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Music Making in Iran: Developments Between the Sixteenth and Late Nineteenth Centuries

Amir Hosein Pourjavady

The Graduate Center, City University of New York

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MUSIC MAKING IN IRAN:
DEVELOPMENTS BETWEEN THE SIXTEENTH AND LATE NINETEENTH CENTURIES

by

Amir Hosein Pourjavady

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in music in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2019
Music Making in Iran: Developments between the Sixteenth and Late Nineteenth Centuries

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Amir Hosein Pourjavady

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Music satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

MUSIC MAKING IN IRAN: DEVELOPMENTS BETWEEN THE SIXTEENTH AND LATE NINETEENTH CENTURIES

by

Amir Hosein Pourjavady

Advisor: Stephen Blum

The primary question in this study is how the long-established maqām modulatory schemes evolved into a set of seven or twelve large-scale performance formats (dastgāhs) and what socio-cultural forces were behind this development. In doing so, this dissertation draws on a variety of sources including musical treatises, song-text collections, court chronicles, travel accounts, biographies, paintings, nineteenth-century albums of photographs and the early Persian 78 rpm records.

The first chapter provides a background on the role of courtesans and their accompanying instrumentalists in Iran between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries. The influence of upper-class courtesans on the urban musical milieu was particularly strong throughout the seventeenth century. While they were always under control and supervision by the authorities, courtesans provided a large amount of tax revenue for the government. Toward the end of the seventeenth century performance practice of art music found a precarious position in Isfahan, mostly due to the association of music with courtesan culture. Hence the Safavid rulers frequently issued royal decrees forbidding performance of music along with drinking of wine, gambling, and activities of courtesan salons. In the second half of the eighteenth century a red-light district was established in Shiraz where a large number of urban and provincial courtesans were gathered catering to the refined taste of the nobility and military commanders. These courtesans were famous for their beauty, seductive manners, polished etiquette (adab), witty conversation and, above all, they were accomplished singers, instrumentalists and dancers.

With the establishment of the Qajar dynasty, Tehran became the capital in 1775. The first two Qajar rulers brought a large number of courtesans mainly from Isfahan and Shiraz to Tehran together with their male accompanists, who primarily served as their teachers and composers.
These professional male and female musicians still carried the vestiges of maqām music in this period. Among them, Bābā Makhmur Esfahāni was the most prominent court singer who later became responsible for combining modal entities and arranging them into twelve sequences of dastgāhs. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the court music came to be dominated by professional male musicians and entertainers who performed mostly at various male court gatherings while a small number of female musicians still performed in the indoor ceremonies of the hareem. Discussing the social organization of musicians and their sources of patronage, the second chapter also looks at the urban ensembles in the capital and their connection with the royal court.

The third chapter first outlines the major sources that were written on the Persian modal system between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries. It further shows that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the modal system of Persian music was theoretically defined as three sets of modes including twelve maqāms, six āvāzs, and twenty four sho’bes that were rendered in the form of modulatory schemes. Toward the end of the sixteenth century when the capital shifted to Isfahan, court repertoire began burgeoning and incorporating elements of regional and rural music in the form of a new modal entity called gusheh. In the second half of the eighteenth century the modal nomenclature among musicians began to change significantly. The terms maqām and sho’be gradually became eclipsed by the term āvāz, while the concept of dastgāh referred to a modulatory scheme including a number of āvāzs interspersed with vocal and instrumental compositions. In the second half of the nineteenth century, two stylistic schools with different arrangements of modulatory schemes and performance formats (dastgāhs) were prevailing at the Qajar court. The first school was associated with the family of Mohammad Sādeq Khan, a celebrated santur player known for his innovative improvisational technique and the second school was associated with Mirzā ʿAbdollāh and his brother Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli who developed a fixed repertoire of free-rhythmic pieces known as the radif.

Chapters four and five survey the development of rhythmic cycles (oṣuls) and musical genres between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, with the decline of compositional genres, long rhythmic cycles were no longer recognized, nor was the term oṣul in the vocabulary used by musicians. However, in the late nineteenth century, vocal compositions could be still categorized in various forms and largely performed in the cycles of four or six beats.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS \hspace{1cm} x

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION AND TRANSLATION \hspace{1cm} xi

LIST OF PLATES \hspace{1cm} xii

LIST OF TABLES \hspace{1cm} xiii

INTRODUCTION \hspace{1cm} 1

## CHAPTER ONE: COURTESAN CULTURE IN EARLY MODERN IRAN

The Late Fifteenth Century \hspace{1cm} 8

The Sixteenth Century \hspace{1cm} 11

The Seventeenth Century \hspace{1cm} 18

The Eighteenth Century \hspace{1cm} 28

The Early Nineteenth Century \hspace{1cm} 35

## CHAPTER TWO: MUSICAL LIFE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Aqā Moḥammad Khān \hspace{1cm} 46

Fatḥ-‘Ali Shāh \hspace{1cm} 48

Moḥammad Shāh \hspace{1cm} 51

*Smaller Troupes of Performers* \hspace{1cm} 55

*Military and European Bands* \hspace{1cm} 57

*Amateur Musicians, Music Theorists, and Poets* \hspace{1cm} 58

Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh \hspace{1cm} 60

‘Amaleh-ye Ṭabar -e Khāṣṣeh \hspace{1cm} 60

*Chief of Court Musicians* \hspace{1cm} 67

*Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khān* \hspace{1cm} 70

*The Farāhāni Family* \hspace{1cm} 73

‘Amaleh-ye Ṭarab and Motrēbs \hspace{1cm} 75

*Instrumentalists, Singers, and Accompanists* \hspace{1cm} 76
Raqqāṣ and Bāzigar 77
Moqalleds 79
Female Court Performers 80
Patrons of Music 83
Urban Musical Ensembles in the Capital 85
Miscellaneous Ensembles 92
Anjoman-e Okhovvat 94
Music of Sufi Lodges 94
Luthiers 95
Moẓaffar-al-Din Shāh 96
Recording Technology 99

