon Ayvazian (b. 1944), Bagher Moazzen (b. 1948), and Dariush Afrasiabi (?).<sup>3</sup> In the 1980s, Iranian classical guitarists began experimenting with composing music for the guitar and encouraged professional composers to write music for them. Some of the first compositions by Iranian composers for classical guitar include Siamak Valai's (b. 1961) "Orange Orchards" (1982) for guitar duo, Shaheen Farhat's (b. 1947) "Sonata for Guitar" op. 23 (1983), and two solo pieces by Mehran Rouhani (b. 1946), "Elegy" (1985) and "Autumn's Corner" (1991).

Many of these compositions were written during a period of radical political and cultural change in Iran. Following the Islamic Revolution in 1979, Universities temporarily closed and most activities in the field of music were banned.<sup>4</sup> Many musicians emigrated to Europe and the United States, and those who stayed in the country were required to limit their activities to occasional house concerts and private teaching.<sup>5</sup> It is during this period that a guitar quartet named the "Tehran Guitar Quartet", as well as a number of guitar orchestras, were formed to give house concerts. Some of these private performances were recorded and the recordings were later published unofficially. These limited performances and recordings included the above-mentioned compositions by Iranian composers.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The french *Chef de Musique*, Bousquet, and his assistant Rouillon were invited to Iran in 1856 by Nasser al Din Shah, king of Iran, as the first Western music experts. Later in 1868, Alfred Jean Baptiste Lemaire (b. 1842) arrived in Iran and established a military music band and a school of music.

Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 186.

<sup>2</sup> Kia Kani, "La Historia de la Guitarra en Iran", (Master's diss., Conservatorio Superior de Musica Oscar Espla, 2014), 7.

Babak Valipour, "Iran and the Guitar," *Soundboard Vol 41, no.2*, 2015, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Valipour, "Iran and the Guitar," 8.

<sup>4</sup> Nooshin, "The Process of Creation and Recreation in Persian Classical Music," 110.

<sup>5</sup> Kani, "La Historia de la Guitarra en Iran", 32.

Valipour, "Iran and the Guitar," 9.

<sup>6</sup> Alireza Tafaghody (b. 1960) unofficially published a recording in 1991 including "Elegy" by Rouhani:

Alireza Tafaghodi, "Classical Guitar: Works by Bach, Albeniz, Villa-lobos, Walton, Rouhani, and others," Tehran: Unofficial Recording, 1991, compact disc.

Later in 2000 he published an official recording which included Rouhani's "Autumn's Corner":

Two decades after the revolution, a reformation in Iranian society and politics facilitated a new artistic wave in Iranian musical practice.<sup>1</sup> During this period, Iranian musicians educated in Europe and the United States began searching for an original style of composition that might bring together Persian traditional music and Western art music. Among these musicians was classical guitarist and composer Mehrdad Pakbaz (b. 1973). Pakbaz's approach to composition weaves Persian modes, rhythms, and conceptual themes into the fabric of Western art music. Yet his contribution to art music practice extends beyond the notes written on the page. Drawing on his considerable experience with Persian traditional repertoire, Pakbaz's performances of his compositions integrate un-notated ornamentation, articulation, and passages of improvisation in a manner that deepens their connection with a Persian sound world.

The major creative work in this thesis takes its lead from Pakbaz's performance practice and extends Pakbaz's approach in two ways: 1) It maps out a variety of possible approaches to stylised performance through an empirical survey of recordings (Chapter 3); and 2) It applies these possibilities across a range of works that nod to Persian traditional music in several different ways. This chapter sets the stage for discussing these stylisations by illuminating how Pakbaz stylises a performance of his composition *Khorasani* on his 2006 album *Dialogue*.

There have been efforts in recent years to share the experiences in incorporating Persian musical elements into compositions for classical guitar with an international audience. Compositions by Reza Vali (b. 1952), and Garry Eister (b. 1952) written for Lily Afshar (b. 1960), Iranian American guitarists, published in the album *Hemispheres* (2006), Golfam Khayam's (b. 1982) improvisational performances through Europe (Copenhagen Guitar Festival, Basel Culturescapes Festival, Aalborg International Guitar Festival, etc.), and the recital and presentation by Pakbaz at the Guitar Festival of Istanbul, 2017 are among them.<sup>2</sup> In a recent article titled "Tradition and Synthesis", Khayam, outlines the integration of Persian instrumental techniques and performance practices into her compositions for the classical guitar.<sup>3</sup> She explains how she combines the techniques of *riz*, *dorrab*, and drone with Persian modes, and describes the manner in which she applies aesthetics of Persian music such as the

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Alireza Tafaghodi, "Classical Guitar: Works by Rodrigo, Rouhani, Bach, Albeniz, and others," Honar-ha-ye Ziba, 2000, compact disc.

Farhat's "Sonata for Guitar" was also recorded in the composer's home studio in Tehran by Bagher Moazzen in the 1980s. (From conversations with the composer, 2007).

<sup>1</sup> Nooshin, *Iranian Classical Music*, 162.

<sup>2</sup> Lily Afshar, "Hemispheres," Archer Records, 2006, compact disc.

"4th International Istanbul Classical Guitar Festival", Guitar Foundation of America, accessed December 20, 2021,

<https://www.guitarfoundation.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=937266>.

Dusan Bogdanovic and Xavier Bouvier, *Tradition and Synthesis: Multiple Modernities for Composer-performers*, (Levis, Quebec: Doberman-Yppan, 2018), 5-6.

<sup>3</sup> Khayam, "Tradition and synthesis,".

importance of the tetrachord in her work. Another fact that makes this article a noteworthy publication in relation to my thesis is that Khayam has also used these techniques in the performance of pieces written by other composers based on Persian music most importantly *Five Persian Miniatures* by Dušan Bogdanović.

#### 4. 1. *Khorasani (Khorasan)* by Mehrdad Pakbaz

*Khorasani* refers to Khorasan, a large province in north-eastern Iran, and contains references throughout to the music of that region. These references include the use of the mode of *Shur*, the most common mode in the music of Khorasan, techniques of strumming similar to the techniques used on the dotar, the two-stringed instrument common in north-eastern Iran and the neighboring countries, and passages of parallel fourths, a common effect in the dotar playing of Khorasan. The piece also alludes to *Haft-Zarbi* in the *dastgah* of *Chahargah*, a piece composed for the tar by Hossein Alizadeh (b. 1951).<sup>1</sup> In Pakbaz's recording of *Khorasani*, the main motif of *Haft-Zarbi* by Alizadeh appears repeatedly from 2'53" to 4'12".<sup>2</sup> In the notated version of *Khorasani* (2020) the motif is excluded.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 4-1: Motif from Alizadeh's *Haft-Zarbi* in Pakbaz's recording of *Khorasani*



On the 2006 recorded performance of *Khorasani*, Pakbaz freely repeats passages, produces percussive rhythmic sounds by hitting the guitar body, uses ornaments, strums the chords using right hand techniques associated with the dotar and setar, strums the lower open strings freely along with the main melody notes, and performs slurs lightly and rapidly as a means of conjuring the effect of *eshareh* in Persian music. In the following section, I unpack the unnotated aspects of Pakbaz's approach in depth and in explicit reference to the Persian performance practice approaches detailed in Chapter 3.

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<sup>1</sup> Hossein Alizadeh, "Sorour (Haft-Zarbi)," Track 12 on *Paykubi*, Hossein Alizadeh and Dariush Zargari, Mahoor, 1993, compact disc.

<sup>2</sup> Mehrdad Pakbaz, "Khorasani," Track 2 on *Goft-o gu (Dialogue)*, Hermes Records, 2006, compact disc.

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that *Khorasani* has been changed by the composer over time and there are many differences between the first version created in 1993 and the notated version that I received from the composer in 2020. Therefore, I will not focus much on the structural differences between the two versions. Instead, I will discuss performing aspects of Pakbaz's recording.

#### 4. 1. 1. Tuning and tempo

In his recording of *Khorasani*, Pakbaz uses tempo rubato frequently. The most significant moments of tempo rubato occur in connection with the opening passages where Pakbaz slows down towards the end of each phrase (see the end of bars 4 (00'05 - 00'06"), 10 (00'14 - 00'15"), and 16 (00'22 – 00'23")). From bar 17 onwards (00'24") such extreme tempo rubato is not heard, but slight ritardandos at the end of some phrases are noticeable (see bars 22 (00'32"), 26 (00'41"), and 43 (1'03")). Ritardandos are noted in the score at two points: once in bar 37 (00'54"), a bar which ends with a double bar line, and the second time at the very end of the piece. Yet in contradiction to the notation in the score, Pakbaz does not slow down at these two points in his recording. He does however slightly reduce the tempo when playing rapid and sudden strums (see for example bars 55 (1'18") and 113 (2'33")).

#### 4. 1. 2. Rhythm

There are occasions in the recording where the continuous rhythm of 7/8 is interrupted either by adding extra beats or alternating time signature. For instance, Pakbaz performs bar 32 and 33 (00'49"-00'51") differently compared to the notated version. The following figures illuminate how Pakbaz skips the last 4 quavers of bar 32, thus manifesting a 10/8 rhythm (7/8+3/8).

Figures 4-2 and 4-3: *Khorasani*, bars 31-34

##### Notated version

##### Recorded version, 00'46"-00'51"

In the un-notated passage of material that includes the motif from *Haft-Zarbi*, Pakbaz improvises on a single string accompanied by strumming of the lower open strings almost with every note of the melody. Here the 7/8 time signature of *Khorasani* occasionally alternates with other time signatures in this passage, including 5/8 and 6/8. This can be heard at 3'29", 3'33", 3'43", and from 4'00" to 4'05" in the recorded performance (see Figure 4-4).

Figure 4-4: Time signature alternation in Pakbaz's recording of *Khorasani*, 4'00" to 4'05"



In addition, a change in the placement of accents which may sound like a time signature change also occurs in the recording from 4'31" to 4'33" as shown in figure 4-5.

Figure 4-5: Change of accent placement in Pakbaz's recording of *Khorasani*, around 4'29" to 4'33"<sup>1</sup>



### 4. 1. 3. Dynamics

Pakbaz uses a wide range of dynamics in his recording. These are arrived at through a variety of means. The composition includes sections of contrasting textures, from monophonic one-string passages to thick chordal phrases and polyphonic sections. This approach to compositional design inevitably produces dynamic contrast. Yet the composition also includes

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of simplicity, I have only notated the melody line in this figure. The actual version performed in the recording is as followed:



notated dynamic switches, including sudden changes like forte-piano (bars 55, 92, and 106), subito piano (bars 67 and 160), and sforzando (bars 71, 72, 75, and 76). In his recording of *Khorasani*, Pakbaz changes dynamic levels frequently, especially in places where terraced dynamics are suggested in the notation. For example, in the opening phrases where the main theme is repeated three times with the dynamics order of *f*, *mf*, and *f* (bars 1-16), Pakbaz performs the dynamic gestures with a different order as *mf*, *f*, and *mp* (00'00" – 00'23"). Such differences compared to the notated version are heard repeatedly throughout Pakbaz's recording and are not limited to the sections with terraced dynamics. Other examples include bars 19 to 22 where a passage indicated as *mp* is played *f* in the recording (00'28 – 00'32"), bars 24 to 26 where a phrase written as *mf* is played *subito piano* (00'33" – 00'40"), and many more.

#### 4. 1. 4. Ornamentation

Pakbaz's approach to ornamentations in his recording is spontaneous and frequently does not match the notated score. Pakbaz adds countless ornaments to the melody. On many occasions, he lifts the left-hand finger quickly after performing the intended note to allow the open string to resonate shortly and softly afterwards, producing the effect of *eshareh*. An illuminating example can be found in bar 18 (00'27") and is illustrated below in figures 4-6 and 4-7:

Figure 4-6 and 4-7: *Khorasani*, Bar 18, use of downward *eshareh*

##### Notated Version



##### Recorded version, 00'27"



There are also moments in Pakbaz’s performance where written slurs are in fact delivered as downward *esharehs*. That is, Pakbaz performs the second note connected with the slur softly and shortly, producing the effect of *eshareh*. It should be noted that due to the structure of Persian plucked string instruments, including the thin long neck and the low-tension metallic strings, the ornaments executed by means of slurs are played extremely lightly. This is different from the standard technique of the classical guitar in which the left-hand fingers pull the string to execute slurs. On Persian instruments, slurs are played so lightly that often the fretboard is barely touched. Pakbaz frequently uses this technique in his performance and as a result, in some passages, ornaments and the notes to which they are added have an obscure quality.

#### 4. 1. 5. Phrasing and Articulation

The role of repetition in Persian music is mentioned frequently in the literature review of this thesis. In the traditional repertoire of *radif*, repeated phrases and motifs appear with different variations. In the notation of *Khorasani*, repetitions appear in forms of octave transposition and melodic variations. In Pakbaz’s recording, improvisatory sections are included, most of which orbit around extemporisations of previously introduced melodic passages. One example of this approach is the long improvisation between 3’06” to 4’12”, which includes various realisations of melodic material from bars 127-131 of the notated work and references to *Haft Zarbi*. Pakbaz’s improvisational sensibility is also apparent in changes to the number of notated repetitions in certain sections of the score. For example, in his interpretation of the repetition of the opening phrase (00’19” to 00’23”) Pakbaz skips a complete bar (bar 15) and ends the phrase after three bars, truncating the repeated material as illustrated in figure 4-8 and 4-9.

Figure 4-8 and 4-9: Khorasani, bars 13-16

##### Notated Version



##### Recorded version (00’19”- 00’24”)



#### 4. 1. 6. Use of Lower open strings

The spontaneous nature of strumming in Persian plucked string instruments results in a free style of accompaniment by lower open strings. This freedom allows for a varied number of strings to be strummed every time the drone is used. In his recording of *Khorasani*, Pakbaz uses different strumming techniques, from upward strums/plucks to the *rasqueado* technique of flamenco guitar. The spontaneity in Pakbaz’s approach to the strums is particularly noticeable in the opening section, illustrated in figure 4-10. In the notated score, the pedal notes of D and G, played on open strings, are to be sustained for four bars while the melody is played on the B string. However, in the recording, Pakbaz strums the second string upwards repeatedly and freely, touching the lower open string frequently.

Figure 4-10: *Khorasani*, opening



This is not the only section in the piece where Pakbaz uses this technique. Figure 4-11 illustrates another section of the piece where continuous downward strums on two strings are used.

Figure 4-11: *Khorasani*, bars 87-90, use of continuous upward strums



Inspired by performance practices in Persian music and based on his experience in playing Persian instruments, Pakbaz presents a unique version of *Khorasani* in his recording. While the piece is notated, significant spontaneity in interpretation of rhythm, melodic ideas, and ornamentation in this recording deliver a deeper level of Persian aesthetics into the mix. Such an approach ensures that the work lives up to the Persian music performance ideal articulated by Borumand – that a work of Persian music “never repeats itself” as performers are expected

to take advantage of endless opportunities for recreation.<sup>1</sup> My own performance of *Khorasani* is one component of the major creative work presented in this thesis. In Chapter 5, I detail the performance choices I have made across the repertoire selected for this project that align with and break from those made by Pakbaz. I situate these choices in relation to the analysis presented in Chapter 3 and the inspiring approach to Western notated compositions based on Persian themes that Pakbaz has pioneered.

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<sup>1</sup> “...each performance of the same *Dastgah*, even by the same performer, is expected to be different.”

Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 14.

“A good performer is expected to fill in the framework, or to elaborate upon the melodic material of the *Radif*, and to do this extemporaneously.”

Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 98.

“You will see... Once you have learned the Gushehs you can change their order... We never play the same thing twice... You must listen to the nightingale; it does not repeat itself.”

Bruno Nettl, “On Learning the Radif and Improvisation in Iran,” in *Musical Improvisation: Art, Education, and Society*, ed. Gabriel Solis and Bruno Nettl (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009) in quotation from master Nur-Ali Borumand, 185.

## Chapter Five – Incorporating Persian Music Performance Practices into Selected Compositions for Classical Guitar

In this chapter, I map out how I have applied Persian music performance practices to selected pieces for the classical guitar composed by Mehrdad Pakbaz, Dusan Bogdanovic, Carlo Domeniconi, and to an original composition *Le Yarei* that I have written for flute and guitar.

### 5. 1. *Khorasani* by Mehrdad Pakbaz

#### 5. 1. 1. Ornamentation

As discussed in Chapter 3, use of *eshareh* specifically suits downward motion passages moving towards an open string. This gesture is found frequently in *Khorasani*. Figures 5-1 to 5-4 illustrate some examples from *Khorasani* where *eshareh* can be used.

Figures 5-1 and 5-2: *Khorasani*, bars 38-43

Notated version

The image displays two staves of musical notation for the piece *Khorasani*, bars 38-43. The notation is in G minor (one flat) and 4/4 time. The first staff, starting at bar 38, is marked *a tempo* and *mf*. It features a descending eighth-note scale with various ornaments (accents and slurs) above the notes. The second staff, starting at bar 42, continues the descending scale and includes specific fingering instructions: II, III, VIII, and V. The notation is presented as a notated version of the original score, illustrating the application of Persian music performance practices like *eshareh*.

Version performed with added downward *esharehs* (Recital: from 01:11:43 to 01:11:52)



Figures 5-3 and 5-4: *Khorasani*, bar 50

Notated version



Version performed with added downward *eshareh* (Recital: 01:12:02)



A feature associated with the techniques of Persian plucked string instruments to be considered in the execution of ornaments in *Khorasani* is the position of left index finger in relation to other fingers on the fretboard. Since Persian melodies do not require long leaps and extreme position changes, it is common that on Persian instruments the left index finger (the hand responsible for the fretting) mostly remains on the fretboard to support other fingers. While there are differences in the neck thickness and width between the two types of instruments, the same technique can be used on the guitar, when technically possible, to imitate the agility and lightness in the execution of slurs heard in the recordings of Persian music. A change in the left-hand angle or even in the posture – holding the guitar on the right lap (for right hand players) – can provide the performer with more flexibility to experiment with such technique. The change might seem problematic for the left-hand due to the complexity of the polyphonic

passages. For this reason, an adjustment in the fingering can be considered. It must be noted that on Persian stringed instruments, the left ring and little finger are mostly used together as one finger. Performers regularly use either the ring or the little finger actively in passages. When using the little finger, the ring finger lands on the lower fret. The two fingers never collaborate. This manner significantly facilitates performing slurs and ornaments.

### 5. 1. 2. Phrasing and Articulation

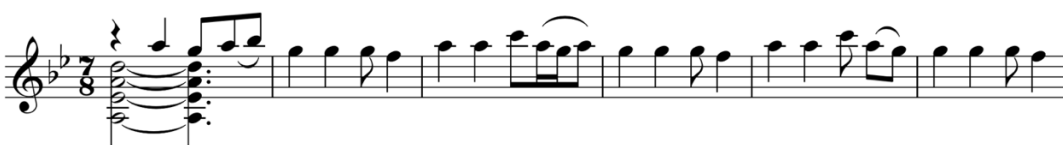
The melodic variations suggested by Pakbaz in his recording of *Khorasani* can be combined or replaced with further versions. For example, the single-string passage which alludes to the single-string effect on the setar (playing without use of drone) from bar 24 to 26, is played differently in the recording (00'33"-00'40"). The number of repeats is also different between the recording and notated version. Figures 5-5 and 5-6 illustrate these differences.

Figures 5-5 and 5-6: *Khorasani*, bars 23, 26

#### Notated version



#### Pakbaz's Recorded version, 00'33"-00'40"



Other possible versions can also be:

**Figures 5-7 and 5-8: bar 25, suggested versions**

**Version 1 (Version performed) (Recital: 01:11:22)**



**Version 2**



Other locations in the score in which motifs might be altered through a similar improvisatory approach are presented below:

**Figures 5-9 to 5-12: *Khorasani*, bars 75-76**

**Notated Version**



**Bar 75: Alternative version**



**Bar 76: Alternative version 1**



**Bar 76: Alternative version 2**



**5. 1. 3. Use of the Lower Open Strings as Drone**

In terms of right-hand techniques, upward consecutive and spontaneous strums used by Pakbaz in his recording can be considered wherever technically possible, with the aim to liberally touch a variable number of the lower open strings at the performer's discretion. As illustrated in figure 5-13, in the notated version, Pakbaz suggests an alternation between the index and the middle fingers when strumming upwards. One could also execute those passages by using only one finger as it is used on the setar.

**Figure 5-13: *Khorasani*, bar 86**



In other occasions, use of downward strums and/or broken chords can be applied.

## 5. 2. *Nava* by Mehrdad Pakbaz<sup>1</sup>

There are numerous direct references to Persian repertoire in Pakbaz's *Nava* that are ripe for stylisation. All three movements of the piece, *Nasim*, *Neyshabourak*, and *Kereshmeh*, contain melodic material in the Persian mode of *Nava* and/or quotations from the *dastgah* of *Nava* in the Persian classical music repertoire *radif*. Apart from a one-off microtone in the main theme at the opening of the first movement and its recapitulation at the end of the third movement, all of the modal references are presented with tempered intervals.

### 5. 2. 1. *Nasim*

As illustrated in figure 5-16, the first tetrachord of the mode of *Nava* contains a microtonal interval. At the beginning of the first movement, *Nasim*, Pakbaz introduces the mode of *Nava* and its opening interval which is slightly larger than a half step, suggesting the technique of bending to produce the note E *koron* (See figure 5-15). This theme reappears later at the end of the third movement.

Figure 5-14: Two tetrachords of the mode of *Nava* used in *Nasim*

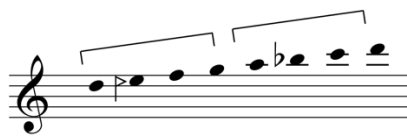


Figure 5-15: *Nasim*, opening



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<sup>1</sup> This piece is yet unpublished. I received the score directly from the composer and have permission to perform it. Based on the manuscript, the first movement is written in 2008. There is no recording of this piece. However, Pakbaz has performed it in his concerts. I personally watched him performing this piece at Avini Hall, The University of Tehran, in 2011.

*Nasim* does not refer to a specific theme in Persian *radif* but there are melodic gestures and rhythmic ideas throughout the piece that echo Persian melodies. For example, a phrase from bar 54 to bar 61 (figure 5-16), introducing the second tetrachord of the *Nava* mode, is reminiscent of the rhythmically fast instrumental pieces in Persian music, *Zarbi*, *Chahar-Mezrab*, and *Reng*.

Figure 5-16: *Nasim*, bars 54-61



Figures 5-17 to 5-19 illustrate a comparison between *Reng-e Nava* and the aforementioned theme.

Figure 5-17: A simplified notation of the theme in *Nasim*, bars 54-61

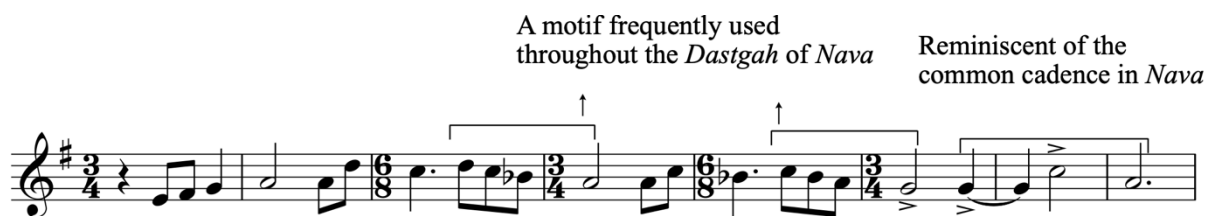


Figure 5-18: *Reng-e Nava*, ending, Talai's notation of the *radif* of Mirza Abdullah Farahani



Figure 5-19: *Reng-e Nava*, ending, performed by Borumand



This theme reappears three times during the piece: once as a sudden modulation to a half step higher (bar 100 to bar 105); once, as shown in figure 5-20, a minor sixth lower; and once as an exact repetition in the recapitulation.

Figure 5-20: *Nasim*, bars 131-137



Use of accents and staccatos in these phrases will later be discussed in the section on articulation and phrase ending in *Nasim*.

### 5. 2. 1. 1. Tempo/Rhythm/Ornamentation

The slow section of *Nasim* provides a contrasting tempo in the middle of the piece which alludes to the transition between measured and unmeasured sections in *radif*. In my recording I use extreme tempo rubato and ornamentation in this section to emphasise the contrast and to create an improvisatory atmosphere. As ideas from the fast section reappear in the slow section, melodic variations are also explored as a way of presenting similar melodies in different ways. Sequential passages are key sites for this kind of exploration in my recording. Figure 5-22 illustrates one of numerous possible versions of the slow section, including slight rhythmic variations (bars 123 and 127), the addition of grace notes (bars 112, 129, 131, 133, 135, 137, 138, 140, and 141), and the use of downward *eshareh* (bars 122, 124, 126, and 134). While the recorded version of the work submitted with this thesis does not enact all of the melody modifications mapped out in Figure 5-22, it does capture the spirit of this map.

Figures 5-21 and 5-22: *Nasim*, bars 109 - 145

Notated version

etwas Langsamer

116

123

130

136

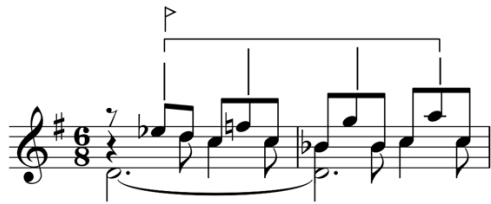
141 rit.



or a microtonal guitar.<sup>1</sup> Figures 5-23 to 5-29 contain examples of passages in *Nasim* compared to the first tetrachord of *Nava*.

**Figures 5-23 to 5-29: Tempered mode of *Nava* in Passages from *Nasim***

**Figure 5-23, Bars 17-18**



**Figure 5-24, Tetrachord used**



**Figure 5-25, Bars 25-26**



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<sup>1</sup> In her recording of “*Gozar: Calligraphy no. 5*” by Reza Vali, in the album, *Hemisphere*, Lily Afshar used additional frets to produce the microtonal intervals. In Turkey, microtonal and fretless guitar has been in use for a few decades to perform Turkish *Maqams*.

Lily Afshar, “*Gozar: Calligraphy no. 5*,” on *Hemispheres*, Archer Records, 2006, compact disc.

“Erkan Ogur,” *RootsWorld*, accessed August 23, 2021,

<https://web.archive.org/web/20070106065310/http://www.rootsworld.com/interview/ogur.html>.

Figure 5-26, Bars 31-32



Figure 5-27, Bars 43-44

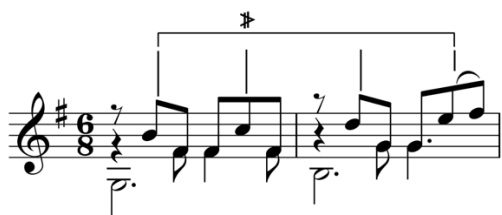


Figure 5-28, Bars 49-50

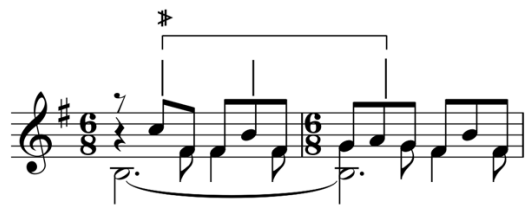


Figure 5-29, Tetrachord used



As the piece begins, the *Nava* mode is introduced with the starting note of D, followed by E *koron*. A slightly sharper C note in figures 5-25 to 5-28 would adjust the tetrachord to the *Nava* mode.

### 5. 2. 1. 2. 2. Accented and staccato phrase endings

Applying articulation ideas inspired by recordings of Persian music is less problematic in this work than finding space for the use of microtones. A gesture frequently heard in recordings of Persian *radif* is the use of staccato and accent on the last note of a phrases, especially in measured pieces. As shown in figure 5-31, this approach can be used to conclude the main theme of *Nasim*.

Figures 5-30 and 5-31: *Nasim*, bars 5-12

#### Notated version



Version performed (Recital: from 00:56:12 to 00:56:24) (Also in recap in *Kereshmeh* from 01:08:26 to 01:08:52)



In this example, a change in the long note at the end of the phrase makes this articulation clear. Other examples of where this articulation is used can be found in bars 16, 54, and 100.

Inspired by the specific articulations attached to the melodies in Persian music, Pakbaz himself has notated articulation signs, including accents and slurs, in particular passages of *Nasim*. As illustrated in figures 5-32 and 5-33, Pakbaz uses accents in bars 59 and 60 in the ending of a phrase similar to the ending of *Reng* in the *dastgah* of *Nava*, emphasising the last three melodic notes of the phrase.

Figure 5-32: *Nasim*, bars 59-60



Figure 5-33: *Dastgah* of *Nava*, *Reng*, ending, *radif* of Mirza Abdollah, performed by Borumand<sup>1</sup>



A similar approach can also be used in bars 104 and 136 where the same motif appears in transposed versions (See figures 5-34 and 5-35).

Figures 5-34 and 5-35: *Nasim*, suggested articulation

Bar 104



Bar 136



<sup>1</sup> Nur- 'Ali, Borumand, "Dastgah-e Nava, Reng-e Nava," Track 21 on *The Radif of Mirza Abdollah for the Tar and Setar*, CD 5, Mahoor, 2006, compact disc.

### 5. 2. 1. 2. 3. Legato playing: Use of Slurs

Another characteristic feature of Persian music performance, legato playing, can also be applied to certain passages of *Nasim*. It is not technically possible to use all of the instrumental effects used on Persian instruments (use of *riz*, plucking of lower open strings, and limitless ornamentation) to reach a sense of legato playing in the performance of *Nasim*. Yet legato is attainable through the use of slurs in certain passages to create flow in the melody. Pakbaz has indicated use of slurs in the notation of specific motifs. As illustrated in figures 5-36 to 5-39, there are other occasions where more slurs can be added.

Figures 5-36 and 5-37: *Nasim*, bar 26

Notated version



Version performed (Recital: 00:56:36)



Figures 5-38 and 5-39: *Nasim*, bar 34

Notated version



## Alternative Version



As shown in figure 5-39, the highest voice has been cut short to make it possible to perform the intended articulation. I have chosen to articulate similar passages in the same way throughout my performance.

### 5. 2. 2. *Neyshabourak*

The second movement of *Nava* is based on melodic ideas from the unmeasured *gusheh* of *Neyshabourak* in *radif*. This is a polyphonic slow movement with an ostinato bass. The *gusheh* of *Neyshabourak* contains a characteristic melodic motif and is performed in the two *dastgahs* of *Nava* and *Mahur* (See figures 5-40 and 5-41).

Figures 5-40 and 5-41: Main motif of *Neyshabourak*, *radif* of Mirza Abdollah, notated by Talai

#### *Dastgah* of *Nava*<sup>1</sup>



#### *Dastgah* of *Mahur*<sup>2</sup>



As illustrated in figures 5-42 and 5-43, this *gusheh* and its characteristic motif appear differently not only in different *dastgahs*, but also in different versions of *radif*.

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<sup>1</sup> Talai, *Radif Analysis*, 218.

<sup>2</sup> Talai, *Radif Analysis*, 389.

Figures 5-42 and 5-43: *Nayshabourak*, opening, *dastgah* of *Nava*

*Radif* of Mirza Abdollah Farahani, notated by Talai<sup>1</sup>



*Radif* of Musa Marufi<sup>2</sup>



The representation of melodic material is always slightly different between existing recordings and notated versions since phrases, motifs, and even individual notes bear changes in the process of repetition during the performance.

Apart from references to particular parts of the motif throughout Pakbaz's piece, the complete motif of *Neyshabourak* appears four times in the same figuration throughout Pakbaz's work. Inspired by the myriad ways the motif is presented in the *radif*, in figure 5-45, I have provided an alternative version for the section containing ornamentation and rhythmic variations based on the existing versions of the motif in *radif* and my survey of recordings. This version is used alternatively with the notated version in the presentations of the motif in my recording.

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<sup>1</sup> Talai, *Radif Analysis*, 218.

<sup>2</sup> Marufi and Barkeshli, *Radif-e Haft Dastgah-e Musiqi-e Irani*, Dastgah-e - Nava, 12.

Figures 5-44 and 5-45: Mehrdad Pakbaz, *Neyshabourak*, bars 17-19

Notated version



Version performed, with ornamentation and melodic variation (Recital: From 01:01:51 to 01:02:04. Also, from 01:03:12 to 01:03:25)



Similarly, a number of repeated motifs and phrases also appear in this movement which provide additional possibilities for ornamentation and melodic variation.

### 5. 2. 3. *Kereshmeh*

This movement is based on the rhythmic yet unmeasured *gusheh* of *Kereshmeh*. This *gusheh* with its distinct rhythmic character, a combination of 6/8 and 3/4, appears in multiple *dastgahs* (See the overview of the *gusheh Kereshmeh* in Chapter 1.)

#### 5. 2. 3. 1. Rhythm

The rhythmic figure of *Kereshmeh* appears frequently throughout this movement. As detailed in the survey of recordings presented in Chapter Three, rhythmic presentations of *Kereshmeh* are subject to different interpretations. As illustrated in figures 5-46 and 5-47 (two versions of *Kereshmeh* presented in the *radif* of Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani performed by Shahnazi), the short components of the rhythm are occasionally played shorter than a quaver.

Figures 5-46 and 5-47: *Kereshmeh*, *dastgah* of *Shur*, *radif* of Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli, performed by Shahnazi<sup>1</sup>

*Kereshmeh I*



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<sup>1</sup> Ali-Akbar Shahnazi, "Dastgah-e Shur, Kereshmeh," Track 4 on *The Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Radif, CD 1*, Tehran: Mahoor, 2003, compact disc.

## Kereshmeh II<sup>1</sup>



Accordingly, in my recording of the third movement of the piece *Nava*, I apply the same rhythmic change to the notated version of the motifs. Figures 5-48 and 5-49 illustrate an example of this approach.

Figures 5-48 and 5-49: *Nava* by M. Pakbaz, III. *Kereshmeh*, bars 9-12

### Notated Version



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<sup>1</sup> Ali-Akbar Shahnazi, "Dastgah-e Shur, Kereshmeh-ye Payin Dasteh," Track 22 on *The Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Radif, CD 1*, Tehran: Mahoor, 2003, compact disc.

### Alternative version with rhythmic variation



A similar rhythmic modification can be applied to the short, slow, contrasting section in the middle of this movement. To emphasise the contrast between the two sections, I perform the slow section as a semi-improvisatory piece with extreme tempo rubato inspired by the semi-measured pieces in *radif*. I also apply rhythmic alteration by performing short notes shorter and sustaining the long notes longer than their indicative notation. Through extensive use of slurs on the fast notes and alternating cross-string fingering I infuse the melodies in the work with a sense of flow. I also roll the chords slowly, in order to avoid silence between phrases (See figures 5-50 and 5-51).

Figures 5-50 and 5-51: *Nava* by M. Pakbaz, III. *Kereshmeh*, bars 100-109

### Notated version

Musical notation for the notated version of the piece. It consists of two staves. The first staff is in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 4/4 time signature. It begins with a dynamic marking of *f* and contains several measures of music with slurs and accents. The second staff starts at measure 105 and continues with a key signature change to two sharps (F#, C#) and a 3/4 time signature. It includes a fingering '5' above a note and dynamic markings of *f* and *mf* with slurs indicating phrasing.

Version Performed (Recital: From 01:06:17 to 01:06:56)

The image shows a musical score for three staves in G major. The first staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and contains a melodic line with slurs and ties. The second staff continues the melody and includes a five-measure phrase. The third staff features a five-measure arpeggiated figure and concludes with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

### 5. 2. 3. 2. Phrasing and Articulation

#### 5. 2. 3. 2. 1. Accents

As illustrated in figures 5-52 to 5-54, in the traditional performances of *Kereshmeh* in *radif*, particular beats are emphasised.

Figures 5-52 to 5-54: *Kereshmeh* in *radif*

*Dastgah* of *Nava*, *radif* of Mirza Abdollah, performed by Borumand<sup>1</sup>



*Dastgah* of *Chahargah*, *radif* of Mirza Abdollah, performed by Borumand<sup>2</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> Nur- 'Ali Borumand, "Dastgah-e Nava, Kereshmeh," Track 4 on *The Radif of Mirza Abdollah for the Tar and Setar*, CD 5, Mahoor, 2006, compact disc.

<sup>2</sup> Nur- 'Ali Borumand, "Dastgah-e Chahargah, Kereshme," Track 27 on *The Radif of Mirza Abdollah for the Tar and Setar*, CD 3, Mahoor, 2006, compact disc.

*Kereshmeh ba Muyeh, dastgah of Segah, radif of Mirza Abdollah, performed by Borumand<sup>1</sup>*



It is mentioned in the literature that any adoption of the free melodies of Persian music to a measured frame would result in unnecessary accents.<sup>2</sup> However, as illustrated in figure 5-55, the notation of *Kereshmeh* by Pakbaz suggests a different approach to phrasing. Here the stronger part of the rhythmic figure of *Kereshmeh* is located on the second beat of the 3/4 time signature. This can lead to a different interpretation of the rhythm.

Figure 5-55: Pakbaz, *Nava*, III. *Kereshmeh*, bars 9-14



<sup>1</sup> Nur- 'Ali Borumand, "Dastgah-e Segah, Kereshme ba Muye," Track 5 on *The Radif of Mirza Abdollah for the Tar and Setar*, CD 3, Mahoor, 2006, compact disc.

<sup>2</sup> Vaziri, *Theori-e Musighi*, 91-92.

In my recording of *Kereshmeh*, I emphasise the second beats of the 3/4 bars to align with the accents uncovered in my survey of Persian music recordings.