CHAPTER THREE: THE MODAL SYSTEM 108
The Major Sources for the Persian Modal System 1500-1900 108
The Timurid Period 115
Overview of Accounts of Modal Entities in Safavid Treatises 116
The Modal System and its Organization in the Safavid Period 126
Maqām 127
Sho’beh 130
Āvāzeh 135
Characteristic Melodic Phrases 137
Tarkib and Gusheh 138
Shadd 144
The Eighteenth Century: The Modal System in Transition 146
The Emergence of Dastgāh 149
The Qajar Court 161
The Second Half of the Nineteenth Century 163
Dastgāhs in the Nāṣeri Period 166
Āvāzs 168
Radif 172
CHAPTER FOUR: RHYTHM

The Early Accounts of Rhythm in Arabic and Persian
The Timurid Period
Overview of Accounts of Rhythm in the Safavid Period
The Development of Rhythmic Cycles in the Safavid Persia
Rhythmic Cycles of the Art Music
Rhythmic Cycles of the Naqqāreh-khāneh
The Qajar Period

CHAPTER FIVE: MUSICAL GENRES

The Early History of Musical Genres in Persia
Arabic Genres
Persian Genres
The Late Timurid Period
Description of Musical Genres in Safavid Treatises
The Genres and their Structures in the Safavid Period
Kār and ‘Amal
Qowl
Ṣowt
Naqsh
Nāqshayn
Tarāneh
Rikhteh
Pishrow
Sarband
Varsāqi
Arasbāri
The Eighteenth Century
Vocal Genres in the Qajar Period
Āvāz
Taṣnif
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I should also thank Mehdi Farāhānī and Moḥsen Moḥammadi for giving me some of the paintings and nineteenth-century photographs of musicians. Finally, George Murer kindly went over a number of chapters, offering suggestions concerning grammar and also helped me with the translation of some paragraphs from French and German to English. Last but not least, I would like to acknowledge the loving support of my wife Shādi who had to share me with this dissertation for more than four years.

Amir Hosein Pourjavady
Los Angeles, July 2019
NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION AND TRANSLATION

I have used the transliteration system of the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* with seven simple modifications:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ث} & \rightarrow \text{th} \\
\text{خ} & \rightarrow \text{kh} \\
\text{چ} & \rightarrow \text{ch} \\
\text{ذ} & \rightarrow \text{dh} \\
\text{ژ} & \rightarrow \text{zh} \\
\text{ش} & \rightarrow \text{sh} \\
\text{غ} & \rightarrow \text{gh}
\end{align*}
\]

The short vowels are represented by:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ا} & \rightarrow \text{a} \\
\text{ئ} & \rightarrow \text{e} \\
\text{و} & \rightarrow \text{o}
\end{align*}
\]

(‘two’ in Persian is always represented by \(d\ddot{\text{o}}\))

The long vowels are represented by:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ا} & \rightarrow \text{ā} \\
\text{ی} & \rightarrow \text{i} \\
\text{و} & \rightarrow \text{u}
\end{align*}
\]

Final silent Persian \(\text{s}\) and Arabic \(\text{ṣ}\) are always represented by \(\text{h}\). Arabic names, technical terms and titles are also transliterated according to the above Persian system for the sake of uniformity.

Translation of Persian texts are all by myself, except in some cases that are otherwise indicated. For translations of some paragraphs from Eskandar Beg Turkamān’s *Tārikh-e ‘ālamārā’ ‘Abbāsi*, I used primarily the English translation of Roger Savory, yet I changed it according to the Persian text in certain instances where it was inaccurate. I also did the same with the English translation of *The Áin-i-Akbari*, made by H. Blochmann.
LIST OF PLATES

CHAPTER 1


Plate 3. Painting of Shah Ṭahmāsp made for his brother Bahrām Mirzā. Tabriz or Herat, 1520s. Courtesy of the Topkapi Palace Museum, Istanbul.


Plate 5. Courtesan with a long-necked lute, Isfahan, circa 1600-1610. Reproduced by permission of Los Angeles Museum of Art, the Nasli M. Heeramanec Collection, gift of Joan Palevsky (M.73.5.457).


Plate 7. Pen box showing a courtesan making love with a gentry. Isfahan, dated 1712. From the private collection of Nasser Khalili, London.


Plate 17. A courtesan playing the *kamāncheh* associated with the *dastgāh-e bāzīgar-khāneh*, Tehran, circa 1820. Source unknown.

Plate 18. A courtesan playing the *santur* associated with the *dastgāh-e bāzīgar-khāneh*, Tehran, circa 1820. Source unknown.

CHAPTER 2


Plate 23. Court *bāzīgars* in the early nineteenth century. Source unknown.


Plate 25. A postcard depicting a musical gathering in the house of the Sardār of Yerevan in the second half of the nineteenth century.


Plate 27. Court male musicians in 1863. Moḥammad Ḥasan Khān (the head of court musicians and *santur*), Āqā Moṭalleb (*kamāncheh*), Āqā Gholām-Ḥosayn (*tār*), Āqā ʿAli Kāshi (singer), Āqā Ḥasan (singer and *tār*), Reżā-Qoli (singer-accompanist), Sayyed Qorāb (singer), Āqā Ḥasan’s son
(dombak), Khoshnavāz Khān’s son (kamāncheh), Moḥammad Šādeq (santur), and the son of Āqā ‘Ali-akbar (tār). Courtesy of the Golestān Palace Museum, Tehran, Album 281, no. 2.


Plate 29. Left to right: Gholām-Ḥosayn Khān Herāti (sārangi), Abulqāsem Khāldār (singer-accompanist) Ḥābibollāh Samā‘-Ḥożur (singer-accompanist), Moḥammad Šādeq Khān (ra‘is), Āqā Ḥosayn Qolī (tār), Mirzā ‘Abrdollāh (tār). Courtesy of the Golestān Palace Museum, Tehran, Album 201, no. 8.


Plate 31. The ceremony of āshpazān (making soup) in October 9, 1894. Bāzigars are sitting in the front row and professional musicians such as Mirzā ‘Abrdollāh are sitting in the back. Courtesy of the Golestān Palace Museum, Tehran.

Plate 32. The ceremony of āshpazān (making soup) in October 9, 1894. Bāzigars are sitting in the front row and professional musicians such as Mirzā ‘Abrdollāh and Ḥābibollāh Samā‘-Ḥożur are sitting in the back. Moḥammad Šādeq Khān (ra‘is) is also standing as the coordinator. Courtesy of the Golestān Palace Museum, Tehran.

Plate 33. Moḥammad Šādeq Khān with his two sons, Moṭalleb and ‘Abrdollāh, and his brother, Mirzā Shafi’. Courtesy of the Golestān Palace Museum, Tehran, Album 295, no. 54.


Plate 35. A postcard showing a troupe of urban musicians and bāzigars in Tehran.


Plate 41. Anis al-Dowleh, the favorite wife of Nāṣer-al- Din Shah. Source unknown.
Plate 42. Musā Kāshi, a Jewish kamāncheh player (top right), Bāqer Khān Rāmeshgar (top left), Morad Khān (bottom right), ṬAl-i-akbar Kāshi (bottom left). From private collection of Bāqer Khān Rāmeshgar.

Plate 43. A troupe of female musicians and dancers. Source unknown.

Plate 44. A troupe of female musicians and dancers. Source unknown.

Plate 45. A postcard showing a troupe of male musicians and a dancing boy including Dāvud Kalimi Shirāzi (tār) and Aqā Jān (dombak).

Plate 46. A troupe of Jewish male musicians and dancing boys. Source unknown.

Plate 47. A mixed troupe of male and female musicians and dancers. Source unknown.


Plate 50. Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh in the andarun together with some of his wives and concubines and Za’farān Bāji. Courtesy of the Institute for Iranian Contemporary Historical Studies, Harvard University.

Plate 51. Ghazāl (dancer), Aziz Sheshlulband (tār) and Marāl (dancer). Courtesy of the Institute for Iranian Contemporary Historical Studies, Harvard University.

Plate 52. Turkman musicians at the Qajar court. Courtesy of the Central Library, University of Tehran, no. 1052.


Plate 55. Garden party at the anjoman-e okhovvat. The musician playing the kamāncheh is Ḩosayn Khān Esmā’īlzādeh. From the private collection of Golshan Ebrāhimi.

Plate 56. Garden party at the anjoman-e okhovvat. Some of the musicians in the picture include Darvish Khān (tār player), Montażam-al-Ḥokamā’ (setār), Ḩosayn Hangāfarin (violin). From private collection of Golshan Ebrāhimi.

xv
Plate 57. Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli and his students in the house of the luthier Yahyā. Source unknown.


Plate 60. ‘Abdollāh, an adolescent singer who performed widely at the court. Courtesy of the Golestān Palace Museum, Tehran.

Plate 61. Taymur Raqqāṣ, a prominent dancing boy amusing Jenāb Sarhang, head of the Shāhsavan tribe. Courtesy of the Institute for Iranian Contemporary Historical Studies, Harvard University.

### LIST OF TABLES

#### CHAPTER 3

Table 3.1. Persian musical treatises written between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries.

Table 3.2. The associations of *sho’behs* with the twelve *maqāms* in *Nasim-e ŭtarab*.

Table 3.3. The scale structure and melodic contour of *maqāms*, *sho’behs*, and āvāzehs in *Taqsim al-naghamāt*.

Table 3.4. The twelve *maqāms* and their related *sho’behs* in the treatise of Mir Šadr al-Din Moḩammad.

Table 3.5. The twelve *maqāms* and their related *sho’behs*, āvāzehs and *gushehs* in the treatise of Amir Khān Gorji.

Table 3.6. The dynamics of *maqāms* and *sho’behs* in the *Taqsim al-naghamāt*.

Table 3.7. Names of scale degrees in Persian and Ottoman musical sources between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.

Table 3.8. Lists of *dastgāhs* in the nineteenth-century musical sources.

#### CHAPTER 4

Table 4.1. The rhythmic cycles mentioned by Safavid music theorists throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Table 4.2. The rhythmic cycles mentioned in the Anonymous Treatise and the *Bahjat al-ruḥ* and comparing them with the accounts of the first and last Safavid musical treatises.

Table 4.3. The rhythmic cycles or patterns of *naqqāreh-khāneh* between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries.

#### CHAPTER 5

Table 5.1. The names of various sections of vocal and instrumental compositions between the fifteenth and twentieth centuries.
INTRODUCTION
PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THIS STUDY

The beginning of the eighteenth century marks a period of chaos and political disarray in the history of Iran. The Afghan invasion in 1722 and the downfall of the Safavid Empire culminated in the transformation of the intellectual, political and artistic life of the country. The Safavid court in Isfahan, previously the center of urban musical life, suddenly collapsed, and many musicians who were serious practitioners of art music abandoned the profession. This had repercussions for many long-established (from the fifteenth century, if not earlier) aspects of music, including the modal system, rhythmic cycles, compositional genres, and instrumentation. In subsequent years, shifts in the seat of power and changes in the pattern of patronage led to the emergence of regional musical practices, the rise of provincial male musicians and courtesans, and their subsequent movement to the new capital. At the beginning of the nineteenth century a new musical system was gradually fostered in the Qajar court, centering on twelve modulatory ordered repertoires known as dastgāhs. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the new musical system synthesized some of the most vital aspects of regional folk and urban music while assimilating old melodies and the creative inputs of new generations of musicians. In this system, melodic modes were indiscriminately called āvāz; the concept of time cycle was not clearly emphasized; the primary mode of musical creation was based on solo improvisation; and the major musical instrument, on which a substantial portion of the repertoire was performed and conceptualized, was the tār, a double-bellied, long-necked lute.

The formation and early theory of the dastgāh system have long been a subject of dispute among Iranian and western scholars. Dealing with this issue was certainly a formidable challenge for musicologists in the past. Historical documents and old treatises pertaining to the concept of dastgāh had not been discovered and remained unpublished until very recently. This was also the
case with early recordings of Persian music and related discographic information, which have only become fully available to researchers in the last little while. Furthermore, much of the scholarship on historical development of *dastgāh*, when initiated, tended to study the subject based on textual analysis of partial musical treatises and to detach it completely from socio-cultural phenomena such as patronage, class origins, modes of production, and contact with other cultures.