### 5. 2. 3. 2. 2. Use of Microtones

Understanding the modal references at play in this composition will also allow to explore the inclusion of microtonal intervals. For instance, in figure 5-56, the note C (bar 9), as the second note of the first tetrachord of *Nava* (starting on B), can be slightly raised to produce a microtonal interval that more precisely reflects Persian performance practice.<sup>1</sup> Technical solutions to achieving this result include bending the C note or the addition of extra frets. The latter is more suitable in this context due to the fast tempo and the polyphonic texture of the movement.

Figure 5-56: Pakbaz, *Nava*, III. *Kereshmeh*, motif of *Kereshmeh*, bars 9-10



### 5. 2. 3. 2. 3. Use of lower Open Strings

In a short passage from bar 57 to bar 62, illustrated in figure 5-57, the open string accompanies the melody producing an effect similar to the technique of Persian plucked string instruments. Use of continuous downward strums, a technique used by the composer in his recording of *Khorasani*, suits the passage both technically and musically. By using this technique, I open up space for plucking the B string spontaneously, even in places where this is not indicated.

<sup>1</sup> Same as in many parts of *Nasim*, the first tetrachord of *Nava* used in this movement begins with B as follows:



Figure 5-57: Pakbaz, *Nava*, III. *Kereshmeh*, bars 57-62



### 5. 3. Five Persian Miniatures by Dusan Bogdanovic

Numerous works by Serbian American guitarist and composer, Dusan Bogdanovic contain elements of various cultural sources including Persian music, making him one of the few internationally acclaimed composers ever composed for the classical guitar based on Persian music. Among his works inspired by Persian music are *Passacaglia and Fugue for the Golden Flower* (1985), *Omar's Fancy* (1994), and *Five Persian Miniatures* (2010).<sup>1</sup> Bogdanovic's music is not limited to the musical ideas borrowed from other cultures but requires certain performing techniques associated with folk music instruments. In the only recording of the *Five Persian Miniatures* made by Persian guitarist, Golfam Khayam, the piece is described as a "free expression of the composer's inspiration with Persian music".<sup>2</sup> Bogdanovic himself believes:

For a composer it is not necessary to know an ethnomusicological subject to the level of expertise of a professional ethnomusicologist: what is necessary is the extent of mastery required by the kind of structure he intends in his work.<sup>3</sup>

*Five Persian Miniatures* contain elements from the music of south-eastern Iran, Baluchistan, in addition to the modal references to Persian classical music. According to Darvishi in the *Encyclopedia of the Musical Instruments of Iran* (2001), plucked string instruments of Baluchistan, rubab, tambourak, and benjo, share techniques such as *riz* and *dorrab* with Persian classical instruments.<sup>4</sup> However, use of these techniques is limited due to the simplicity and limitation of Balouchi instruments.<sup>5</sup> Left-hand techniques such as vibrato, glissando, and slurs are even more limited on these instruments.<sup>6</sup> Overall, the existence of sympathetic strings on

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<sup>1</sup> "Published Works," Dusan Bogdanovic's Official Website, accessed October 5, 2022, <https://www.dusanbogdanovic.com/publish.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Bogdanovic himself describes the pieces as "very much inspired by Persian music". Bogdanovic, *Ravi*.

<sup>3</sup> Bogdanovic and Bouvier, *Tradition and Synthesis*, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Mohammad Reza Darvishi, *Encyclopedia of the Musical Instruments of Iran, Vol 1: Chordophones in Regional Music* (Tehran: Mahoor, 2001), 84 and 92.

<sup>5</sup> Rubab has 3 to 5 frets and the fretted Tambourak has 5 or 6 frets. Darvishi, *Encyclopedia of the Musical Instruments of Iran*, 79 and 100.

<sup>6</sup> Darvishi, *Encyclopedia of the Musical Instruments of Iran*, 85.

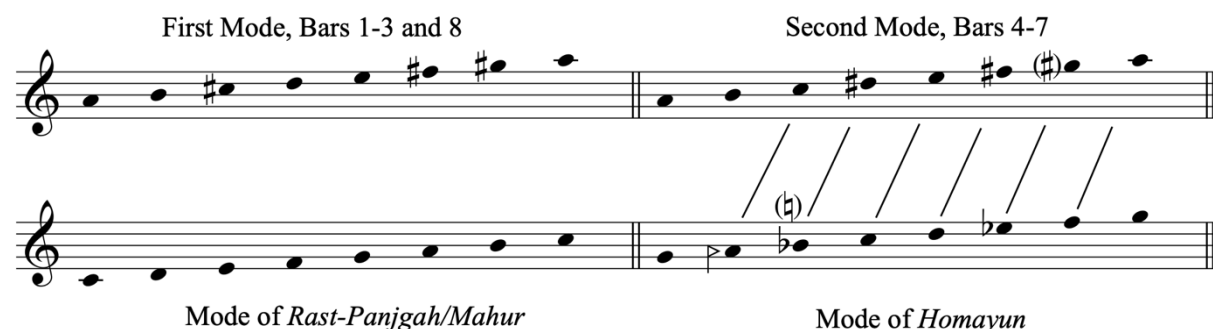
Balouchi instruments, and the function of instruments like fretless Tamburak, which is used only as an accompanying voice without any fingering on the fretboard, suggest a more continuous quality in the sonority of string instruments of Baluchistan in comparison to Persian classical music instruments, resulting in a Campanella-like effect in the phrasing of melodies.<sup>1</sup>

### 5. 3. 1. Improvisation

Three of Bogdanovic’s five *Miniatures* include sections for improvisation. I therefore begin my discussion of stylisation with an overview of how I conceptualised my approach to improvisation in these sections before outlining other performance choices I have made.

Bogdanovic’s suggested modes for improvisation in the *Miniatures* are similar, but not the same, as Persian modes. Figure 5-58 illustrates a resemblance between some Persian modes and the modes suggested by Bogdanovic for improvisation in the first *Miniature*.

Figure 5-58: Bogdanovic’s suggested modes compared to Persian modes



Considering Western definitions of improvisation, “the creation of music in the course of performance”<sup>2</sup>, “a performance according to the inventive whim of the moment, i. e. without a written or printed score, and not from memory”<sup>3</sup>, “to invent...from...imagination, rather than planning or preparing it first”<sup>4</sup>, Persian music should be cautiously labelled as improvised. It

<sup>1</sup> Darvishi explains three functions for fretless Tambourak in Balouchi ensembles: 1. Providing continuous rhythmic patterns, 2. Emphasising tonal centre by repeating the most important note of the mode, and 3. thickening the texture of the music.

Darvishi, *Encyclopedia of the Musical Instruments of Iran*, 99.

The Campanella affects is produced when the notes of a single melodic line ring over each other. I used this technique in some phrases of *Five Persian Miniatures*, for example, in the introduction to the first and the th movements.

<sup>2</sup> Nettl, “On Learning the Radif and Improvisation in Iran,” 186.

<sup>3</sup> Michael Kennedy, *Oxford Dictionary of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 428.

<sup>4</sup> “Improvise,” Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, accessed, April 21, 2020, [https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/improvise#improvise\\_\\_4](https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/improvise#improvise__4).

is not creation, but recreation, or recall. It is based on the performers' memory of *radif* or other traditional set pieces. It is planned and has a specific form. Therefore, a combination of different words and concepts perhaps better describe the nature of performance in Persian music: composition/ performance/improvisation.<sup>1</sup> Persian performers always have an idea of what they are aiming for in improvisation – a basis for improvisation must exist in every improvisation session. In fact, if the music performed by a Persian musician has nothing to do with the traditional repertoire, *radif*, it would be considered “rootless”<sup>2</sup>.

In a discussion of improvisation in Persian music, Zonis points to three improvisatory arenas in converting *radif* to performance: repetition, ornamentation, and centonisation “or the joining together of recognizable motives”.<sup>3</sup> These three arenas provide numerous possibilities for realising familiar material in new and inventive ways. Every repetition of a phrase or motif is an opportunity for improvisation.

On the other hand, Nettle's work highlights the importance of both variety *and* unity in his discussion of performance practices in Persian music. In Nettle's view, factors uniting different parts of *radif* as a whole include: the way that similar motifs exist in different *dastgahs*, techniques of melodic expansion, and the ascending manner of changing the central tone in the tetrachords. On the other hand, he considers the pitch range, modal system, *gushehs*' different functions, etc., as factors that contribute to variety within the framework of *radif*. By pointing out both regularity and idiosyncrasy, Nettle frames Persian music as idiosyncratic phenomena “within... certain regularities”.<sup>4</sup> This is an aesthetic road map for improvisation in the vein of Persian music making.

*Radif* can serve as a metaphorical well that can be drawn from as performers seek out rhythmic structures, forms, development techniques, and melodic ideas. The melodic presentation and development in the opening of Bogdanovic's first *Miniature*, for example, shows similarities to the concept of *Daramad* in Persian music as an introduction to a set of pieces. These ideas are also repeated later in the fifth *Miniature*. In Persian music, *Daramad* gradually introduces the first tetrachord, the main functional notes, and melodic figures to pave the way for the following *gushehs*. Figure 5-59 presents a transcription of the *gusheh* of *Daramad* in the *dastgah* of *Rast Panjgah*, performed by Borumand. The main mode in the introduction of the *Five Persian Miniatures* is similar to the mode introduced in this *gusheh* from *radif*.

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<sup>1</sup> Nooshin comprehensively discusses concepts of composition, improvisation, and performance in her PhD thesis (32-51). She believes:

All music is thus a combination of varying degrees of traditional or pre-determined elements on the one hand, and spontaneous elements on the other, and the distinction between “creation” and “recreation” becomes blurred – in a sense, all creation is re-creation.

Nooshin, “The Process of Creation and Recreation in Persian Classical Music,” 39.

<sup>2</sup> Nettle, “On Learning the Radif and Improvisation in Iran,” 194.

<sup>3</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 14, 98, 109, 127.

<sup>4</sup> Nettle, *The Radif of Persian Music*, 39-49.

Figure 5-59: *Daramad of Rast-Panjgah, radif of Mirza Abdollah, performed by Borumand*<sup>1</sup>

## Rast-Panjgah: Daramad

Performed by Nur-Ali Borumand  
1975

A4: 440 Hz

♩ = 70

(*appoggiatura*) (accel.) (a tempo) (allarg.)

*mf*

(development by repetition of the last motif of the phrase) (accel.) (a tempo) (appoggiatura)

*cresc.* 3 3 3 3 *mf*

(development by repetition) (development) u, d d u d

*mf*

(allarg.) (a tempo) (repetition) (appoggiatura) (accel.) (a tempo)

(accel.) (a tempo) (accel.) vib. (allarg.) (repetition) u u u

(accel.) rit. (appoggiatura), (appoggiatura)

<sup>1</sup> Nur- 'Ali Borumand, "Dastgah-e Rast-Panjgah, Daramad-e avval – Rast," Track 22 on *The Radif of Mirza Abdollah for the Tar and Setar*, CD 5, Mahoor, 2006, compact disc.

Listed below are features presented in this performance that I have in turn used as a model for my improvisations in the *Miniatures*.

1. Modal material is the tetrachord, not the scale.
2. The mode is introduced step by step by addition of short units or cells.
3. There is a direction in the melody to gradually reach the highest note of the register, *Owj* (D). The piece then ends the same way it began, on F.
4. The tonic, or the most important note of the mode, is emphasised by repetition.
5. The short and long notes do not always have the exact ratio of 2 to 1.
6. Absence of measurement
7. Absence of silence
8. Limited dynamic range
9. Use of repetition as an important tool for material development
10. Extreme use of tempo rubato

Using this recording as a model, I also referenced in my improvisations melodic ideas from the *dastgah* of *Rast-Panjgah* with material from Bogdanovic's notated versions and suggested modes. I limited use of accompanying material to create a homophonic atmosphere in these performances. The introduction of *Miniature no. 1, Flower Promenade*, and a sketch of ideas I drew on in my improvisation are presented below in figures 5-60 and 5-61.

Figure 5-60: Dusan Bogdanovic, *Miniature no. 1, Flower Promenade*, bars 1-8<sup>1</sup>

Ad lib.

art.

*mp*

3

5

12

gliss.

art. 7 1

bend

5

gliss.

*mf*

7

5

<sup>1</sup> Dusan Bogdanovic, *Five Persian Miniatures*, (Levis, Quebec: Doberman-Yppan, 2011), 4.

Figure 5-61: *Miniature no. 1, Flower Promenade*, improvisation plan (Recital: from 00:23:36 to 00:26:57)

# Flower Promenade

## Improvisation Plan

Harm. *p* *accel.* *rit.*

*p* *f* *f*

Nat.

Harm. *p cresc.* *f*

Bogdanovic's Bars 1-3

Nat. *mp* *f*

Bogdanovic, Bar 1 | Bogdanovic's Bars 4-5

Improvisation on Bogdanovic's bars 6-7:

Repeat ad lib using E as drone *accel.*

Bend all the main notes in the serie

Repeat ad lib Using E as drone *accel.*

Improvise on the tetrachord (C, #D, E, #F) alternating with the B note based on the example *accel.* *rit.*

Harm. Nat.

(Bogdanovic's Bar 8)

In the third *Miniature* which requires repetition of the entire improvisatory section, I first presented a performance of the notated version and then performed an improvisatory version based on the modal suggestions made by the composer and ideas I have drawn out of performances of Persian traditional repertoire. In the introduction to the *Miniature no. 5*, I improvised based on the modal and melodic ideas in the notation with minimal use of the notated material. Plucked the lower open strings as a drone frequently and used the effect of Campanella and glissando to resemble the Baluchi rubab. The first five bars of *Miniature no. 3, A Page from a Sonnet*, and the introduction of *Miniature no. 5, Bird and Flower* along with my sketches for improvisation in the two movements are illustrated in figures 5-62 to 5-65.

Figure 5-62: Dusan Bogdanovic, *Miniature no. 3, A Page from a Sonnet*, bars 1-5<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bogdanovic, *Five Persian Miniatures*, 8.



Figure 5-64: Dusan Bogdanovic, *Miniature no. 5, Bird and Flower*, bars 1-7<sup>1</sup>

Ad lib.

5 = G

*mp*

*mf*

*mf*

*allargando*

*gliss.*

*art.*

*bend*

<sup>1</sup> Bogdanovic, *Five Persian Miniatures*, 12.

Figure 5-65: *Miniature no. 5, Bird and Flower*, improvisation plan (Recital: From 00:36:12 to 00:38:26)

### Bird and Flower

#### Improvisation Plan

The musical score for 'Bird and Flower' is presented as an improvisation plan. It consists of four horizontal sections of music on a single treble clef staff. The first section is labeled 'Improvise' and shows a sequence of notes. The second section is also labeled 'Improvise' and includes the instruction 'Use D as drone' with a circled '3' above the notes. The third section is more complex, with multiple instructions: 'Improvise XII 4 3', 'Improvise using D and G as drone', 'Bend', 'Improvise XII 5 4 3', and 'Improvise using Campanella effect'. The fourth section is labeled 'Use D as drone' and 'Use A as drone' and includes the text 'Bogdanovic's Bar 5' and 'Bogdanovic's bar 1' above the notes. The notes are decorated with various ornaments and fingerings.

### 5. 3. 2. Rhythm

In addition to the introductory sections of the first and the fifth variations which are written as *Ad lib.*, there are numerous possibilities throughout the *Miniatures* to adopt a loose approach to rhythm that might echo the unmeasured melodies of Persian music. *Miniature no. 2, Rubab Player*, with a percussive ostinato on the bass line alludes to the *dohol* and *sorna* ensemble common in the dance music of various parts of Iran, including Baluchistan. In such ensembles, while *dohol* performs a fixed basic rhythmic pattern, the melodic instrument, *sorna*, plays complex embellished melodies. Bogdanovic has applied this texture in *Miniature no. 2*. The exact rhythmic formulae are presented by the composer in the notation. However, the rhythmic representation of the melodies in traditional performance practice is usually subject to the performer's choices and therefore are always likely to change. Accordingly, the representation of the melodies in my performance does not exactly match the notated version of the piece. I

have instead embraced an improvisatory interpretation of the rhythm of the melody line, whilst the rhythmic bass is played as indicated in the notation.

The rhythmic presentation of the melodies in *Miniature no. 3, A Page from a Sonnet*, can also be modified to align more specifically with Persian performance practices. Written as Adagio rubato, the notation includes rapid notes which are not exactly indicated in the notation. Together with numerous time signature changes, this movement allows for a rhythmic approach similar to unmeasured pieces in Persian music. In my recording, I have applied rhythmic alterations to repeated groups of notes and do not treat the long and short rhythmic components in these passages as the ratio of 1:2.

The final section of the fourth movement, *The Prince and the Ascetic*, (last 6 bars) where the rhythmic motif of the piece is replaced with a continuous line of semiquavers is another example of a section ripe for experimentation with rhythm. Here a rhythmically freer approach in the performance creates a sense of contrast with the first section and as a result, alludes to the semi-measured pieces of Persian music in which the measured and unmeasured material alternate. Figure 5-67 illustrates an alternative version to the ending of *Miniature no. 4* that I have drawn on for inspiration in my recording of the work.

Figures 5-66 and 5-67: Rhythmic interpretation of *Miniature no. 4*, bars 14 to 19

Notated version

The image displays three staves of musical notation for the final section of *Miniature no. 4*. The first staff begins in 3/4 time with a melody of eighth notes and a bass line of quarter notes, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second staff continues the melody and bass line, featuring a change to 6/8 time. The third staff shows a further change to 4/4 time, marked with a ritardando (*rit.*) dynamic, and concludes with a final cadence. The notation includes various rhythmic markings such as accents, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Version performed (Recital: from 00:35:29 to 00:35:52)

The image shows a musical score for three staves. The first staff begins with an 'accel.' marking, followed by a 'rit.' marking. The second staff features a forte 'f' dynamic marking. The third staff includes another 'rit.' marking and a 'bend' instruction with an upward-pointing arrow above a note. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and phrasing slurs.

### 5. 3. 3. Ornamentation

Some ornamentations such as appoggiaturas and mordents are included in the notation of *Five Persian Miniatures*. In my performance, besides adding extra ornamentation to the melodies whenever possible, I alternate some of the notated ornaments with *eshareh*, as this technique is common in Persian music (Figures 5-68 to 5-76).

Figures 5-68 to 5-76: Ornament alteration in the performance of *Five Persian Miniatures*

*Miniature no. 1, Bar 7*

Notated version

A single staff of music in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The notation shows a sequence of notes with various ornaments, including a mordent and a grace note.

Notated as *eshareh*

A single staff of music in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The notation shows a sequence of notes with 'u u' written above the first two notes, indicating the *eshareh* ornamentation.

**In performance**



**Miniature no. 3, bar 3**

**Notated version**



**Notated as *eshareh***



**In performance**

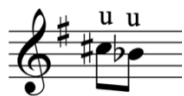


**Miniature no. 5, bar 7**

**Notated version**



Notated as *eshareh*



In performance



In my recording, I also perform some of the melodic lines in a similar manner. In this fashion, in figures including two notes connected with slurs, the second note is performed shorter and softer, and, as a result, sounds like an ornament (*eshareh*). Some Examples are illustrated in figures 5-77 to 5-74.