It is safe to say that compared to other non-western musical traditions, especially the music of India, which enjoys an extensive amount of academic writing to this date, little has been written on Persian classical music and its historical development in English and other European languages. Ethnomusicologists have raised questions about the evolution of the Persian modal system and also the fate of music making in Iran after the fall of the Timurid rule in the beginning of the sixteenth century up until the second half of the Qajar rule in the middle of the nineteenth century.

Despite its prominence, research on the formation and early theory of the *dastgāh* is limited to passing references. However, in the past two decades, as a result of the new discoveries of various documents ranging from musical treatises to song-text collections, travel accounts, diaries and interviews of musicians, musical notations, and old recordings of the *radif* and compositions, indigenous musical research in Iran has evolved enormously and students of Persian music are now in a better position to examine the development of Persian music in the premodern era. My intention in this dissertation is to provide a new perspective on the modal and rhythmic systems of the *dastgāh* music by examining their divergent trajectories and tracing their historical developments back to the fifteenth century. Safavid treatises largely deal with modes, rhythmic cycles, and compositional genres; these are the topics of Chapters Three, Four and Five. My main questions were how the Safavid *maqām* system, rhythmic cycles, and musical genres were
structured and later evolved into a set of seven or twelve large-scale ordered repertoires (dastgāhs) in the nineteenth century, and what socio-cultural forces were behind this development.

Of particular value to my research was my background in Persian music, consisting of instruction in setār and the radif for roughly ten years (1983-1993) from Dāriush Ṣafvat. I also studied with Ḥosayn Alizādeh, Dāriush Ṭalā’i and Ḥātam Asgari between 1990 and 1995 while I was an undergraduate student of music at the University of Tehran taking classes with Iranian music theorists and musicologists such as Farhād Fakhreddini, Taqi Binesh and Mohammad-Taghi Massoudieh. Around 2000 I met with Moḥammad-Reżā Loṭfī occasionally in Southern California and had long interviews with him on various topics including the implication of oral tradition, instrumental skills, radif and old compositions. Meanwhile, I conducted research on a wide range of musical documents and edited, translated and published a number of Persian musical treatises and song-text collections that were composed between the thirteenth and the end of the nineteenth centuries.

Besides musical treatises, chronicles, European travel accounts, and other historical literature were particularly important in this study and I used them to write the musical life of the period in which the dastgāh system was formed and subsequently developed. By describing the musical life and socio-cultural context, I tried to identify who the people were who created, performed, heard and patronized this music and examine the choices they made and why they made them. I tried to explore what they valued most in the music and how these choices reflected both tradition and innovation. Early recordings of the Gramophone Company were also among the most important sources in this study. The Gramophone Company came to Iran in 1906 and began recording a whole range of court repertoire from the most celebrated musicians of the time including Mirzā ‘Abdollah, Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli and their students. Most of these recordings have
been digitized and released by recording publishers in Iran while a few still remain in the EMI archive. A careful analysis of these recordings still makes clear various traditions of grouping *dastgāhs* in this period and the incorporation of various urban and rural āvāzs to the core modal system.

The dissertation contains five chapters. Chapter one provides a background on the role of courtesans and their accompanying instrumentalists in Iran. Since in two previous publications I had examined musical life in the Safavid and Afsharid periods, chapter two only concentrates on the royal patronage and social organization of musicians in the Qajar period. Chapter three briefly outlines Persian musical treatises dealing with the modal system between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries while it further explores the development of *maqām* and *dastgāh* systems and the formation of *radif*. Finally, chapters four and five survey the structure and development of rhythmic cycles (*oṣuls*) and musical genres.

In this study, I focus on analysis of data collected from the primary sources written from the beginning of the sixteenth century all the way to the end of the nineteenth century. In most cases, I recognized that a historical background or the discussion of earlier literature can further illuminate some of the topics at hand. Hence a reader may find discussion of topics such as courtesan culture, rhythm, musical genres extended briefly back to the Timurid period or even earlier.

Throughout the dissertation, I sometimes use such terms as ‘classical musicians’ or ‘classically trained musicians.’ While the epithet ‘classical’ may seem inappropriate or anachronistic when applied to Persian musicians of the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries, by classical, I essentially mean the category of musicians that enjoyed a high level of skill and sophistication, and mostly performed at courts or the homes of aristocracy. This category of
musicians may well agree with what ‘Abd al-Qāder Marāghi labels in the fifteenth century as mobāsherān fann (commissioners of the art) adept in both ‘elm and ‘amal (theoretical and practical knowledge) who performed in the majles of sultans and amirs. In the nineteenth century, ‘amaleh-ye tarab-e khāṣseh, the solo specialists who enjoyed the highest esteem at the Qajar court and were masters of dastgāhs and the radif, could well fit into the category of classical musicians whereas maddāhs, mḍrebs (hereditary professional musicians) and courtesans who were exponents of religious genres, light songs, and dance tunes could be grouped as semi-classical musicians or entertainers.

I also employ the taxonomy of classical/semi-classical/light in reference to musical genres or melodic modes. In chapter three, I tried to show that while classical modes were characteristically performed at the court and in urban musical centers and were set to ghazals of classical poets, semi-classical or vernacular modes were associated mainly with folk-regional genres and were typically set to dōbaytis (quatrains). Classifying vocal genres as light was also a phenomenon that was common among Persian music theorists throughout the history. For instance, Marāghi characterizes havāi as the akhaff e aṣnāf-e taṣānif or the lightest genre of taṣānifs.

While the modern concept of dastgāh as it is known today is primarily a nineteenth century development, it is now evident that dastgāh as a musical term predates the Qajar period (1785-1925) by at least a century. It goes without saying that an attempt to reconstruct the historical development of Persian music during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries certainly involves a considerable amount of conjecture and raises more questions than it answers. Nonetheless, this study as I propose it certainly yields particular insights into the nature of the repertoire of Persian classical music and, by extension, the systems and practices of neighboring regions.
I hope that addressing these issues will resolve some of the ambiguities currently evident in the terminology used to describe modern Persian performance practice, particularly modal concepts such as āvāz and dastgāh, which at this time are overlapping or have multiple meanings. In the course of their evolution, these musical terms have taken on different concepts and meanings. The concepts of dastgāh and gusheh were certainly different in the middle of the nineteenth century from what they are now perceived to mean in modern practice of Persian music. This study could also shed light on the historical link between Persian music and music of neighboring regions, for instance the Azeri mugam. Likewise, some of the methodologies used in this dissertation could be applied to study historical developments of other large-scale ordered repertoires in the Middle East and Central Asia such as the Iraqi maqām, Tajik-Uzbek shashmaqom, or the Uyghur on ikki muqam.

3 In an interview I conducted with Moḥammad-Reżā Loṭfī he also opined that the āvāzs of radif that are set to dōbaytis were predominantly rooted in regional-folk music of Iran.
CHAPTER ONE
COURTESAN CULTURE IN EARLY MODERN IRAN

Professional female performers in Persia have long played a seminal role in the dissemination of music and dance at the courts of monarchs, feudal rulers, governors, and in the homes of aristocrats and noblemen. The numerous references to dancing-girls and courtesans (lūls) in classical Persian literature and their images as found in miniature paintings all suggest that they were commonplace as instrumentalists, singers, and dancers throughout Iranian history.

In the period between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, the influence of these women seems to have been particularly strong in the performance practices of music at courts and courtesan salons. Upper-class female performers received training in music and dance as well as knowledge of poetry from master musicians and poets of the time and sometimes they even went through several years of apprenticeship, working closely with celebrated courtesans as assistants or supporting performers. However, because of their inferior social status as women and their stigmatized character in particular, court chronicles make no direct references to their activities nor do they include women in their enumeration of prominent musicians. Therefore, it is impossible to probe their lives, ethnicities, and performance tradition merely through Persian sources. Yet European travelers who visited Persia in this period frequently mention the activities of dancing girls and female entertainers in their travel accounts and often provide succinct but valuable information about the proliferation of courtesan culture, with attention to the physical appearance of these women and above all the way they were received in society.

Unlike the Persian court chronicles that were mostly intended to exalt the virtues of the dynasty and to justify the actions of the shāhs, travel accounts depict a lively and vibrant society filled with color, movement, and diversity. Without travelers, certain aspects of premodern Iranian society and culture were completely unknown to us. The narratives of travelers were shaped after
all by their level of engagement with culture and their knowledge of the country. Some travelers spent several years in Persia and came to be familiar with Persian language and with various layers of Iranian society at large. Hence, they provide more detailed information on certain aspects of courtesan life than can be found elsewhere. In many cases, they wrote down their own firsthand observation, but sometimes they seem to have gathered accounts from other sources as well. For instance, Jean Chardin, a seventeenth-century French traveler, states that he received information about the harem from a palace eunuch he had befriended.¹

Nonetheless, some aspects of courtesan culture are still completely missing in the accounts of travelers. These include descriptions of the types of music and dance that were cultivated by courtesans. Even travelers like Chardin or Engelbert Kaempfer who deal in a more technical way with Persian music neglect to comment on the types of music that were typically performed by courtesans in the seventeenth century. Nor did any traveler prior to the nineteenth century seek to assemble a collection of songs performed by female entertainers.

While female musicians and dancers continued to be active until the end of the Qajar period (1785-1925), the middle of the nineteenth century marks a decline in the activities of upper-class courtesans in Persia.

**The Late Fifteenth Century**

Solṭān Ḥosayn Bāyqarā (r. 1469-1506) was the most celebrated Timurid potentate in Heart, who ruled for more than three decades in the second half of the fifteenth century before the invasion of Uzbeks. During his long reign, he displayed more fondness for calligraphy, painting, poetry, music, dance, and Epicurean pleasure in general than for the tedium of administering his kingdom. Together with Mir ‘Alishir Navā’i (1441-1501), who served as his adviser and the custodian of the
royal seal, he elevated the fine arts to an unprecedented standard of excellence. He also lavishly patronized musicians and dancers and held poetic and musical gatherings (bazms) in the glorious gardens of Herat, to which a leisure class that included princes, noblemen, poets, calligraphers, painters, singers, and instrumentalists were frequently invited.²

Musical events were documented in probably more detail in this period than in any other period in Iranian history, due mainly to the significant contribution of Zayn al-Din Vâsefî, the author of Badâye ‘al-vaqāye’ (The marvels of the events). Soltân Ḥosayn Bâyqarâ built a splendid garden on the outskirts of Herat that became known as the bâgh-e jahânârâ (world adorning garden). In this garden, he housed a music hall called qaşr-e Ŧarâbafzâ (euphoria inducing palace) which came to be a major performance milieu for music and dance in the late fifteenth century.³ A group of female musicians and dancers were reportedly sustained by the court and the nobility during this period. In a short letter written by the famous calligrapher, Solṭān-‘Ali Mashhadi (1453-1520), to Soltân Ḥosayn Bâyqarâ, a convivial gathering is described in which, alongside male musicians, several female performers are mentioned as being in attendance. These include Mâhpâreh Mojallad (dancer), Ḥurnezhâd (dancer), Shâhkânom Mehrâl’at (dancer), Shâhnâz Khâtun Naghmeh-Sarây (singer), and Ḥavâmârî Šâheb-Ṣowt (singer). The majlis took place in the garden of nurâ and the organizer of the ceremony (bazmârâ) was Khorshid Khânom, who might have been a senior courtesan at this time.⁴

The Timurid court also retained female and male performers from beyond the borders of Herat, most notably from other parts of Khorâsân, Transoxiana, and Mongolia. Among the female artists, harp players seem to have been the most celebrated musicians in the service of the court and the most famous of these was Chakar Changi.⁵ One miniature painting from the reign of
Hosayn Bāyqarā has also survived in which the sultan is depicted sitting on the balcony of his palace, enjoying a troupe of Central Asian dancing girls (Plate 1).  

Aside from being hired at court or in the homes of the nobility, courtesans were also active performers in courtesan districts and caravanserais. Yet they were always kept under some measure of control and supervision by the authorities. For instance, when Uzbeks laid siege to Herat in 1532, they allowed respectable women to leave the city. But according to Qāzī Aḥmad Qomi, a number of prostitutes were assigned to oversee these women and make sure they would leave their jewelry and other precious belonging behind before departing.  