Figures 5-77 to 5-82: Melodic lines performed as *eshareh*, *Five Persian Miniatures*

*Miniature no. 3, bar 6*

Notated version



Notated as *eshareh*



**In performance**



**Miniature no. 5, bar 4**

**Notated version**



**Notated as *eshareh***



**In performance**



In the third *Miniature*, on occasions where rapid repetition of single notes was needed (Figures 5-83 and 5-84), I performed *riz* by strumming the single string upwards and downwards with my right index finger. In execution of *riz*, I used *accelerando* and *crescendo* to imitate the effect heard frequently in the recordings of Persian music. It should be noted that I improvised based on the composer's written material in my performance of *Miniature no. 3*, therefore, I did not perform the same exact figures indicated below. These figures illustrate the written versions.



### Alternative version



### Bar 14

### Notated version



### Alternative version



## 5. 4. *Nam* by Carlo Domeniconi

Italian guitarist and composer, Carlo Domeniconi, a key figure in contemporary classical guitar, has also experimented with different musical ideas from non-Western sources including Persian music. In his numerous works for solo classical guitar and chamber music, Domeniconi has used elements of Anatolian, Middle Eastern, Indian, and Persian music in pieces such as *Variations on an Anatolian Folk Song*, op. 15 (1982), *Koyunbaba*, op. 19 (1984-5), *Gita*, op. 26 (1986), *Dhavani (Concerto no. 6)*, op. 47 (1990), *Dervish songs*, op. 60 (1993), *Taqsim*, op. 106 (2002), and *Nam*, op. 156 (2009).<sup>1</sup> *Nam*, meaning “name” in Persian, is a suite in four

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<sup>1</sup>“Works,” Carlo Domeniconi’s Official Website, accessed October 5, 2022, <http://www.carlo-domeniconi.com/english/works.html>.





Due to the composers' approach to this modal material, possibilities to apply certain practices into the performance of *Nam* are more subtle compared to the other pieces in my repertoire for my DMA recital. In the following section I explain how I made my performance decisions based on my understanding of Persian music practices discussed in Chapter 3.

### 5. 4. 1. Rhythm

As opportunities for a liberal rhythmic interpretation abound in the slower movements, I have applied rhythmic alterations in the second and the third movements to my recorded performance. These changes mostly target the short motifs in the movements containing long and short notes. In such passages I have performed the long notes longer and the short notes shorter than their indicative notation. Figures 5-97 to 5-100, illustrate two passages from the second movement in which such rhythmic changes are applied.

Figures 5-97 and 5-98: *Nam*, II, bars 37-41

Notated version



Alternative version



Figures 5-99 and 5-100: *Nam*, II, bars 54-55

Notated version



**Alternative version**



I utilise the same approach in the third movement. In the fifth bar, a group of semiquavers are performed as demisemiquavers:

**Figures 5-101 and 5-102: *Nam*, III, bars 5-6**

**Notated version**



**Alternative version**



Another example rhythmic alterations I have pursued is a passage in the same movement containing semiquavers and quavers. Here, I avoid performing all the consecutive short notes in an equal manner:

**Figures 5-103 and 5-104: *Nam*, III, bars 109-111**

**Notated version**



**Alternative version**



**5. 4. 2. Ornamentation**

Possibilities for ornamentation are also abundant in the slower movements. Ornaments used in these movements include mordents, appoggiaturas and *esharehs*. Figures 5-105 to 5-114 illustrate some examples of my approach.

**Figures 5-105 to 5-114: Ornamentation in *Nam***

***Nam* II, bar 1**

**Notated version**



**Alternative version**



***Nam* II, bar 13**

**Notated version**



Version performed (Recital: 00:43:46 and 00:44:40)



*Nam III*, bars 8-9

Notated version

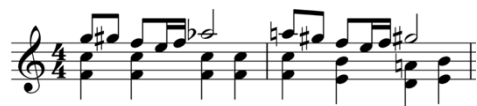


Alternative version

Musical notation for the alternative version of Nam III, bars 8-9. It consists of two staves in 4/4 time. The upper staff shows the melody: a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4 and B4. The second bar begins with a quarter note C5, followed by quarter notes B4 and A4. A vocal accent 'u' is placed above the C5 note. The lower staff shows the bass line: a G4 chord in the first bar and an F4 chord in the second bar.

*Nam III*, bar 36-37

Notated version



Alternative version



*Nam IV*, bars 17-20

Notated Version



Alternative version



### 5. 4. 3. Phrasing and Articulation

A very limited number of articulation signs and absolutely no fingerings are provided in the notation of *Nam*.<sup>1</sup> This leaves much of the phrasing in the work open to interpretation. In my recording, slurs are the most important tool I have used to imbue my performance with a Persian performance aesthetic. In addition to playing the melodies in a “sempre legato” manner by using the natural sustainability of the strings, bass notes are also sustained as much as possible to maintain flow throughout the piece. The following figures illustrate how I have sought to deliver this phrasing strategy in *Nam*.

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<sup>1</sup> In the second movement, accents and staccatos are used in the notation in a four-bar passage from bar 64 to 67. This is the only occasion in the entire piece on which articulation signs are used by the composer.

Figures 5-115 to 5-121: *Nam*, Versions performed, phrases articulated with slurs (Recital: From 00:41:15 to 00:41:29)

*Nam*, I, bars 1-4



*Nam*, I, bars 20-23 (Recital: From 00:42:14 to 00:42:26)



*Nam*, II, bars 12-14 (Recital: From 00:43:43 to 00:43:50)



*Nam*, II, bars 17-20 (Recital: From 00:43:55 to 00:44:06)



*Nam*, III, bars 22-24 (Recital: From 00:47:53 to 00:48:04)



*Nam*, III, bar 44 (Recital: From 00:52:06 to 00:52:10)



*Nam*, IV, bars 6-9 (Recital: From 00:53:00 to 00:53:10)



#### 5. 4. 4. Use of Lower open strings

There are a few occasions on which I have added a layer of accompaniment to the melody lines by plucking or strumming the lower open strings in the two slower movements of *Nam* to create the effect of a drone (See figures 5-122 to 5-131).

Figures 5-122 to 5-131: Use of lower open strings in *Nam*

*Nam* II, bar 13

Notated version



**Alternative version**



***Nam II*, bar 17**

**Notated version**



**Alternative version**



***Nam III*, bar 22**

**Notated version**



**Alternative version**



*Nam III, bar 37*

**Notated version**



**Alternative version**



*Nam III, bar 44*

**Notated version**



**Alternative version**



I have also used strumming techniques associated with Persian plucked string instruments in the fourth movement. Due to technical preferences, in these occasions, I have used upward strums on the treble strings, and downward strums on the bass strings.<sup>1</sup> To make the use of

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<sup>1</sup> Using upward strums on bass strings results in a noise made by the back of nails scratching metallic cover of the string.

strumming possible, I have tried to keep the melody on a single string while using open strings in the lower voice whenever possible (See figure 5-132 and 5-133).<sup>1</sup>

**Figure 5-132: *Nam*, IV, bars 6-15, Fingering decisions and suggested use of strums (Recital: From 00:53:00 to 00:53:28)**



**Figure 5-133: *Nam*, IV, bars 17-20, use of downward strums (Recital: From 00:53:30 to 00:53:37)**



## 5. 5. *Le Yarei* for flute and guitar by Majid Amani

*Le Yarei* is based on a folk song of the Kurmanj people in north-eastern Iran. Kurmanji is a branch of Kurdish language also common in parts of Turkey, Syria, and Iraq.<sup>2</sup> Kurmanji culture shares the two-stringed dotar, as its most important musical instrument, with the neighbouring

<sup>1</sup> I did not change or add any note but tried to use open strings instead of fretted notes in the lower voice.

<sup>2</sup> “Kurmanji Kurdish,” Languages, The University of Arizona, accessed December 15, 2021, <https://iranian-languages.arizona.edu/node/7>

Turkman, and Turkish cultures.<sup>1</sup> Due to such cultural exchanges, Kurmanji musicians are often able to speak and sing in languages other than Farsi (Persian), Iran's official language.

*Le Yarei* uses a modal range similar to the mode of *Shur*, the most common mode in the music of Northern Khorasan.<sup>2</sup> The song is usually performed by *Bakhshies*, dotar players and singers<sup>3</sup>. A dotar has nine fixed frets of half steps, one fret slightly larger than a half step (first fret), and one fret as wide as a full step (last fret). Figure 5-134 illustrates the modal range of the dotar.

**Figure 5-134: Dotar's melodic register**



The two strings of the dotar are tuned in fourths or fifths depending on the mode being performed.<sup>4</sup> The lower string is solely used to accompany the melody and is never used to deliver melodic material. Occasionally, parallel fifths or fourths are created by means of the left thumb. Left hand techniques used on the dotar are similar to the techniques used on the setar and tar, including use of slurs (*kandan*) and *eshareh*. The right hand in turn plays an extremely complex role due to numerous strumming techniques, performed by different finger combinations. This feature enables the performer to create a range of dynamic variations.<sup>5</sup>

The *Le Yarei* song consists of two phrases: The first starts and ends on the third note of the mode (third fret). The second begins in a similar way but ends on the first open string of the dotar, which in turn serves as the main note of the melody. Like many Persian folk songs, the melody of *Le Yarei* is repeated numerous times and is accompanied with different verses each time it repeats. Figure 5-135 illustrates a basic version of the melody.

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<sup>1</sup> Darvishi, *Encyclopedia of the Musical Instruments of Iran*, 151.

<sup>2</sup> Ameneh Youssef Zadeh, *Rameshgaran-e Shomal-e Khorasan*, trans. Alireza Manaf Zadeh (Tehran: Mahoor, 2009) 206.

Modal range is limited in Kurmanji music. In fact, modal development is not a matter of importance in this music as it is in Persian classical music repertoire, *Radif*. The word “*Maqam*” used specifically in the Turkish music of Northern Khorasan also does not fit into its definition in the old treatises on Persian, Arabic, and Turkish music as the modal range. For musicians of North Khorasan, *Maqam* means song and refers to specific fixed melodies. Darvishi, *Encyclopedia of the Musical Instruments of Iran*, 152.

Youssef Zadeh, *Rameshgaran-e Shomal-e Khorasan*, 182.

In Kurmanji music, the word “Hang” (Song) is also used to refer to songs.

<sup>3</sup> Yousof Zadeh *Rameshgaran-e Shomal-e Khorasan*, 56.

<sup>4</sup> Darvishi, *Encyclopedia of the Musical Instruments of Iran*, 153.

<sup>5</sup> Darvishi, *Encyclopedia of the Musical Instruments of Iran*, 159-161.



simple with little difference between repetitions, while the vocal part presents a more sophisticated and varied realisation of the melody (See figure 5-138).

Figure 5-138: *Le Yarei*, performed by Sohrab Mohammadi, opening <sup>1</sup>

**Le Yarei**  
Performed by Sohrab Mohammadi

The musical score for 'Le Yarei' is presented in five staves. The first staff, labeled 'Dotar', begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 2/4 time signature. It starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second staff, labeled 'Vocal', continues the melody with a 3/4 time signature. The third staff, labeled 'Dotar', features a 3/4 time signature and a 2/4 time signature. The fourth staff, labeled 'Vocal', features a 3/4 time signature and a 2/4 time signature. The fifth staff, labeled 'allarg.', features a 3/4 time signature and concludes with a fermata over the final note.

In the performance of my arrangement of *Le Yarei* for flute and guitar, I experimented with bringing the fluidity of the vocal line in Mohammadi's performance into both the flute and guitar parts of the work.

### 5. 5. 1. Rhythm/Ornamentation

In our recording of *Le Yarei*, both the flute and the guitar create different melodic and rhythmic variations on the notated motifs. This is inspired by significant differences between the instrumental and vocal versions of the melody in Sohrab Mohammadi's performance of *Le*

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<sup>1</sup> The notation has been transposed to a half-step higher. Mohammadi performs *Le Yarei* almost a half-step lower.

*Yarei* song. For example, in a section from bar 44 to bar 69, where a melody in the mode of *Shur* is introduced in the flute part, the flute player improvises on the melodic material of the entire section creating numerous rhythmic and melodic variations as well as ornamentations including *eshareh*, appoggiaturas, and mordents. Simultaneously, the guitar part provides accompaniment material by chord blocks creating a rhythmic contrast, as one of the techniques used in Persian ensembles. (See figures 5-139 and 5-140).

Figures 5-139 and 5-140: Majid Amani, *Le Yarei*, bars 44 to 69

Notated version

Flute

Guitar

VII XII *mf*

VII XII *mp* Nat. 1 1

51

Fl.

Gtr.

1 2 1 2 1 2

57

Fl.

Gtr.

1 2 1 2 1 2

63

Fl.

Gtr.

*f* *mf*

4 3 4 *mf*

An alternative version

Fl. *mf*

Gtr. VII XII Nat. *mp*

Fl. 51

Gtr.

Fl. 57

Gtr.

Fl. 63 *f* *mf*

Gtr. *mf*

### 5. 5. 2. Articulation and Phrasing

The guitar section of *Le Yarei* for flute and guitar is written with the continuous resonance of the two strings of the dotar in mind. Therefore, in the notation, I have suggested enormous number of open strings to be used in the left hand fingering. In our recording of *Le Yarei*, I have allowed the open strings to resonate unlimitedly to create the feature of a consistent drone.

This composition is written in a similar mode to the traditional mode of *Shur*. Considering the microtonal interval at the start of the mode of *Shur*, in our recording of *Le Yarei* for flute and guitar, the note F, is frequently played slightly higher than the standard pitch in both the flute and the guitar parts.

## Conclusion

It is highly unrealistic... to make any statement about practice [in Persian music] without qualifying it with terms such as “generally”, “usually”, “the typical”, or “frequently”.<sup>1</sup>

In the quote above, Zonis describes a key challenge in investigating performance practices in Persian music: the fact that idiosyncratic approaches to performance are predominant across the Persian musical world. This challenge is echoed in Nettl’s analysis of performances in the *dastgah* of *Chahargah*. Nettl reports that among his selected performances he found “a tremendous variety of length, themes, procedures, types of development, and structure”.<sup>2</sup> However, he also believed that there were enough factors uniting these divergent performances of Persian music to discern some degrees of unity:

The most characteristic method of development in melody is also a feature that unites most of the performances. It relies on repetition, sequential treatment, and expansion of motifs for its structural features. Typically, a motif may be repeated twice, perhaps at different pitch levels, then expanded, after which a section of the expanded form is subjected to treatment similar to that described for the first motif. This results in the characteristically wave-like intensity curve of the music, with its short stretches of intensification and its large number of minor climaxes...<sup>3</sup>

Understanding the way traditions of practice and individual musical approaches are balanced in Persian music is crucial to understanding the spirit of Persian music performance. These two themes anchor the scholarly literature in the field. The first scholarly works about Persian music in the twentieth century are focused on establishing Persian music’s parameters such as the theory of intervals, modes, and melodic development. Building on this pioneering research came works that explored the relationship between these parameters and the performances of Persian music with a primary focus on the art of improvisation in Persian music. Individual agency is a common ground in these recent studies. This second group of studies are the basis for my research to explore how this significant agency in the nature of Persian music provides various technical possibilities for performers.

In this thesis I have sought to map the various approaches taken by performers to certain elements of performance in order to devise a list of stylistic tools performers might utilise to

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<sup>1</sup> Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, 99.

<sup>2</sup> Bruno Nettl and Bela Foltin, *Daramad of Chahargah: A study in the Performance Practice of Persian Music* (Detroit: Detroit Monographs in Musicology, 1972), 33.

<sup>3</sup> Nettl and Foltin, *Daramad of Chahargah*, 33.

It should be noted that Nettl’s observation has been made in 1971. More transformation might have happened to the treatment of *radif* among current generation of Persian musicians due to more accessibility of recordings, new publications of *radif* and influences from other genres of music. The position of *radif* among contemporary musicians has been thoroughly studied by Nooshin in her multiple publications about Persian music some of which have already been mentioned in this thesis.

introduce a Persian voice into performances of Western music. Given the lack of evidence related to technical decisions in the literature and the tradition, I found that it was necessary to analyse recordings of Persian music in order to provide a practical source to better illuminate my discussion.<sup>1</sup> In my research, I analysed features of performance in selected recordings made by masters of Persian music. I explored the idiosyncrasies in Persian masters' approaches to specific technical features in performances in order to apply my findings into my performance of a selected set of repertoire written for the classical guitar based on Persian music. The recordings considered in my analysis include a range of performances of Persian classical music repertoire, *radif*, from 1905 to 1991. Additionally, I considered technical features in the performances of some Iranian folk music specifically in relation to *Five Persian miniatures* by Dusan Bogdanovic and my own composition for flute and guitar, *Le Yarei*. I analysed and compared different performances' realisation of tuning and tempo, rhythm, dynamics, ornamentation, phrasing and articulation, and the use of lower open strings as drone.

As I set the case studies into three categories of unmeasured, semi-measured and measured pieces, a series of consistent and inconsistent performance practices was what emerged from transcribing these three genres within Persian music. In the performances of *Araq*, as an example for an unmeasured piece, a significant deal of rubato playing by expanding and compressing the motifs was noticed. This technique is also used in the same manner in unmeasured sections of the semi-measured pieces. The use of allargando simultaneously with accented notes and accelerando in alternation is frequently heard in the cadential passages of short notes. *Riz*, the tremolo technique, executed mostly with an accelerando was another common technique heard in the performances of this *gusheh*. Although the structure of the unmeasured pieces allows for more space between the rhythmically freer phrases, Persian musicians do not allow any moment of silence to occur in between the phrases. They use *riz* and other ornamentation and phrasing tools such as glissando and plucking of the lower open strings to sustain the sound throughout their performance.

In the performances of *Chahar-Pareh*, as an example for a semi-measured piece, phrases are well separated by fermatas. Since the pauses between phrases vary in length, they infuse a sense of freedom similar to the rhythmically free melodies of unmeasured pieces. Through the use of accented *dorrab*, which is a brief *riz*, on shorter notes performers put emphasis on certain beats and pitches. These accents vary from performer to performer depending on their interpretation of the rhythm. These short fast *rizes* being used alternately with actual *riz* create a sense of legato throughout most performances of this semi-measured *gusheh*.

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<sup>1</sup> "...details of improvisation, are rarely discussed by musicians, and there is thus very little technical terminology in this area."

Nooshin, "The Process of Creation and Recreation in Persian Classical Music," 134.

And finally, in the performances of *Chahar-Mezrab*, as an example for a fully measured piece, performers mostly avoid tempo rubato and fill open spaces in the melody by plucking the lower open strings or utilising downward *esharehs*. They also interpret the shorter rhythmic motifs in a variety of ways creating rhythmic variations in the repetitions.