Dancing was by no means confined to the realm of courtesans, for in the second half of the fifteenth century dancing boys were evidently more sought-after and renowned than female performers (Plate 2). A number of male musicians and dancers were mentioned in fact as companions and sexual partners of assorted gentry, literati, and artists. Zayn al-Din Vāṣefī mentions Maqṣūd-ʿAlī Raqqāṣ as the most prominent dancing boy who performed in the gatherings of the nobility in the late fifteenth century. He also reports on one of the musical gatherings taking place in Herat right after the accession of the Safavid Shāh Esmaʿīl I (r. 1501-24) as follows:  

Six months after the accession of Shāh Esmaʿīl, one night a group of friends were gathered in my house. Mirzā Byram was playing the qānum, Khānāzādeh Bolbol was playing the dāyereh, Siyāḥcheh was singing, Mollā Fāżlī, Mollā Ahlī, Mowlānā Amānī, and Mowlānā Moqbeli were composing poetry extemporaneously and Tāherchakeh and Māhchubak were dancing.  

Roughly in the same period, under the Turkmen Āq Qoyunlus (White Sheep) in the west, Tabriz came to be an important literary and artistic center. Uzun Ḥasan (r. 1453-1478) and his two sons Khalīl and Yaʿqūb built impressive monuments in Tabriz and their court became a gathering place of artists, poets, literary figures, and musicians. Uzun Ḥasan took particular interest in the art of
music and maintained a group of female musicians and dancers in his court. The Italian traveler Josafa Barbaro, who visited Persia at the time, relates musical scenes at the court of Uzun Ḥasan in the following passage:

there came certein women that begunne to daunce and to synge with certein that plaied. And than was there sett on a carpett an hatt faconed like a suger looofe, having on the toppe cuttes and tassels after the manner of the hattes of Zubiri, and a little from it stoode one waiting the kingses commandment, who poincted him on whose heade he shulde sett that hatt. Whereupon he took it up and went to the person appointed: which arose, and putteing on his rolle, putt the hat on his heade; being so unseemely as suffised to have disgraced a right goodly man. But he having it on, passed forth, daunceng before the king, as he knewe the guyse. And the king gave a signe to him that wayted, comaunding him to give the dauncer a piece of Camocato. And he taking this piece threwe it about the heade of the dauncer and of other men and women; and using certein woordes in praiseng the king, threwe ir before the mynstrells. This daunceng and throwing of piecees lasted till an howre before sonnesett.¹⁰

Nothing is known about courtesans and their activities outside the court of Tabriz in the fifteenth century; nor are courtesan salons mentioned as having been widespread in this period. But it appears that bayt al-lotfs (brothels) were quite prevalent throughout urban and rural centers. One of the surviving documents regarding this matter is a decree issued in 1470 by Uzun Ḥasan in which he mentions the tax bracket of brothels in Yazd.¹¹

The Sixteenth Century

After the fall of the Aq Qoyunlu, courtesans seem to have remained active in Tabriz and other urban centers. But it was around the middle of the reign of Shāh Esmāʿīl I that they received official recognition from the shāh, and subsequently found their ways to the Safavid court. Following the conquest of Tabriz, Shāh Esmāʿīl I initially showed a hostile disposition towards courtesans in general and reportedly ordered between 200 to 300 prostitutes across the city to be killed.¹² Around the same time, he received a group of female singer-harpists (changnavāz-e khoshāvāz) and dancers from Soltān Ḣosayn Bāyqarā along with an assortment of gifts and majles supplies. But
he dismissed them all as being an inappropriate tribute, claiming that as a warrior and defender of Twelver Shi‘ism, he did not need to be entertained by such music-making beauties (hurvashān-e naghmehsāz). Later on, especially after his defeat at the battle of Chaldiran in 1514, his spirit changed significantly and thereafter he became engaged in hunting, wine drinking, and spending time in the company of young boys and dancing girls. The Italian merchant Francesco Romano, who visited Tabriz during the reign of Shāh Esmā‘il I, relates that prostitutes and courtesans frequented public places and they were bound to pay taxes based on their beauty. The more attractive and stylish they were, the higher the taxes they had to pay.

It is in fact during the reign of Shāh Ṭahmāsp (r. 1524-1576) that we find a more extensive account of courtesans and their associated male instrumentalists. Historical sources claim that when Shāh Ṭahmāsp came to power, he withdrew his patronage of music and subsequently ordered the hands of everyone who played musical instruments in public to be cut off. Eskandar Monshi, a chronicler of the Safavid court, appears to justify the shāh’s hostility to music as follows:

Since Shāh Ṭahmāsp always eschewed all practices forbidden by religious law, musicians found little favor with him. He fired most of those who already had employment at the court, and retained only Ostād Ḥosayn Shushtari Balbâni and Ostād Asad, who was the sornā player in the royal naqqāreh-khāneh (drum house). Toward the end of his life, the Shāh expelled from the court musicians such as Ḥāfeẓ Aḥmad Qazvini, who was renowned for his superb vocal techniques and graceful style of singing; Ḥāfeẓ Lālā Tabrizi; and others. The Shāh had the idea that perhaps the royal princes, by associating with them, might begin to pay too much attention to music, and that they might corrupt the emirs who were their moral tutors and guardians and thus generate a general demand at court for such forbidden pleasures. Even Ostād Ḥosayn the sornā player was arrested, for he played in the public gatherings, and spent some time in prison. Finally, he swore a solemn oath that he would not play his sornā at any other place than the royal naqqāreh-khāneh.

At first glance, the reaction of Shāh Ṭahmāsp towards musicians in Tabriz seems rather perplexing, especially when we learn that as crown prince he was surrounded by some of the most outstanding musicians of his time. His fondness for music was in fact so great that in one of his own paintings he depicted a nay-player and a male dancer who were likely in his service between 1515 and 1521.
in Herat (Plate 3). Thus, a question can be raised as to why all at once Shāh Ṭahmāsp turned his back on musicians and banned those who were affiliated with his court from performing in public places. One may wonder what the major problem was with instrumentalists or sāzandehs at that time and in what socio-cultural settings they would usually perform outside of the court. We know that in Islamic law major offences such as burglary may be punishable by amputation as a consequence of and retribution for criminal activity. The question may then be raised: What other activities besides music-making were the sāzandehs involved in and what stigmas were attached to this class of musicians that rendered them deserving of such severe punishment? Evidently, the public gatherings that Eskandar Monshi refers to could not have been merely wedding ceremonies and annual festivities, for it is unrealistic to assume that a potenteate such as Shāh Ṭahmāsp would have shown such harsh reactions to the recreational and mundane social activities of common citizens.