In general, while there are few significant changes in quality of dynamics, tone colour, and tempo, Persian music performance traditions allow for more freedom and spontaneity in the interpretation of rhythm, addition of ornaments, use of the lower open string, tuning range, tempo choice, and the alteration of melodic material. The delivery of content of *radif* and the melodic presentation and development in the process of improvisation are matters in which considerable diversity is found between performances. This is reflected in different versions of basically the same pieces which are performed with different sections and/or lengths. Two consistent approaches among most of the case studies analysed in this thesis are accented phrase endings and the continuous use of *riz* on long notes and *eshareh* on the short notes. The type of *eshareh*, seems to depend on the nature of the phrase. The use of *eshareh* is also related to the technique of left hand fingering in Persian string instruments. Although the limitless addition of embellishments seemingly provides an obscure frame for the original melodies, the differences in the quality of tone makes the ornaments distinguishable. In fact, the approach to ornaments executed by the left hand on Persian string instruments is reflected in the terminology by use of the word *eshareh* which means “to mention something briefly”. An important finding in relation to *eshareh* was that both types of *eshareh* -upward and downward - are mostly used in descending passages. (See tables 9 to 13 in appendix 5).

I made my choices in the performance of selected pieces for the classical guitar based on my findings in the literature, notated versions of Persian *radif*, and recordings of Persian masters. In the case of pieces based on direct material from Persian *radif* or folk music, performance possibilities are based upon the existing examples and similar passages from the case studies. Considering the substantial use of lower open strings and inspired by right hand techniques used on Persian plucked string instruments, plucking techniques were adjusted in order to use lower open strings in certain passages. However, the number of possibilities in infusing modern pieces with the aesthetic of Persian music is affected by the structure of instruments and the texture of pieces. Use of microtones, and ornaments such as *riz* and *eshareh*, and use of lower open strings as drone are more practical in monophonic or technically simple homophonic passages. For example, any change in the intonation of the notes on the classical guitar requires a technical compromise due to the limitations the fixed fretting system imposes. Based on my experience in the performance of *Le Yarei*, these challenges are brought to the fore in an ensemble including instruments such as flute or violin with the capability of producing microtones more naturally, because of the differences between the instruments within the ensemble. On the other hand, applying certain dynamics - mostly avoidance of sudden changes

like *subito piano* and *subito forte* – and the flexibility in interpretation of rhythm are features with more possibilities of experimentation.

In my performance of *Khorasani*, I added *eshareh* whenever possible, performed slurs and ornaments lightly, added melodic variations, and used lower open strings as a drone with a downward strum. In the performance of *Nava*, I created rhythmic and melodic variations on the notated motifs, added ornamentation including *eshareh* and grace notes, ended some phrases with an accented staccato, used slurs vastly to create a sense of legato, and interpreted rhythmic figures based on their sources in *radif*. In the performance of *Five Persian Miniatures*, I improvised in a manner inspired by techniques of elaboration in the performances of Persian music. I used tempo rubato vastly and interpreted the rhythm freely, added ornaments including *riz* and *eshareh*, added drone by downward strums, and used the effect of Campanella in some phrases to imitate the sound of rubab, the Baluchi musical instrument. In the performance of *Nam*, I used rhythmic variations, added ornaments, used slurs frequently to create a sense of legato, and occasionally used drone by downward strums. And finally, in the performance of *Le Yarei* for flute and guitar my source of inspiration was a performance by Sohrab Mohammadi, the Kurmanj musician. In our performance, we experimented with bringing the fluidity of the vocal line in Sohrab Mohammadi's performance into both the flute and guitar parts. We interpreted the rhythm freely, added ornaments and used microtones.

I sought to develop a personal and embodied approach to both my repertoire and to the aforementioned techniques through performing them; and in line with the tradition and aesthetic of Persian music, my decisions were informed by the specificity of the moment of performance rather than determined in advance. At times I would change the order of phrases in repetitions (*Nam*), allow dynamic and tempo choices unfold in unplanned ways (*Nava* and *Khorasani*), and use my improvisation plans (illustrated in chapter 5, figures 5-61, 5-63, and 5-65) in a flexible manner: changing the order of ideas and using the material selectively (*Five Persian Miniatures*).

Apart from exploring possibilities in stylising pieces based on Persian music practices, this study of performance practices of Persian music also revealed the close relationship between the performance and the composition as two equal components of the process of music making in Persian music. This is reflected in the rhetoric of Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani, as “what I compose is what I perform.”<sup>1</sup> This narrow border between the performer and the composer's tasks invites the performer to intervene in the process of music making. In this sense even the performer of a fixed composed piece is seen as part of the compositional process. This is what Nooshin sees as “moving from one to another” when discussing the relationship between

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<sup>1</sup> Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani in Laudan Nooshin, “(Re-)Imagining Improvisation: Discursive Positions in Iranian Music from Classical to Jazz” in *Distributed Creativity: Collaboration and Improvisation in Contemporary Music*, Ed. Eric F. Clarke and Mark Doffman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 6.

“learnt repertoire and creative performance”<sup>1</sup>. The significance of the performer’s agency in the recordings analysed, and the aesthetics of Persian music as an improvisatory self-generated genre of music eventually led me to re-think, and therefore, re-create the music in the process of performance. In this way I could practise my individuality in the music and therefore produce a unique version of the piece through a unique experience as an individual. This approach not only benefits and changes the way the performer conceives any piece of music, but also provides the composer with a new world of possibilities when creating a new piece. This is when the borders between composition, improvisation, and performance fade.

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<sup>1</sup> Nooshin, *Iranian Classical Music*, 100-101.

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## **Appendices**

## **Appendix 1: Transcriptions**

# Mahur: Araq

Performed by Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani  
1905

A4: 430 Hz

allarg. accel. a tempo ,

*f* *sempre* *sf*

allarg. a tempo allarg.

*sf*

rit.

a tempo

a tempo

*> mp f*

# Mahur: Araq

Performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza  
(1959)

A4: 474 Hz

gliss.

*f* *sempre* L. H

rit.

a tempo

Vib. L. H

# Mahur: Araq

Performed by Ali-Akbar Shahnazi  
1962

A4: 432 Hz

u u  
*mf*  
*allarg.* *a tempo*  
*mf*  
(Gusheh Nahib)  
dr dr dr dr dr dr dr  
*mp* *accel.* *Meno mosso* *a tempo*  
*subito p* *f*  
u u u  
*gliss.* *rit.*

# Mahur: Araq

Performed by Nur-Ali Borumand  
1975

A4: 420 Hz

*f*  
u u u *rit.* *a tempo*  
*accel.* *rit.* *accel.* *allarg.* *p* *f*  
u u u  
*gliss.* *rit.*  
*a tempo* u u

# Abu'ata: Chahar-Pareh

Performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza  
(1959)

A4: 453 Hz

$\text{♩} = 208$

*mf* < *mf* < *sempre*

*poco dim.* *mf*

*accel.* *allarg.* *a tempo*

*mf*

*accel.* *allarg.* *a tempo*

Articulations: *d*, *u*

The musical score consists of eight staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 2/4 time signature. The melody starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4 and Bb4, and a half note C5. Dynamics include *mf* and *sempre*. Articulations *d* and *u* are present. The second staff continues the melody with similar rhythmic patterns. The third staff features a *poco dim.* marking followed by *mf*. The fourth staff includes *accel.* and *allarg.* markings with a series of eighth notes, followed by *a tempo* and *mf*. The fifth staff continues with *d* and *u* articulations. The sixth staff has *accel.*, *allarg.*, and *a tempo* markings with a series of eighth notes. The seventh and eighth staves conclude the piece with final notes and articulations.

# Abu'ata: Chahar-Pareh

Performed by Ali-Akbar Shahnazi

1962

A4: 424 Hz

♩ = 132

The musical score consists of ten staves of music in a single system. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes various dynamics and performance instructions:

- Staff 1: *f* (forte), *gliss.* (glissando), *d* (dotted note).
- Staff 2: *f* (forte), *gliss.* (glissando), *d* (dotted note).
- Staff 3: *f* (forte).
- Staff 4: *uuuu uuuu* (sustained notes), *p* (piano), *subito f* (suddenly forte), *gliss.* (glissando), *d* (dotted note).
- Staff 5: *d* (dotted note), *gliss.* (glissando), *d* (dotted note).
- Staff 6: *d* (dotted note), *u* (sustained note).
- Staff 7: *p* (piano).
- Staff 8: *mf* (mezzo-forte), *d* (dotted note), *gliss.* (glissando), *d* (dotted note).
- Staff 9: *d* (dotted note), *d* (dotted note), *d* (dotted note), *u* (sustained note).

# Abu'ata: Chahar-Pareh

Performed by Nur-Ali Borumand

1975

A4: 438 Hz

♪ = 252

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f*



# Abu'ata: Chahar-Pareh

Performed by Hossein Alizadeh  
1992

A4: 419 Hz

$\text{♩} = 304$

The musical score consists of ten staves of music in a single system. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 2/4. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 304. The score includes various dynamics such as *f*, *mp*, *mf*, *p*, and *ff*, as well as performance instructions like *accel.*, *a tempo*, *ad lib.*, and *rit.*. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and slurs. Some notes are marked with 'dr' (drum) or 'u' (up-bow). The piece concludes with a double bar line.

# Mahur: Chahar-Pareh

Performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza  
(1959)

A4: 465 Hz

$\text{♩} = 215$

The musical score consists of seven staves of music in a single system. The notation is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff begins with a dynamic marking of *f* and includes a vocal line with 'u' above the notes. The second staff has 'u' above the first measure and 'd' above the fourth measure. The third staff has 'u' above the first and second measures. The fourth staff has 'u' above the first measure, 'b' above the second measure, and 'd' above the third measure. The fifth staff has 'u' above the first measure, 'd' above the second measure, 'u' above the third measure, and 'd' above the sixth measure. The sixth staff has 'u' above the first measure and 'u' above the fifth measure. The seventh staff includes dynamic markings of *accel.* and *a tempo*, and a vocal line with a long 'u' above a series of notes.



# Mahur: Chahar-Pareh

Performed by Ali-Akbar Shahnazi

1962

A4: 425Hz

♩ = 220

The musical score consists of ten staves of music. The first staff begins with a dynamic of *f* and includes articulations *dr* and *u*. The second staff starts with *mp* and features *sf* and *mf* dynamics. The third staff is marked *f*. The fourth staff includes *rit.* and *a tempo* markings, with *sf* and *subito p* dynamics. The fifth staff starts with *f* and *p*. The sixth staff contains *allarg.*, *a tempo*, *accel.*, *allarg.*, and *a tempo* markings, along with *u*, *gliss.*, *sf*, and *subito p*. The seventh staff is marked *mf* and *f*. The eighth staff includes *dr*, *vib.*, and *dr* articulations. The ninth staff starts with *mf* and *a tempo*, and ends with *sf*. The score also includes various accidentals and slurs throughout.

# Mahur: Chahar-Pareh

Performed by Nur-Ali Borumand  
1975

A4: 413 Hz

$\text{♩} = 240$

The musical score consists of four staves of music in treble clef, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 240. The first staff begins with a dynamic marking of *mf* and includes vocalizations: (dr), (dr), dr, u, u, u, dr. The second staff continues with dr, u, u, u, u, u, b, u. The third staff includes dr. The fourth staff includes rit. and ends with a double bar line. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, and includes various ornaments and slurs.

# Mahur: Chahar-Pareh

Performed by Hossein Alizadeh  
1992

A4: 416 Hz

♩ = 270

The musical score consists of four staves of music in a single system. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is written in a rhythmic style characteristic of Mahur, with notes often beamed together and accompanied by chordal textures. Above the notes, the letters 'dr' are written, indicating a specific performance technique. The first staff starts with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The second staff begins with *mp*, followed by a crescendo hairpin leading to *mf*. The third and fourth staves continue the melodic and harmonic development. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

# Nava: Chahar-Mezrab

Performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza  
1959

A4: 486 Hz

♩. = 170

*f* *sempre* *simile* *d* *d*

8

16

24

32

*mp* *cresc.* *d* *d*

39

*f*

# Nava: Chahar-Mezrab

Performed by Ali-Akbar shahnazi

1962

A4: 430 Hz

♩. = 190

The musical score consists of ten staves of music, each beginning with a measure number. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 6/16. The dynamics and articulations are as follows:

- Staff 1 (measures 1-9): *f* (forte), *sempre legato* (always legato).
- Staff 2 (measures 10-17): *mp* (mezzo-piano), *cresc.* (crescendo), *f* (forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano).
- Staff 3 (measures 18-25): *cresc.* (crescendo), *f* (forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano).
- Staff 4 (measures 26-33): *cresc.* (crescendo), *f* (forte).
- Staff 5 (measures 34-40): *mp* (mezzo-piano), *cresc.* (crescendo).
- Staff 6 (measures 41-49): *f* (forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *cresc.* (crescendo).
- Staff 7 (measures 50-60): *f* (forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *cresc.* (crescendo), *f* (forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *cresc.* (crescendo).
- Staff 8 (measures 61-70): *f* (forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *cresc.* (crescendo).
- Staff 9 (measures 71-79): *f* (forte).
- Staff 10 (measures 80-88): *f* (forte).

# Nava: Chahar-Mezrab

Performed by Nur-Ali Borumand  
1975

A4 = 425 Hz

$\text{♩} = 130$

8

*f* *sempre* simile

8

simile

17

26

35

45

53

# Nava: Chahar-Mezrab

Performed by Hossein Alizadeh

1992

A4: 419 Hz

$\text{♩} = 180$

8

*f*

16

*mf* *f*

24

*mf* *f*

32

*mf* *cresc.*

40

*f* *cresc.*

48

54

*p cresc.* *f*

# Homayun: Chahar-Mezrab

A4: 458 HZ

Performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza

1959

$\text{♩} = 155$

1

8

16

24

33

41

46

# Homayun: Chahar-Mezrab

Performed by Ali-Akbar Shahnazi

1962

A4: 423 Hz

$\text{♩} = 180$  u

9 *f* *f* *sempre legato* *f*

17 *f*

25 *f*

32 *f*

40 unclear - - *f subito p*

48 - - - - *f mp*

57 *mf mp mf mp*

66 *cresc.*

75 *f*

82

# Homayun: Chahar-Mezrab

Performed by Nur-Ali Borumand  
1975

A4: 421 Hz

♩. = 135

*f*

8

*d*

17

*(b)*

26

*(b)*

36

*d*

45

*d*

53

*d*

57

*f*

# Homayun: Chahar-Mezrab

Performed by Hossein Alizadeh  
1992

A4: 421 Hz

♩. = 150

9

*f*

17

25

33

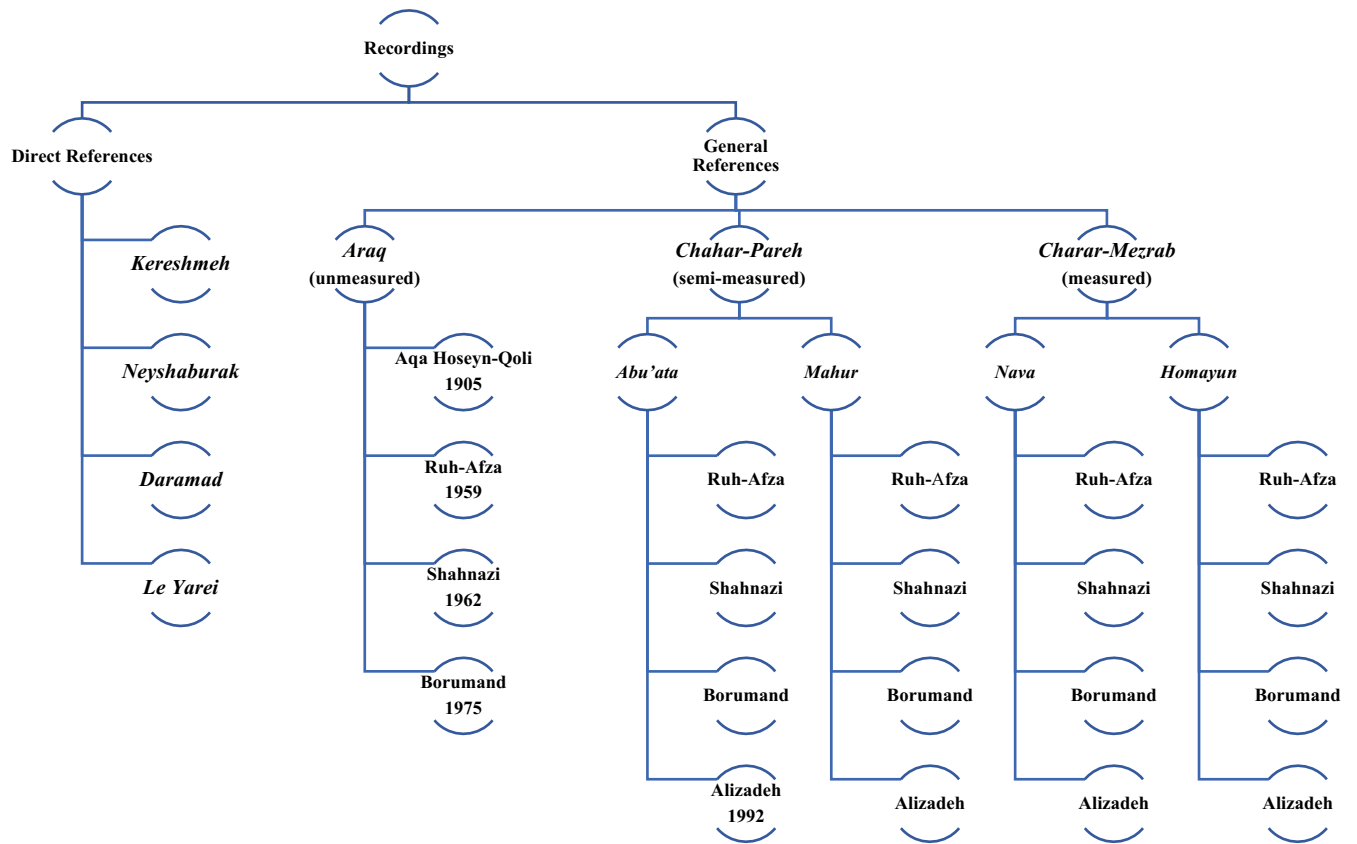
41

49

55

63

## Appendix 2: Recordings Chart



## **Appendix 3: Detailed Analysis of the Case Studies**

## Four performances of the *gusheh Araq* in the *dastgah* of *Mahur*, as an example of an unmeasured piece

### 1. *Araq, dastgah* of *Mahur*, performed by Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani (1905)

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli's recording is the only performance among the selected recordings of *Araq* with F as the modal centre. All of the other case studies are performed a perfect fourth lower centring C as the main note of the mode.

**Dynamics:** Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli's plucking and strumming is fairly courageous and loud. An aggressive attack can be heard in both Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli's plucking style and in the style of his son, Ali-Akbar Shahnazi on many of their recordings. Except for the use of sforzando strums in passages of allargando, changes in dynamics on this recording are very limited. Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli's performance is consistently forte.

**Ornamentation:** Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli occasionally uses upward *eshareh* on short notes if his extremely fast tempo allows. Although the main mode contains E natural, Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli occasionally utilises E flat as an upward *eshareh*.<sup>1</sup>

**Articulation and Phrasing:** Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli performs *riz* extremely rapidly with minimum delay. *Riz* is deployed consistently across this recording, leaving very little space between phrases. Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli also seemingly spontaneously emphasises some of the notes in passages of repeated pitches by adding strong accents. It is difficult to interpret any modal or phrasing functions in the way he accents these single notes.

### 2. *Araq, dastgah* of *Mahur*, performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza (1959)

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** Ruh-Afza's tar tuning is the highest among all the selected performances of *Araq*. Comparing this to the fairly low tuning choice of Borumand leaves us with more than a 50 Hz pitch difference which is almost a minor third.

Except for a short use of ritardando at the end of the second phrase, no specific tempo changes are heard in Ruh-Afza's performance of *Araq*.

**Articulation and Phrasing:** Symmetrical groupings of passages of short notes by planned accents is a feature of Ruh-Afza's performance of *Araq*. Examples are provided below.

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<sup>1</sup> See Figure 3-16 in chapter 3.

Figure A-3-1 and A-3-2: Symmetric grouping of short notes, *gusheh* of *Araq*, performed by Ruh-Afza



As shown in figures A-3-3 and A-3-4, Ruh-Afza finishes most of his phrases with a long note performed with *riz*. The two figures respectively illustrate Ruh-Afza's use of glissando and vibrato. He performs glissando at the opening of the performance to connect two neighbouring notes that utilise *riz*. Figure A-3-4 shows Ruh-Afza's use of vibrato when sustaining notes that do not utilise the *riz* ornament.

Figure A-3-3 and A-3-4: Use of *riz* at the end of phrases, *gusheh* of *Araq*, performed by Ruh-Afza



**Use of the Lower Open Strings:** Ruh-Afza very sparingly plucks the lower open string. Instead, he plucks the first open string by means of the left hand in the space between phrases.

### 3. *Araq*, *dastgah* of *Mahur*, performed by Ali-Akbar Shahnazi (1962)

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** In this recording Shahnazi largely uses tempo rubato including accelerando followed by allargando (See complete transcription of this recording in appendix 1).

**Dynamics:** The overall contrast and the diversity of ideas used by Shahnazi makes his performance relatively colourful and dramatic. This performance utilises a wide range of dynamics. In addition to the short subito piano section in the middle of the piece, nearly all phrases end with a diminuendo. When playing loud, an attack is heard in Shahnazi's plucking, a quality which can also be found on the recordings of his father, Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Farahani.

**Ornamentation:** Shahnazi uses *dorrab* on some of the staccato quavers in this work creating a unique sound effect that is rare in the recordings surveyed for this thesis.

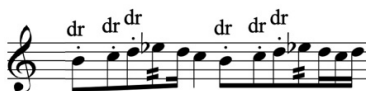
**Articulation and Phrasing:** Shahnazi uses *riz* on short notes followed by upward *eshareh* towards the end of the piece. Figures A-3-5 to A-3-7 contains examples of alternation between staccato and *riz* on short notes. This effect provides significant contrast between phrases.

Figures A-3-5 to A-3-7: Various treatments of short notes, *gusheh* of *Araq*, performed by Shahnazi

Staccato with acciaccatura



Staccato with *dorrab* (characteristic of the motif of *Nahib*)



*Riz* with upward *Eshareh*



In addition to his unique use of *dorrab*, Shahnazi uses glissando, another rare technique, to connect two long notes sustained by *riz* towards the end of the piece. This technique is also used by Ruh-Afza in his recording of *Araq*.

#### 4. *Araq, dastgah of Mahur, performed by Nur-Ali Borumand (1975)*

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** Borumand's tar tuning on this recording is fairly low (A4 420 Hz). Considering the personal tuning preferences in Persian music, at first this might not seem hugely different from the first example made by Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli (A4 430 Hz), but this pitch difference of 10 Hz is added to a perfect fourth interval difference between the pitch range of the two performers.

**Ornamentation:** Long notes with *riz* are occasionally followed by an upward *eshareh* in this recording.

**Articulation and Phrasing:** Most of the phrases in this recording of Borumand end with a *ritardando*.

**Use of the Lower Open Strings:** Borumand performs *Araq* mostly on a single string with no drone.

## Eight Performances of the *gusheh* of *Chahar-Pareh*, as an example of a semi-measured piece

### 1. *Chahar-Pareh*, *dastgah* of *Abu'ata*, performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza (1959)<sup>1</sup>

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** Ruh-Afza's tuning of the tar in this recording (A4 453 Hz) is the highest among the selected recordings. It is almost 35 Hz higher than the lowest tuning range which belongs to Alizadeh (See table 3 in appendix 4).

The rubato playing style, a characteristic of unmeasured Persian music, is used vastly by Ruh-Afza in the few unmeasured passages of this recording. A fairly slow tempo (more than quaver = 100 bpm slower than Alizadeh's performance) has allowed Ruh-Afza to apply even more extreme rubato playing to this performance (See table 3 in appendix 4).

**Rhythm:** Ruh-Afza's version of the *Chahar-Pareh* resists transcription in a fixed meter due to significant sustains of the long note in the main repeated motif.

Figure A-3-8: *Chahar-Pareh* in *Abu'ata*, opening, Ruh-Afza



Within Ruh-Afza's rhythmically free approach, systematic groupings do emerge. Specifically, melodic material is grouped into what begins to feel like three beat gestures or cells as the work progresses.

**Dynamics:** Ruh-Afza applies a crescendo during nearly all applications of *riz*.

**Articulation and Phrasing:** Ruh-Afza uses short fermatas between the unmeasured and semi-measured components of the performance.

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<sup>1</sup> *Dastgah* of *Abu'ata* is derived from the *Dastgah* of *Shur*. Its main melodic register is a fourth above the main register of *Shur*. The *Gusheh* of *Chahar-Pareh* is played in the register of *Hejaz* in the mode of *Abu'ata*. Vaziri, *Theori-e Musiqi*, 111-113.

**Use of the Lower Open Strings:** Use of the lower open strings is very limited in Ruh-Afza's recording of the *Chahar-Pareh*. Apart from the first strum and a few strums between the short motifs in the second phrase, this recording is almost a one-string performance.

## 2. *Chahr-Pareh, dastgah of Abu'ata, performed by Ali-Akbar Shahnazi (1962)*

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** Shahnazi performs the *Chahar-Pareh* slightly faster than Ruh-Afza. Crucially, the passage of short notes in the unmeasured part of the work is performed almost twice as fast as all of the other examples (See Table 3 in appendix 4).

**Rhythm:** In parallel to Ruh-Afza's recording, Shahnazi similarly groups the three-note motif of *Chahar-Pareh* into what feels like three beat cells, but, as shown in figure A-3-9, performs these cells in four different rhythmic variations:

Figure A-3-9: Four rhythmic variations on the three-note motif, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Abu'ata*, Shahnazi



In turn, Shahnazi performs the two-note motif in two different rhythmic variations as shown below:

Figure A-3-10: Two rhythmic variations on the two-note motif, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Abu'ata*, Shahnazi



Finally, Shahnazi frequently provides a sense of expansion or suspension in his performance by inserting occasional pauses between the short and the long components of both motifs. This approach disrupts the expected flow of the rhythm.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Some oral sources mention this quality in the performance of Persian music. In a recorded video for an online setar lesson, Behrad Tavakoli, an Iranian setar player, mentions this as one of the characteristics of Shahnazi's performances. Tavakoli labels this technique as compression and expansion of the rhythmic component. In this manner, the compressed and the expanded notes/motifs compensate each other in order to match the general

**Dynamics:** Shahnazi uses a wide range of dynamics in his performance. In addition to the use of diminuendo followed by a subito forte on the last few notes of each phrase, he occasionally applies contrast between the main phrases of *Chahar-Pareh* by introducing sudden changes in dynamics.

**Ornamentation:** Shahnazi primarily uses downward *esharehs* in phrases with downward motion.

**Articulation and Phrasing:** Shahnazi’s recording of the *Chahar-Pareh* is one of the rare examples of using glissando in the performance of Persian music. He uses this technique at the end of phrases along with a fermata.

Figures A-3-11 and A-3-12: Use of glissando at the end of phrases, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Abu’ata*, Shahnazi



Another rare technique used in this performance is the occasional doubling of long notes in the melody with a note played a third above as shown in figure A-3-13.

Figure A-3-13: Doubling the long note in the melody in a third above, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Abu’ata*, Shahnazi




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rhythmic structure of the phrase. This general rhythmic structure, according to Tavakoli, is not based on measures but “*Dowr*” or a rhythmic cycle.

Behrad Tavakoli (@behrad.tavakoli), “Zarb-e Osul,” Instagram video, August 30, 2020, [https://www.instagram.com/p/CEf3mYpgx7T/?utm\\_medium=copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/p/CEf3mYpgx7T/?utm_medium=copy_link).

**Use of the Lower Open Strings:** Shahnazi plucks the lower open strings very frequently to fill gaps at the end of short motifs and phrases. The lower strings are also occasionally and spontaneously plucked in a way that emphasise certain melody notes.

### 3. *Chahr-Pareh*, *dastgah* of *Abu'ata*, performed by Nur-Ali Borumand (1975)

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** Borumand's tar is tuned slightly lower than the standard international tuning of A4:440 Hz.

**Rhythm:** In contrast to the two previous recordings, Borumand's *Chahr-Pareh* is presented in a seven-beat rhythm with short pauses between every second phrase and emphasis placed on the first and the fifth beats by means of a *dorrab*.

Figure A-3-14: *Chahr-Pareh* in *Abu'ata*, opening, Borumand



**Dynamics:** Borumand uses very limited dynamic variation. However, he does end many phrases with a brief crescendo.

**Articulation and Phrasing:** Borumand uses *dorrab* on short notes to emphasise specific beats within each bar. Borders between phrases are clearly delimited by fermatas, accents, and occasional staccatos placed on the last note of each phrase. Considering the fact that *dorrab* is essentially a short *riz*, the frequent use of these two techniques provides a sense of legato throughout the piece.

**Use of the Lower Open Strings:** Borumand barely plucks the lower open strings in his performance of *Chahr-Pareh*. This recording is almost thoroughly a one-string performance.

### 4. *Chahr-Pareh*, *dastgah* of *Abu'ata*, performed by Hossein Alizadeh (1992)

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** Alizadeh's tar in his recording of *Chahr-Pareh* has the lowest tuning amongst the case studies. There is almost a 35 Hz difference between

Alizadeh's tuning and Ruh-Afza's tuning of the tar. Another factor distinguishing Alizadeh's recording from the other performances in this case study is his approach to tempo. This recording is 50 bpm faster than the recording made by Borumand and nearly 100 bpm tempo faster than the recording of Rou Afza's performance (See table 3 in appendix 4).

As illustrated in figures A-3-15 and A-3-16, Alizadeh uses tempo rubato in the unmeasured sections of the work. Considering the fairly fast tempo in the measured sections, use of this technique infuses significant contrast into this performance.

Figures A-3-15 and A-3-16: Tempo rubato in *Chahar-Pareh* in *Abu'ata*, Alizadeh

Figure A-3-15



Figure A-3-16



**Rhythm:** Alizadeh, in parallel to Borumand's performance, presents the *Chahar-Pareh* in a seven-beat rhythm with short pauses between every second phrase. In turn, he emphasises the first and the fifth beats of each bar by means of *dorrab*.



**Articulation and Phrasing:** In addition to placing accents on the first and the fifth beats of phrases by means of *dorrab*, borders between phrases are clearly distinguished by fermatas. This approach is also utilised in Borumand’s performance. Unlike the approach of other performers in this case study, Alizadeh does not always end his phrases with a loud accented note.

**Use of the Lower Open Strings:** Alizadeh’s uses the lower strings to occasionally introduce a drone effect into his performance. In turn, he occasionally plays the lower open strings when emphasising the opening of unmeasured passages.

### 5. *Chahar-Pareh, dastgah of Mahur, performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza (1959)*

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** Ruh-Afza presents an extremely extended *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur* based on Musa Maroufi’s version of *radif*. In line with Shahnazi’s version of *Chahar-Pareh*, Ruh-Afza’s recording of the work contains an extra section in the modal range of the *dastgah Esfahan* which results in a significantly longer performance than those of Borumand and Alizadeh. Indeed, Ruh-Afza’s recording is twice as long as Shahnazi’s performance, making it nearly six times longer than the very brief version of the work discussed in the Alizadeh case study.

Ruh-Afza’s tar tuning is fairly high with an almost 50 Hz difference between his performance and Alizadeh’s who utilises the lowest tuning range in this case study. This recording also presents the slowest performance of the *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur* (See table 4 in appendix 4).

**Rhythm:** Ruh-Afza presents *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur* with a three-beat rhythm. This is similar to his performance of *Chahar-Pareh* in *Abu’ata*. This is the only version of the piece analysed in this case study performed in a three-beat rhythm. All other versions are performed in 7/8.

Figure A-3-21: *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, opening, Ruh-Afza



Ruh-Afza almost always utilises the same rhythmic approach to the two main motifs: short-short-long and short-long. Figures A-3-22 and A-3-23 illustrate occasional variations provided by Ruh-Afza including alternating the first motif with a motif of four semiquavers and a minim, and the second with a quaver and a minim (plus a quaver).

**Figures A-3-22 and A-3-23: Motifs and variations, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, Ruh-Afza**

**The short-short-long motif**



**The short-long motif**



**Ornamentation:** The most important feature of this performance is the vast use of the mordent and both upward and downward *eshareh* which imbues the main motifs of the work with melodic variation. Following are three examples of these variations with added mordent.

**Figures A-3-24 to A-3-29: Melodic variations by addition of ornaments, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, Ruh-Afza**

I



II



III



**Articulation and Phrasing:** Ruh-Afza introduces no significant pauses between the phrases, even when the work modulates to another mode in the second section. Ruh-Afza does however use glissando in the performance once in the unmeasured section at the end of the work.

Figure A-3-30: Use of glissando, ending of *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, Ruh-Afza



6. *Chahar-Pareh*, *dastgah* of *Mahur*, performed by Ali-Akbar Shahnazi (1962)<sup>1</sup>

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** Like Ruh-Afza's recording, Shahnazi's performance of *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur* includes a passage in the *dastgah* of *Esfahan*. Shahnazi's version is therefore significantly longer than those of Borumand and Alizadeh, but not quite as expansive as Ruh-Afza's recording. (See table 4 in appendix 4).

**Rhythm:** Shahnazi performs the measured section of the *gusheh* in the *dastgah* of *Mahur* in a seven-beat rhythm with occasional fermatas at the end of phrases.

Figure A-3-31: *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, opening, Shahnazi<sup>2</sup>



As shown in figure A-3-32, a syncopated rhythm occasionally occurs when a semiquaver value is added to the fourth beat.

Figure A-3-32: Regular rhythm of the main motif alternating with a syncopated rhythm, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, Shahnazi<sup>3</sup>



Generally, Shahnazi's performance is freer than the other performances surveyed in this case study in terms of rhythmic variation. The main motif of *Chahar-Pareh*, short-short-

<sup>1</sup> *Chahar-Pareh* is presented in two separate tracks in Shahnazi's recording. Therefore I have specified the exact track when providing excerpts from this performance.

<sup>2</sup> Ali-Akbar Shahnazi, "Dastgah-e Mahur, Moradkhani I (Chaharpareh)," Track 23 on *The Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Radif, CD 2*, Tehran: Mahoor, 2003, compact disc.

<sup>3</sup> Shahnazi, "Dastgah-e Mahur, Moradkhani I (Chaharpareh)."

long-short-long, appears in many different ways in this recording. In Figures A-3-33 to A-3-37, I have transcribed different iterations of the motif.

**Figures A-3-33 to A-3-37: The main motif and its rhythmic variations, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, Shahnazi**

**Main motif (15 times)**



**Second version (5 times)**



**Variation 1 (4 times)**



**Variation 2 (3 times)**



**Variation 3 (2 times)**



**Dynamics:** Shahnazi applies an extremely wide range of dynamics in his performance of *Chahar-Pareh*. As transcribed in figures A-3-38 and A-3-39, in addition to the use of

diminuendo and crescendo on the long notes with *riz*, Shahnazi can be seen to utilise dynamics to create contrast between consecutive phrases.

**Figures A-3-38 and A-3-39: Examples of sudden dynamic changes in consecutive phrases, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, Shahnazi**

Figure A-3-38<sup>1</sup>



Figure A-3-39<sup>2</sup>



**Ornamentation:** Use of *dorrah* and *eshareh* is limited in Shahnazi’s recording of the *Chahar-Pareh*. He uses *riz* on most of the long notes but not on the last notes of the phrase which are mostly performed with an accent and fermata. Shahnazi also adds short *riz* to his numerous melodic and rhythmic variations. These variations and ornamentations can be interpreted differently and therefore notated alternatively: As shown in figures A-3-40 to A-3-44, both long and short notes of the main motif are occasionally ornamented by one or two extra plucks of the plectrum on the same note in opposite directions.

<sup>1</sup> Shahnazi, “Dastgah-e Mahur, Moradkhani I (Chaharpareh).”

<sup>2</sup> Shahnazi, “Dastgah-e Mahur, Moradkhani I (Chaharpareh).”  
Shahnazi, “Dastgah-e Mahur, Moradkhani II.”

**Figures A-3-40 to A-3-44: Ornamentation added to rhythmic and melodic variations, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, Shahnazi**

**Main motif (15 times)**



**Version 2 (once)**



**Version 3 (twice)**



**Can also be notated as**



**Another version of variation 2 (once)**



**Articulation and Phrasing:** Shahnazi introduces significant pauses between phrases in *Chahar-Pareh* and introduces contrast into his delivery of the main motif by alternating between the use of *riz* and staccato. He also uses glissando once to transition from the unmeasured part of the work to the semi-measured part of the work.

Figure A-3-45: Use of glissando as a sound effect, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, Shahnazi<sup>1</sup>



In terms of accents, there is a tendency in Shahnazi’s performance to rhythmically accent the third and the sixth beats of each bar. In accenting the third beat of each bar, Shahnazi frequently plays a note a third above the melody note in conjunction with the melody note as shown below.

Figure A-3-46: Doubling the third beat with a third above, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, Shahnazi<sup>2</sup>



**Use of the Lower Open Strings:** Both spontaneous and functional use of the lower open strings are noticeable in Shahnazi’s recording. A drone in the lower strings is used to ring over occasional notes, and sometimes to emphasise specific beats, including the third beat of each bar.

## 7. *Chahar-Pareh*, *dastgah* of *Mahur*, performed by Nur-Ali Borumand (1975)<sup>3</sup>

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** Borumand’s tar in this recording has the lowest tuning range amongst the selected recordings of *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur* (A4: 413 Hz) (See table 4 in appendix 4). This recording, like Alizadeh’s performance, is shorter than the others

<sup>1</sup> Shahnazi, “Dastgah-e Mahur, Moradkhani II.”

<sup>2</sup> Shahnazi, “Dastgah-e Mahur, Moradkhani I (Chaharpareh).”