We are informed that between 1532 and 1534 Shāh Ṭahmāsp issued several decrees (farmāns) in an attempt to curtail various forms of frivolous entertainment and recreation including the activities associated with the sharāb-khāneh (tavern), bang-khāneh (house for smoking hashish), ma’jun-khāneh (house for drinking a cocktail drug), buzeh-khāneh (house for drinking rice beer), bayt al-lotf (brothel), qomār-khāneh (gambling house) and qavvāl-khāneh. What stands apart in this list of public places is the qavvāl-khāneh, and by extension the name qavvāl. The qavvāl-khāneh has been interpreted and identified imprecisely by historians of the Safavid period as a gathering place for performing music or storytelling. Yet qavvāl literally means a performer of qowl, which was a metric vocal genre; therefore, it should not be confused with the naqqāl who is indeed a narrator or storyteller. Several documents show that qavvāl was a term that referred exclusively to courtesans as a general category in the Safavid period, for female musicians
were the major exponents of qowl in the sixteenth century and afterwards. Hence curtailing the activity of qavvāl-khāneh somehow indicates that courtesan salons were widespread establishments in the capital and other cities, at least as early as the beginning of the reign of Shāh Ṭāhmāsp.

The term qavvāl appears in a number of surviving documents from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. One account relates that when Moẓaffar Soltān, a disobedient feudal ruler of Western Gilan, was arrested and brought to Tabriz in 1537, Shāh Ṭāhmāsp ordered craftsmen, entrepreneurs, and lay people to decorate the streets and bazaar and to mock the conquered foe while qavvālān (courtesans), mokhannathān (transvestite dancing boys), možhekān (jesters), and maskharehā (buffoons) were also brought to perform and lend the situation even more excitement.20 Another account, a newly discovered sketchbook that the German physician Engelbert Kaempfer (1651-1716) had brought back from Isfahan around 1684, includes the drawing of a woman, described as “the archetypal image of qavvālān in Iran” (Plate 4).21

Unfortunately, the extant accounts shed little light on the qavvāl-khāneh as a socio-cultural institution in Tabriz or Qazvin, the two Safavid capitals in the sixteenth century. Yet we can glean much information about the social organizations of courtesans and urban male musicians by examining unique records associated with the provincial court of the Kārkiyā dynasty in eastern Gilan. These documents include job appointment letters (hokm-e sarkāri) issued to two musicians as well as official correspondence and decrees sent to Gilan from the royal court in Tabriz.22

Eastern Gilan and especially the town of Lāhijān were among the most important provincial centers in the sixteenth century to host a music culture of unique character. This region was ruled by the Kārkiyā dynasty, which for many decades and at least as early as the beginning of the Safavid period, enthusiastically employed and sustained many of the most renowned musical
artists in their court. In the middle of the sixteenth century, the feudal ruler of the dynasty was Khān Aḥmad Gilānī (r. 1537-1568), who was himself a talented ‘ud player and a prolific composer of the instrumental pishrow. An appointment letter reveals that at some point he invited the prominent kamāncheh player of his time, Ostād Zaytun, to Lāhijān and appointed him as the chālchi-bāshi—or the chief of the community of musicians in town—for several years. In a similar letter, written a few years later, Ostād Moḥammad ‘Udi was appointed to the same office and various classes of musicians and entertainers in Lāhijān were assigned to operate under his supervision.

The above two letters and other historical documents including the correspondence of Khān Aḥmad Gilānī reveal certain facts about the town’s musical life and in particular regarding courtesans and their social status. The letters first indicate that all musicians and entertainers formed a community known by officials and in court records as ahl-e naghmeh (lit. people of music). In one letter, four major groups of musicians are introduced as such, namely instrumentalists (sāzandehs), courtesans (qavvāls), musicians of military and ceremonial bands (naqqārehchis), and street entertainers who attract a circle (ma’rekehgirs). In the second letter, vocalists (guyandehs and khvānandehs) and luthiers (sāztarāshs) are also added to this list. On the order of Khān Aḥmad, the four groups of musicians had to abide by the rules and regulations set by the chālchi-bāshi. They had to seek his advice on most matters, resolve their fiscal and legal problems through him, and enter into or cancel deals and contracts under his authority. If they were arrested or convicted, it was the responsibility of chālchi-bāshi to intervene and release them from jail. No claim or problem could be presented to the court unless it had already been heard by the chālchi-bāshi. In one instance, Khān Aḥmad directly orders the tavā’ef, who appear to have been courtesans and musicians of tribal or rural background, to obey the order of chālchi-bāshi.
and be at his service at all times. The Dastur al-Moluk, a manual of Safavid court further describes the character of chālchi-bāshi in the following words:

He is the doyen (rishsefid) of the entire community of performers and musicians and responsible for training a group of musicians, singers, and players of various instruments qualified and adept to perform at the gatherings of the shāhs. It is required that he be present in service of the shāh when he was traveling as well as when he was resident at his court. The salaries and stipends of chālchi-bāshi’s subordinates are paid in accordance with his suggestion and the approval of His Excellency, the nāżer-e boyutāt and pending the grand vizir’s consent. He received 50 tumāns as annual salary from the custom revenues (‘oshur).

On the whole, the chālchi-bāshi served as an intermediary between the community of musicians and higher officials except in the matter of collecting rents and taxes, which does not seem to have been among his responsibilities.