<sup>3</sup> Nur- ‘Ali Borumand. “Dastgah-e Mahur, Chahar-pare (Morad Khani),” Track 15 on *The Radif of Mirza Abdollah for the Tar and Setar*, CD 4, Mahoor, 2006, compact disc.

considered in this case study as no unmeasured section or extra sections based on other modes are presented as part of the performance.

**Rhythm:** Borumand’s approach to the rhythm in this recording is the same as his performance of *Chahar-Pareh* in *Abu’ata*, except for the fact that no unmeasured sections are presented in this recording. *Chahar-Pareh* is performed in a seven-beat rhythm and there are no rhythmic variations of the main motifs. Apart from a very short *ritenuto* at the end of the performance, tempo remains steady throughout this recording.

Borumand takes clear pauses between phrases. The pauses have different lengths from 4 to 7 quavers with a tempo of 240 bpm. (See the complete transcription of *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur* performed by Borumand in appendix 1).

**Articulation and Phrasing:** In line with Shahanazi’s performance, Borumand does not use *riz* on the long notes at the end of phrases. Borumand performs *dorrab* on short notes and attaches them to the following long notes with *riz*. Considering the fact that a *dorrab* is in itself a short *riz*, separating out one effect from the other is a challenge in analysing this performance. Figure A-3-47 contains examples of Borumand’s approach.

Figure A-3-47: Consecutive *dorrab* and *riz*, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, opening, Borumand



**Use of the Lower Open Strings:** Borumand does not use the drone effect in this performance.

## 8. *Chahar-Pareh*, *dastgah* of *Mahur*, performed by Hossein Alizadeh (1992)<sup>1</sup>

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** Alizadeh provides the fastest performance of the *Chahar-Pareh* surveyed in this case study (270 bpm). Alizadeh’s performance is more than 50 bpm faster than the slowest recording in this series, which belongs to Ruh-Afza (See

<sup>1</sup> Hossein Alizadeh, “*Mahoor, Chahar-Pareh*,” Track 12 on *Radif Navazi: Radif of Mirza Abdollah according to Nur-Ali Borumand, Disc 4*. *Mahoor*, 1992, compact disc.

table 4 in appendix 4). The fact that an unmeasured section is not included in this fairly fast performance of *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur* makes Alizadeh's recording the shortest version of the *gusheh* analysed in this set.

**Rhythm:** Alizadeh performs *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur* in a seven-beat rhythm with a steady pulse. No rhythmic variation is provided in this performance.

**Dynamics:** Dynamic range is limited in this performance. One exception is the first phrase in which Alizadeh drops the dynamic toward the end before applying a crescendo to finish the phrase, as transcribed in figure A-3-48.

Figure A-3-48: Dynamic change, *Chahar-Pareh* in *Mahur*, Alizadeh



**Ornamentation:** Due to the fast tempo in Alizadeh's performance, the borders between the notes with *dorrab* and *riz* are difficult to distinguish. The opening of *Chahar-Pareh* transcribed in figure 3-76 also illustrates this blending.

**Articulation and Phrasing:** Alizadeh performs *dorrab* frequently on the short notes in this performance, including almost always on the first note of each bar and frequently on the first and the fifth beats of the phrase, as outlined in the example above. Alizadeh also places fermatas between every second bar.

**Use of the Lower Open Strings:** Alizadeh occasionally plucks the open lower strings in the space between phrases.



**Figure A-3-50: Use of downward *eshareh* in *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Nava*, performed by Ruh-Afza, bars 16-20**



**Articulation and Phrasing:** Articulation in this performance is all legato, with no silence between notes, except for a semi-staccato upbeat semiquaver at the beginning of each phrase as shown in figures A-3-51 and A-3-52.

**Figures A-3-51 and A-3-52: Use of staccato in the upbeats, *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Nava*, performed by Ruh-Afza**

**bars 9 and 10**



**bars 36 and 37**



## **2. *Chahar-Mezrab*, *dastgah* of *Nava*, performed by Ali-Akbar Shahnazi (1962)<sup>1</sup>**

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** Shahnazi's tuning of the tar in this performance is the closest to the international standard tuning system of A4, 440Hz (A4 = 430 Hz). This recording is the most expansive (87 bars) of the four selected performances in this case

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<sup>1</sup> Ali-Akbar Shahnazi, "Dastgah-e Nava, Chaharmezrab," Track 79 on *The Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Radif, CD 1*, Tehran: Mahoor, 2003, compact disc.

study. In turn, it is the fastest performance (190 bpm) of the four selected performances (See table 5 in appendix 4).

**Dynamics:** The factor that dramatises Shahnazi’s performance is his exceptional dynamic range. He uses crescendos to shape most of his phrases and combines this approach with a variety of touch that extends from fairly soft to purposefully rough. Figure 3-53 is an example of such dynamic changes.

Figure A-3-53: Use of dynamics in *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Nava*, performed by Shahnazi, bars 10-15



**Ornamentation:** There is a narrow border between the ornaments in this performance – mostly short *riz* – and the main notes of the melody due to the fast tempo.

**Articulation and Phrasing:** Shahnazi introduces clear pauses between phrases and begins each phrase on the downbeat. As will be discussed, this presents a significantly different approach to the other performances analysed in this case study.

Figure A-3-54: Opening of *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Nava*, performed by Shahnazi



### 3. *Chahar-Mezrab*, *dastgah* of *Nava*, performed by Nur-Ali Borumand (1975)<sup>1</sup>

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** Borumand provides the slowest performance of the piece (130 bpm) (See table 5 in appendix 4).

<sup>1</sup> Nur- ‘Ali Borumand, “Dastgah-e Nava, Chahar-mezrab,” Track 1 on *The Radif of Mirza Abdollah for the Tar and Setar*, CD 5, Mahoor, 2006, compact disc.

**Rhythm:** No tempo change is noticeable in this performance, although there is a slight accelerando towards the end (from bar 49) which seems to be unintentional rather than an approach to musical interpretation.<sup>1</sup> Significant tempo changes like this are almost never heard in recordings of Persian music and there are some unclear articulations in this performance that hint at execution issues (e.g., G note at the beginning of bar 51) (See complete transcription of this recording in appendix 1).

**Ornamentation:** The space between the main notes of the melody is always filled with plucked lower open strings or the use of *eshareh*. This approach sometimes makes it difficult to distinguish main notes from ornaments.

**Articulation and Phrasing:** This performance is extremely stable in terms of articulation (mostly legato), and phrasing ideas. Borumand always uses a downward pluck on the downbeat. As shown in figure A-3-55, he emphasises the quavers with tenuto and the E *korons* with accents.

Figure A-3-55: Articulation in *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Nava*, performed by Borumand, bars 8-14



A unique feature in Borumand's performance is the delay at the very beginning and end of the piece which conjures a sense of suspension.

Figure A-3-56: Opening of *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Nava*, performed by Borumand



Figure A-3-57: *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Nava*, performed by Borumand, ending



<sup>1</sup> This is also noticeable in Borumand's recording of *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Homayun*.

#### 4. *Chahar-Mezrab, dastgah of Nava, performed by Hossein Alizadeh (1992)*<sup>1</sup>

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** Alizadeh's tar in this recording has the lowest tuning range amongst the selected performances (A4 = 419 Hz) (See table 5 in appendix 4). No tempo rubato is heard in Alizadeh's performance of the *Chahar-Mezrab*.

**Dynamics:** A consistent touch quality (mostly fairly soft) is noticeable in this recording. Alizadeh applies slight dynamic changes in the first half of the piece: the repeated motif (refrain) is always forte and new sequences are presented slightly softer. The dynamic range expands in the second half. As shown in the following figure, in the last phrase, Alizadeh applies a clear crescendo starting with a drop in the dynamic level.

Figure A-3-58: *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Nava*, performed by Alizadeh, ending



**Use of the Lower Open Strings:** Alizadeh softly plucks the lower open string as an accompaniment to the main melody throughout the performance. At times, this plucking is used to emphasise the beginning of three-bar sequences (bars 35-45: See the complete transcription of *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Nava* performed by Alizadeh in the Appendix).

#### 5. *Chahar-Mezrab, dastgah of Homayun, performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza (1959)*<sup>2</sup>

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** This performance utilises the highest tuning in this case study (A4 = 458 Hz). Ruh-Afza also presents the shortest version of the *Chahar-Mezrab* (50 bars) amongst the considered performances (See table 6 in appendix 5)

**Rhythm:** Ruh-Afza does not provide new variations of rhythmic content.

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<sup>1</sup> Hossein Alizadeh, "Nava, Chahar-Mezrab," Track 1 on *Radif Navazi: Radif of Mirza Abdollah according to Nur-Ali Borumand, Disc 5*. Mahoor, 1992, compact disc.

<sup>2</sup> Musa MARufi, "Dastgah-e Homayun, Chaharmezrab," Track 1 on *Radif of Seven Dastgahs of Iranian Classical Music, CD 10*, Performed by Soleyman Ruh-Afza, Mahoor, 2009, compact disc.

**Dynamics:** Ruh-Afza’s performance is extremely consistent in terms of tone quality and dynamics except for a slight crescendo at the very end.

**Ornamentation:** The ornaments and main melody notes are easy to distinguish from each other in this recording. A characteristic of Ruh-Afza’s performance, as shown in figure 3-98, is the constant use of downward *eshareh* (G) after the *A koron* (first fret of the second string on tar and setar). This results from a performance practice on Persian plucked string instruments in which the note played on the first fret is followed by the same note played on an open string as an ornament by means of slurs.

Figure A-3-59: Use of downward *eshareh*, *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Homayun*, performed by Ruh-Afza, bars 41-45



## 6. *Chahar-Mezrab*, *dastgah* of *Homayun*, performed by Ali-Akbar Shahnazi (1962)<sup>1</sup>

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** The tuning of Shahnazi’s tar ( $A_4 = 423$ ) is the closest to the standard international tuning system of A 440 Hz in the performance of *Chahar-Mezrab* analysed in this case study. Shahnazi’s performance is also the most expansive and fastest version among the selected performances (see table 6 in appendix 5).

**Dynamics:** Shahnazi applies a wide dynamic range in his performance, particularly in the second half of the piece, which provides a clear contrast with the opening section. The following figure shows how considerable dynamic changes are realised in the second section of the piece. Starting in bar 47, the phrase begins forte with an accented C followed by a sudden drop in dynamics. The volume then increases towards the end of the phrase. The two following phrases begin softly and end in the same way with a crescendo.

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<sup>1</sup> Ali-Akbar Shahnazi, “Dastgah-e Homayun, Chaharme-zrab,” Track 2 on *The Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli Radif, CD 3*, Tehran: Mahoor, 2003, compact disc.

Figure A-3-60: Use of dynamic changes in *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Homayun*, performed by Shahnazi, bars 32-67

The musical score for Figure A-3-60 consists of four staves of music in a 6/16 time signature. The first staff (bars 32-39) features a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) and a phrasing slur. The second staff (bars 40-47) includes a dynamic marking of *f* *subito p* (suddenly piano) and a phrasing slur. The third staff (bars 48-56) shows dynamic markings of *f* and *mp* (mezzo-piano) with phrasing slurs. The fourth staff (bars 57-67) features dynamic markings of *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *mp* with phrasing slurs. There are also some performance instructions like "unclear" and "f" scattered throughout the score.

In addition, Shahnazi's phrases usually end with a slight crescendo that leads to an accent on the last note. This effect is illuminated in figure A-3-61.

Figure A-3-61: Crescendo and accents at the end of phrases, *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Homayun*, performed by Shahnazi, bars 1-16

The musical score for Figure A-3-61 consists of two staves of music in a 6/16 time signature. The first staff (bars 1-8) features dynamic markings of *f* (forte) and *f* with phrasing slurs. The second staff (bars 9-16) includes a dynamic marking of *f* and the instruction *sempre legato* (always legato) with phrasing slurs. There are also some performance instructions like "u" and "f" scattered throughout the score.

**Articulation and Phrasing:** Shahnazi applies noticeable pauses in between his phrases. Shorter motifs are always played legato.

**7. *Chahar-Mezrab*, dastgah of *Homayun*, performed by Nur-Ali Borumand (1975)<sup>1</sup>**

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** This is the slowest performance of the *Chahar-Mezrab* in the case study. Borumand's tuning of tar in this recording (A4 = 421) has also the lowest tuning amongst selected recordings of *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Homayun* (see table 5 in appendix 4.)

**Ornamentation:** Borumand consistently uses downward *esharehs* after A *koron*.

**Articulation and Phrasing:** Borumand emphasises the E *koron* as an important note by placing an accent on this note along with a tenuto. He also performs the upbeat to each phrase in a number of different ways; sometimes with two or three semiquavers, and sometimes with one quaver. The following figures show three different ways Borumand approaches the upbeats at the beginning of his phrases.

**Figures A-3-62 to A-3-64: Different approaches to the opening of phrases, *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Homayun*, performed by Borumand**

**Opening**



**Bars 23-25**



**Bars 32-34**



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<sup>1</sup> Nur- 'Ali Borumand, "Dastgah-e Homayun, Chaharmezrab," Track 31 on *The Radif of Mirza Abdollah for the Tar and Setar*, CD 2, Mahoor, 2006, compact disc.

An unpredictable delayed execution of the last note of the piece might be considered one of Borumand's stylistic traits.

Figure A-3-65: Ending of *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Homayun*, performed by Borumand



### 8. *Chahar-Mezrab*, *dastgah* of *Homayun*, performed by Hossein Alizadeh (1992)<sup>1</sup>

**Tuning, Tempo, and Duration:** Alizadeh's tar in this recording has the lowest tuning amongst the selected recordings (A4 = 421 Hz) (See table 6 in appendix 5).

**Rhythm:** Alizadeh's approach to the rhythm of the repeated motifs remains the same throughout the performance.

**Dynamics:** The dynamic level remains unchanged throughout this performance of the *Chahar-Mezrab*. A very slight change occurs in the second half of the piece in which a short crescendo leads to the end.

**Articulation and Phrasing:** As transcribed in figure 3-105, Alizadeh, like Borumand, emphasises the note E *koron* as a characteristic of phrasing in *Chahar-Mezrab*. This emphasis is not only because of the location of this note in the beat (always on the first note of the bar). Other notes of the mode barely bear accents when performed as the first note of the bar. Apparently, this note has functional and theoretical value to the performers and emphasises the character of the mode.

Figures A-3-66: Accented E *korons*, *Chahar-Mezrab* in *Homayun*, performed by Alizadeh, bars 9-13



<sup>1</sup> Hossein Alizadeh, "Homayun, Chahar-Mezrab," Track 30 on *Radif Navazi: Radif of Mirza Abdollah according to Nur-Ali Borumand, Disc 2*. Mahoor, 1992, compact disc.

## **Appendix 4: Comparative Tables**

**Table 1: Mahur: Araq (unmeasured)**

<b>Performer</b>	<b>Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli (1905)</b>	<b>Ruh-Afza (1959)</b>	<b>Shahnazi (1962)</b>	<b>Borumand (1975)</b>
<b>Factor</b>				
<b>Duration</b>	37 seconds	30 seconds	37 seconds	46 seconds
<b>Tuning</b>	A4: 430 Hz	A4: 474 Hz (highest)	A4: 432 Hz	A4: 420 Hz (lowest)
<b>Number of Bars</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Tempo</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Rhythm</b>	Allargando always with sforzando followed by accelerando in the passages of short fast notes	Rhythmic changes limited to the expansion and compression in the nature of motifs	Tempo rubato is largely used, specifically towards the end of each phrase; Use of allargando with staccato in the passage of short fast notes at the beginning (another version of the technique of accented notes with allargando in other recordings); A significant tempo change - reinforced by an extreme decrease in nuance - in a short section in the middle of the piece	Vast amount of rubato specifically towards the end of the phrases; Use of accelerando followed by allargando in the passages of short fast notes
<b>Dynamics</b>	Limited, mostly forte	Soft touch: almost no change	Aggressive touch; Vast register of nuance: phrases are well separated with the change in nuance (tone colour	Soft touch: almost no change

			change in each phrase and diminuendo at the end of phrases)	
<b>Ornaments</b>	<i>riz</i> followed by <i>eshareh</i> on long notes; <i>eshareh</i> on short notes	<i>riz</i> followed by <i>eshareh</i> on long notes; <i>eshareh</i> on short notes	<i>riz</i> on long notes; Occasional short notes are followed by upwards <i>eshareh</i> ; <i>dorrab</i> on some staccato quavers	<i>riz</i> followed by <i>eshareh</i> on long notes; <i>eshareh</i> on short notes
<b>Phrasing and Articulation</b>	Rapid <i>riz</i> ; Little space between phrases; Spontaneous accents	Symmetric grouping of the passages of short notes; Planned accents; Diversity in the ending of the phrases ( <i>riz</i> , accents, short notes); Use of Glissando; Vibrato	vast use of staccato along with <i>dorrab</i> on short notes; Glissando	All phrases and short motifs end with an accent; Use of Staccato on short notes and at the end of phrases
<b>Use of lower open strings</b>	Occasional use of open strings to fill the gap between the phrases	Plucking the open string with the left hand	Vast use of lower open strings to accent specific notes and to fill the space between the phrases	limited use of open base strings

**Table 2: *Abu'ata: Chahar-Pareh (Chahar-Baq) (Semi-measured)***

Performer	Ruh-Afza (1959)	Shahnazi (1962)	Borumand (1975)	Alizadeh (1992)
<b>Factor</b>				
<b>Duration</b>	98 seconds	95 seconds	85 seconds	86 seconds
<b>Tuning</b>	A4: 453 Hz (highest)	A4: 424 Hz	A4: 438 Hz	A4: 419 Hz (lowest)
<b>Number of Bars</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Tempo</b>	208 bpm (slowest)	232 bpm	252 bpm	304 bpm (fastest)
<b>Rhythm</b>	Three-beats rhythm (3/4) in the semi-measured part; Always same rhythmic approach to the two repeated components of the main motif: quaver-quaver-minim for the short-short-long motif, and semiquaver-minim for the short-long motif	Three-beat rhythm (3/4) in the semi-measured part; Various approaches to the repeated motifs: Short-short-long motif as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quaver-quaver-minim</li> <li>2. Crotchet-semiquaver-minim</li> <li>3. Semiquaver-semiquaver-minim</li> <li>4. Dotted semiquaver-quaver-minim</li> </ol> Short-long motif as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Semiquaver-minim</li> <li>2. Quaver-minim</li> </ol>	Seven-beats rhythm (7/8) with short pauses between every second phrase; Emphasising the 1 <sup>st</sup> and the 5 <sup>th</sup> quaver of each bar by means of <i>dorrab</i>	Seven-beat rhythm (7/8) in the semi-measured part with short pauses between every second phrase; Emphasising the 1 <sup>st</sup> and the 5 <sup>th</sup> quaver of each bar by means of <i>dorrab</i> ; Considerable use of tempo rubato in the unmeasured section

		Expansion of the rhythmic content creating suspension, e.g. an occasional pause between short and long component in both motifs of short-short-long and short-long		
<b>Dynamics</b>	Steady and limited range of dynamics throughout the piece with the exception of the crescendo inside almost every <i>riz</i>	Wide range of dynamics: contrast in dynamics between the main phrases; Diminuendo followed by a subito forte on the last few notes of the phrases	Limited range of dynamics with the exception of ending almost all phrases with a short crescendo and accent on the last note	Wide range of dynamics: contrast in different phrases: dynamic contrast within phrases by deploying diminuendos and crescendos, particularly during the performance of unmeasured passages; Not all phrases end with a loud accented note
<b>Ornaments</b>	<i>Riz</i> on all long notes followed in many cases by <i>eshareh</i> (upward and downward); Upward <i>eshareh</i> in fast descending passages	<i>Riz</i> on most of the long notes; Upward <i>eshareh</i> in fast descending passages; Frequent use of downward <i>eshareh</i> as most of phrases have a descending motion	Vast use of <i>dorrab</i> on short notes and <i>riz</i> on long notes; Upward <i>eshareh</i> in fast descending passages	Vast use of <i>dorrab</i> on short notes; Upward <i>eshareh</i> in fast descending passages
<b>Phrasing and Articulation</b>	Always legato, by means of <i>riz</i> ( <i>riz</i> , as in many other recordings starts with a very short pause at the beginning); No clear pause between phrases in the semi-measured sections; Short fermatas between the unmeasured and semi-measured sections	Meaningful pauses between phrases by means of fermata and glissando in the semi-measured section, and between the unmeasured and semi-measured sections; All legato by means of <i>riz</i> in the unmeasured sections; Accent and occasional staccatos on the last note of phrases; Passages of short notes in the	Semi-measured section:  Borders of phrases are clearly distinguished by fermatas; Accent and occasional staccatos on the last note of phrases  Unmeasured section:  Legato by means of <i>riz</i>	Semi-measured section:  Borders of the phrases are clearly distinguished by fermatas  Unmeasured part:  Legato by means of <i>riz</i>

		unmeasured sections are performed extremely fast (almost two times faster than all other selected recordings); A very rare example for frequent use of glissando (at the end of phrases along with a fermata); Occasional doubling of the melody notes in thirds		
<b>Use of lower open strings</b>	Limited use of drone	Vast use of drone as an ending to the short motifs and phrases, also to occasionally accompany the melody in a spontaneous way	No use of drone	Very limited use of drone: occasional use of the lower open strings when emphasising the opening of unmeasured passages

**Table 3: Mahur: *Chahar-Pareh (MoradKhani)* (Semi-measured)**

<b>Performer</b>	<b>Ruh-Afza (1959)</b>	<b>Shahnazi (1962)</b>	<b>Borumand (1975)</b>	<b>Alizadeh (1992)</b>
<b>Factor</b>				
<b>Duration</b>	175 seconds (longest)	88 seconds	39 seconds	33 seconds (shortest)
<b>Tuning</b>	A4: 465 Hz (highest)	A4: 425 Hz	A4: 413 Hz (lowest)	A4: 416 Hz
<b>Number of Bars</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Tempo</b>	215 bpm (slowest)	220 bpm	240 bpm	270 bpm (fastest)
<b>Rhythm</b>	<p>Three-beats rhythm (3/4) in the semi-measured section; An almost steady approach to the two main motifs:</p> <p>Short-short-long as quaver-quaver-minim, and short-long motif as semiquaver-minim, with occasional variations (alternating the first with a motif of 4 semiquavers plus a minim, and the second with quaver-minim)</p>	<p>Seven-beats rhythm in the semi-measured section with pauses at the end of some phrases; Various rhythmic variations to the main motif; Occasional accents on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> beats; Occasional syncopated rhythm by addition of a semiquaver value to the 4<sup>th</sup> beat; Use of allargando at the same time with crescendo followed by accelerando in the passages of short fast notes in the unmeasured section (an expression frequently used in the unmeasured pieces)</p>	<p>7/8 rhythm; Steady approach to the rhythmic component; Pauses between phrases extends the rhythm of 7/8 (pauses' lengths differ from 4 to 7 quavers with a tempo of 240 bpm)</p>	<p>7/8 rhythm; Steady approach to the rhythmic component</p>

<b>Dynamics</b>	Very limited range of dynamics	Wide range of dynamics: contrast between consecutive phrases by means of sudden changes; Diminuendo and crescendo on long notes with <i>riz</i> in the unmeasured section	Very limited range of dynamics	Limited dynamic range with a slight change ( <i>mezzo piano</i> , <i>crescendo</i> ) at the end of the first phrase
<b>Ornaments</b>	Vast use of mordant and upward and downward <i>eshareh</i> is combined with different variations on the main motif in a way that makes it challenging to notate; Upward <i>eshareh</i> in the short fast descending passages in the unmeasured section; <i>riz</i> on every long note	Use of <i>dorrab</i> only in the first and the last phrase; <i>riz</i> on most of the long notes but mostly not on the last notes of the phrases; Limited use of <i>eshareh</i>	Attachment of the long notes with <i>riz</i> to the short notes with <i>dorrab</i> makes it difficult to distinguish the border of the notes; Same as shahnazi, Borumand does not use <i>riz</i> on the long notes at the end of phrases	Alizadeh, same as Borumand, uses <i>dorrab</i> on the short notes vastly (Since this performance is faster than Borumand's recording, it makes it even more difficult to distinguish <i>riz</i> on the long notes from <i>dorrab</i> on the Short notes as they are rapidly attached)
<b>Phrasing and Articulation</b>	Continuous use of <i>riz</i> on every long note gives the entire performance a sense of legato; No significant pause between phrases, even when changing the mode; Use of glissando once in the unmeasured section at the end	Diverse articulation gestures: alternation between <i>riz</i> and staccato, meaningful pauses between the phrases, and ending many phrases with a <i>sforzando</i> ; Occasional doubling of the melody in thirds on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> beat; Use of glissando once in the space between the unmeasured and the semi-measured section in the second section (Shahnazi uses this technique in both his	Continuously legato by combining use of <i>dorrab</i> and <i>riz</i>	Accents by means of <i>dorrab</i> always on the 1 <sup>st</sup> and the 5 <sup>th</sup> beats; significant pauses between phrases

		performances of the two <i>Chahar-Parehs</i> )		
<b>Use of lower open strings</b>	Occasional touch on the lower strings: no functional use of the drone	Both spontaneous and functional use of the lower open strings, sometimes to ring over occasional notes, and sometimes to emphasise specific beats	Almost a single-string performance: no use of drone	Use of lower open strings in the space between phrases (every second bar)

**Table 4: *Nava, Chahar-Mezrab* (Measured)**

<b>Performer</b>	<b>Ruh-Afza (1959)</b>	<b>Shahnazi (1962)</b>	<b>Borumand (1975)</b>	<b>Alizadeh (1992)</b>
<b>Factor</b>				
<b>Duration</b>	31 seconds	57 seconds	57 seconds	44 Seconds
<b>Tuning</b>	A4: 486 Hz (highest)	A4: 430 Hz	A4: 425 Hz	A4: 419 Hz (lowest)
<b>Number of Bars</b>	45 (briefest)	87 (most extended)	60	59
<b>Tempo</b>	170 bpm	190 bpm (fastest)	130 bpm (slowest)	180 bpm
<b>Rhythm</b>	The rhythmic presentation of the semiquavers in the groups of 3 notes is clear (They can be distinguished from the added ornaments); No tempo change	Rhythmic variation on the main motif mostly in the second half of the piece	Short pauses before the downbeats at the beginning and the end of the piece	No tempo change
<b>Dynamics</b>	Consistently forte	Dynamic change in every phrase: piano-crescendo-forte in most of the phrases	Very consistent soft touch quality: no dynamics change	Slight nuance difference between phrases: the repeated phrase is always forte while the new sequences are slightly softer; Considerable dynamic change towards the end (soft start then crescendo in the repetition of the 3-notes pattern in bars 54 & 55)

<b>Ornaments</b>	When there is a semiquaver followed by a quaver in a descending passage, most of the time a downward <i>eshareh</i> follows the quaver (which can be confused with another semiquaver to make a group of 3 semiquavers)	Narrow border between ornaments and the main notes of the melody due to the fast tempo	It is difficult to distinguish ornaments from the main melody notes due to the fast tempo	The last semiquavers of the beats are most of the time too soft, so it is hard to understand if they are ornaments or a part of the main melody (both when there is a quaver with a semiquaver and when there are three semiquavers in a beat)
<b>Phrasing and Articulation</b>	Always legato; The upbeat semiquaver is semi-staccato	The first phrase begins with downbeat (different from other performances); Considerable pause between phrases	Quavers are always tenuto, especially the <i>E koron</i> which bears a slight accent; No staccato, everything legato; consistent phrase shapes	In the three-bars sequences (bars 35-45) there is a slight accent by softly plucking the lower open string at the beginning of each sequence
<b>Use of lower open strings</b>	Spontaneous plucking of the lower string	Vast use of open lower string almost everywhere	Many open string strums in between the main beats	Softly plucking the lower open string as an accompaniment to the main melody throughout the piece, also to emphasise the beginning of three-bar sequences

**Table 5: *Homayun, Chahar-Mezrab* (Measured)**

<b>Performer</b>	<b>Ruh-Afza (1959)</b>	<b>Shahnazi (1962)</b>	<b>Borumand (1975)</b>	<b>Alizadeh (1992)</b>
<b>Factor</b>				
<b>Duration</b>	39 seconds	59 seconds	53 seconds	53 seconds
<b>Tuning</b>	A4: 458 Hz (highest)	A4: 423 Hz	A4: 421 Hz (lowest)	421 Hz (lowest)
<b>Number of Bars</b>	50 (briefest)	88 (most extended)	61	61
<b>Tempo</b>	155 bpm	180 bpm (fastest)	140 bpm (slowest)	150 bpm
<b>Rhythm</b>	No tempo changes or new variations to the rhythmic content	No tempo changes or new variations to the rhythmic content	Inconsistent tempo; Various ways of starting the upbeat in each phrase: 3 semiquavers, 2 demisemiquavers, 1 quaver	Steady approach to the rhythm of the repeated motifs
<b>Dynamics</b>	Almost no dynamic change except for a slight crescendo at the end	Wide dynamic range: considerable changes in the second part of the piece providing contrast; Most of phrases end with a slight crescendo (last note of the phrases is always fairly loud)	Very consistent nuance: no change	Almost consistent dynamics with a very slight and limited change in the second half of the piece and a very short and limited crescendo at the end of the piece
<b>Ornaments</b>	Downward <i>eshareh</i> on A <i>koron</i> (This is an instrumental technique on Persian plucked string instruments: the note on	Limited use of downward and upward <i>eshareh</i>	Besides almost consistent use of downward <i>eshareh</i> after A <i>koron</i> , there is always a narrow border between the main notes of the	Vast use of downward <i>eshareh</i> as an instrumental technique

	the first fret is followed occasionally by the same open string by mean of slurs)		melody and the ornaments (second and third semiquavers of each beat)	
<b>Phrasing and Articulation</b>	Grouping of the semiquavers and the difference between ornaments and the main melody notes are clear	Clear ideas in phrasing: pause between phrases; Always legato	Always accent on E <i>koron</i> as a characteristic of the piece/mode; Delayed execution of the last downbeat at the end (performer's stylistic)	Accent on the E <i>koron</i> as the characteristic of the piece/mode
<b>Use of lower open strings</b>	Spontaneous plucking of lower open strings	Frequent use of the lower open strings	Spontaneous and free plucking of the lower open strings	Spontaneous and free plucking of the lower open strings

## **Appendix 5: Tables for Performing Aspects in Case Studies**

**Table 6: Tuning**

<b>Performer</b> <b>Piece</b>	<b>Aqa</b> <b>Hoseyn-Qoli</b> <b>(1905)</b>	<b>Ruh-Afza</b> <b>(1959)</b>	<b>Shahnazi</b> <b>(1962)</b>	<b>Borumand</b> <b>(1975)</b>	<b>Alizadeh</b> <b>(1992)</b>
<i>Araq</i>	A4: 430 Hz	A4: 474Hz	A4: 432 Hz	A4: 420 Hz	N/A
<i>Chahar-Mezrab in Nava</i>	N/A	A4: 486 Hz	A4: 430 Hz	A4: 425 Hz	A4: 419 Hz
<i>Chahar-Mezrab in Homayun</i>	N/A	A4: 458 Hz	A4: 423 Hz	A4: 421 Hz	421 Hz
<i>Chahar-Pareh in Abu'ata</i>	N/A	A4: 453 Hz	A4: 424Hz	A4: 438Hz	A4: 419Hz
<i>Chahar-Pareh in Mahur</i>	N/A	A4: 465Hz	A4: 425Hz	A4: 413 Hz	A4: 416Hz

**Table 7: Tempo in *Chahar-Mezrab***

<b>Performer</b> <b><i>Dastgah</i></b>	<b>Ruh-Afza</b> <b>(1959)</b>	<b>Shahnazi</b> <b>(1962)</b>	<b>Borumand</b> <b>(1975)</b>	<b>Alizadeh</b> <b>(1992)</b>
<i>Nava</i>	170 bpm	190 bpm	130 bpm	180 bpm
<i>Homayun</i>	155 bpm	180 bpm	140 bpm	150 bpm

**Table 8: Tempo in *Chahar-Pareh***

<b>Performer</b> <b><i>Dastgah</i></b>	<b>Ruh-Afza</b> <b>(1959)</b>	<b>Shahnazi</b> <b>(1962)</b>	<b>Borumand</b> <b>(1975)</b>	<b>Alizadeh</b> <b>(1992)</b>
<i>Abu'ata</i>	208 bpm	232 bpm	252 bpm	304bpm
<i>Mahur</i>	215 bpm	220 bpm	240 bpm	270 bpm

**Table 9: Upward and downward *eshareh* in ascending and descending passages**

Passage type	Ascending passages	Descending passages
Ornament type		
Upward <i>eshareh</i>	34	100
Downward <i>eshareh</i>	11	120

**Table 10: Upward *eshareh* in ascending passages**

Performer	Aqa Hoseyn-Qoli (1905)	Ruh-Afza (1959)	Shahnazi (1962)	Borumand (1975)	Alizadeh (1992)
Piece					
<i>Araq</i> (unmeasured)	0	0	3	0	N/A
<i>Chahar-Mezrab</i> in <i>Nava</i> (measured)	N/A	0	0	0	0
<i>Chahar-Mezrab</i> in <i>Homayun</i> (measured)	N/A	0	0	0	0
<i>Chahar-Pareh</i> in <i>Abu'ata</i> (semi-measured)	N/A	5	1	5	5
<i>Chahar-Pareh</i> in <i>Mahur</i> (semi-measured)	N/A	11	0	4	0

**Table 11: Upward *eshareh* in descending passages**

<b>Performer</b> <b>Piece</b>	<b>Aqa</b> <b>Hoseyn-Qoli</b> <b>(1905)</b>	<b>Ruh-Afza</b> <b>(1959)</b>	<b>Shahnazi</b> <b>(1962)</b>	<b>Borumand</b> <b>(1975)</b>	<b>Alizadeh</b> <b>(1992)</b>
<i>Araq</i> (unmeasured)	3	5	7	9	N/A
<i>Chahar-Mezrab</i> in <i>Nava</i> (measured)	N/A	0	0	0	0
<i>Chahar-Mezrab</i> in <i>Homayun</i> (measured)	N/A	0	0	0	0
<i>Chahar-Pareh</i> in <i>Abu'ata</i> (semi- measured)	N/A	10	5	5	14
<i>Chahar-Pareh</i> in <i>Mahur</i> (semi- measured)	N/A	33	4	5	0

**Table 12: Downward *eshareh* in ascending passages**

<b>Performer</b> <b>Piece</b>	<b>Aqa</b> <b>Hoseyn-Qoli</b> <b>(1905)</b>	<b>Ruh-Afza</b> <b>(1959)</b>	<b>Shahnazi</b> <b>(1962)</b>	<b>Borumand</b> <b>(1975)</b>	<b>Alizadeh</b> <b>(1992)</b>
<i>Araq</i> (unmeasured)	0	0	0	0	N/A
<i>Chahar-Mezrab</i> in <i>Nava</i> (measured)	N/A	0	0	0	0
<i>Chahar-Mezrab</i> in <i>Homayun</i> (measured)	N/A	0	0	0	8
<i>Chahar-Pareh</i> in <i>Abu'ata</i> (semi- measured)	N/A	1	0	1	0
<i>Chahar-Pareh</i> in <i>Mahur</i> (semi- measured)	N/A	1	0	0	0

**Table 13: Downward *eshareh* in descending passages**

<b>Performer</b> <b>Piece</b>	<b>Aqa</b> <b>Hoseyn-Qoli</b> <b>(1905)</b>	<b>Ruh-Afza</b> <b>(1959)</b>	<b>Shahnazi</b> <b>(1962)</b>	<b>Borumand</b> <b>(1975)</b>	<b>Alizadeh</b> <b>(1992)</b>
<i>Araq</i> (unmeasured)	0	0	0	0	N/A
<i>Chahar-Mezrab</i> in <i>Nava</i> (measured)	N/A	18	0	0	0
<i>Chahar-Mezrab</i> in <i>Homayun</i> (measured)	N/A	6	0	8	13
<i>Chahar-Pareh</i> in <i>Abu'ata</i> (semi- measured)	N/A	16	21	0	23
<i>Chahar-Pareh</i> in <i>Mahur</i> (semi- measured)	N/A	8	6	0	1

**Table 14: Use of allargando with accent and staccato followed by an accelerando in the unmeasured passages of short fast notes, quantity**

<b>Performer</b> <b>Piece</b>	<b>Aqa</b> <b>Hoseyn-Qoli</b> <b>(1905)</b>	<b>Ruh-Afza</b> <b>(1959)</b>	<b>Shahnazi</b> <b>(1962)</b>	<b>Borumand</b> <b>(1975)</b>	<b>Alizadeh</b> <b>(1992)</b>
<i>Araq</i> (unmeasured)	4	0	1	2	N/A
<i>Chahar-Pareh</i> in <i>Abu'ata</i> (semi- measured)	N/A	2	0	0	5
<i>Chahar-Pareh</i> in <i>Mahur</i> (semi- measured)	N/A	2	1	N/A	N/A

**Table 15: Use of glissando**

<b>Performer</b> <b>Piece</b>	<b>Aqa</b> <b>Hoseyn-Qoli</b> <b>(1905)</b>	<b>Ruh-Afza</b> <b>(1959)</b>	<b>Shahnazi</b> <b>(1962)</b>	<b>Borumand</b> <b>(1975)</b>	<b>Alizadeh</b> <b>(1992)</b>
<i>Araq</i>	0	1 functional	1 functional	0	N/A
<i>Chahar-Pareh in Abu'ata</i> (semi-measured)	N/A	0	6 as sound effect	0	0
<i>Chahar-Pareh in Mahur</i> (semi-measured)	N/A	1 functional	1 as sound effect	0	0