Ostād Zaytun, one of the most renowned sāzandehs of his time, was formerly based in Herat. Khān Aḥmad brought him to Lāhijān and offered him first the office of chālchi-bāshi and subsequently appointed him as the general of the cavalry (sepahsālār) of a vast region in Gilān called Tolam. A few years later, Shāh Ṭahmāsp wrote a letter to Khān Aḥmad making remarks critical of the appointment and allocating an annual salary of 400 tumāns to Ostād Zaytun. The content of the letter reveals that Shāh Ṭahmāsp was previously familiar with this musician, probably from Herat, and had a severely negative impression of him as he refers to Ostād Zaytun as ‘an alcoholic instrumentalist of gypsy origin (kowli) who would incite a large number of Muslim men to adultery every year.’ Shāh Ṭahmāsp further blames Ostād Zaytun for his lack of adherence to the Islamic law (shari‘a) and for being surrounded by aristocrats of that region who keep young Muslim boys as their companions and would commonly attend the latter’s gatherings engaging in music, gambling and sexual dissipation.
Among the four groups of musicians and entertainers mentioned in the letter, instrumentalists and courtesans seems to have been the major exponents of music in the town. We may assume that prominent soloists like Ostād Zaytun and the professional courtesans had the opportunity to perform at the court or the gatherings (majles) of nobility; less esteemed qavvāls and sāzandehs only performed in courtesan salons. Nonetheless, there is no evidence of a strong line of demarcation between these two classes of musicians. In other words, most sāzandehs seem to have been associated with courtesan salons in one way or another. In the case of ṭavā’ef, the sāzandehs must have also been related to the courtesans either through familial or pedagogical ties, as was the case in later periods.  

All the accounts allude to the fact that it was the prior connection and experience of Ostād Zaytun with the courtesan community that brought him to Lāhijān. Likewise, we can infer that the hostility that Shāh Ṭahmāsp showed toward instrumentalists and more specifically toward Ostād Zaytun was due to the latter’s association with the courtesan community and prostitution. In all, these facts explain why the performance of music came to be banned more specifically during the reign of Shāh Ṭahmāsp and periodically throughout the Safavid period in general.

In the court correspondence of Khān Aḥmad there is a short letter written by the qavvālān of Rudsar, a small town 16 miles east of Lāhijān, to Khvājeh Kamāl Rudsari, who was most likely the local overseer of courtesans at that time. The letter reveals not only the existence of a courtesan community in Rudsar, but also the fact that the courtesans of that town were highly literate and had a demonstrable command of witty conversation, an uncommon attribute of the average housewife in that period.  

Despite the ban, Shāh Ṭahmāsp failed to eliminate qavvāl-khānehs in the capital or in any other cities, although he assigned severe punishments to professional sāzandehs that performed in
courtesan salons and houses of ill-repute. The majority of sāzandehs presumably supported
themselves partially or entirely through teaching or accompanying the courtesans. Indeed, what
Shāh Ṭahmāsp managed to achieve in this period was chiefly to remove the position of chālchi-
bāshi and abolish all taxes on courtesan salons and other public houses such as gambling dens and
brothels. Yet he must have retained professional female performers in his own service or as part
of his extensive harem. In 1566, he dispatched four dancing-girls together with a group of
musicians including two singers, one ‘ud player, one arghanun player, two tanbur players, and a
large collection of naqqāreh-khāneh instruments to the Ottoman ruler, Salim II (r. 1566-1574).  
During the reign of Shāh Ṭahmāsp, musical contact was also initiated with the Caucasus. Shāh
Ṭahmāsp invaded Georgia several times and in his raiding expeditions brought back a large
number of men and women from that region. Georgian and Circassian women, who were often
engaged in music and dance, later became omnipresent at the seraglio and the royal practice of
contractual marriages with them as concubines became widespread from that time on.

With the death of Shāh Ṭahmāsp and the accession of his son, Esmā‘il II (r. 1576-7) to the
throne, the sāzandehs were released from these pressures, a move that soon led to significant
developments. Esmā‘il II called back all the performers of music and dance that had been expelled
from the court by his father and reinstated the position of chālchi-bāshi by appointing Ḥāfeẓ Jalājel
Bākhażri, a master singer, as the chief of ahl-e naghme in Qazvin. A ruthless ruler, Esmā‘il II
indulged excessively in sensual pleasures and kept company with courtesans during his short reign.

The Seventeenth Century

In 1587, the most celebrated Safavid monarch, Shāh ‘Abbās I (r. 1587-1629), ascended the throne.
A decade later, he moved the capital to Isfahan, which soon grew into a large cosmopolitan center
with unique social and economic conditions. Shortly thereafter, large contingents of performers, courtesans, artists, poets, craftsmen, and merchants migrated to Isfahan from other urban centers and rural areas; accordingly, the multitude began to congregate in the city’s bazaars and socialize in its coffeehouses and places of recreation. Ḥāfeẓ Jalājel Bākharzi remained in the office of chālchi-bāshi for a few decades, but in Isfahan he was succeeded by Āqā Ḥaqqi, who, as Pietro della Valle confirms, came to be the chālchi-bāshi and superintendent of courtesans.34

As a patron of the fine arts, Shāh ‘Abbās I was extremely energetic, innovative, and influential. His secretary, Eskandar Monshi, reports that the king was an accomplished composer of qowl and ‘amal genres and his vocal compositions (tašānif) were performed frequently by the musicians of his time. According to another chronicler, Shāh ‘Abbās “reached in music the level where all contemporary composers were keen to emulate his style.”35 Throughout the Safavid period, Shāh ‘Abbās I was the only ruler who lavishly patronized musicians and courtesans. Eskandar Monshi presents a list of the ahl-e naghme that were mainly active in the second half of the sixteenth century, without naming women among them. In 1608, Shāh ‘Abbās ordered homes to be built for favored professional singers of his court in one of the districts of Isfahan, which later came to be known as mahalleh-ye naghme (the ward of music).36

Pietro della Valle, who visited Isfahan at that time, refers to the king’s female performers and specifically mentions Felfel (Pepper), a senior courtesan who commanded much respect from everyone at the court, even though by then she was old and unattractive.37 The Armenian historian Zakaria Kanakertsi (1627-1699) also recounts the story of an Armenian dancer, Ghazāl, who was Shāh ‘Abbās’s favorite courtesan despite the fact that she never converted to Islam and later repented and became a nun.38 The Spanish envoy Don Garcia de Silva y Figueroa and Della Valle both refer to several instances where a group of twenty to twenty-five courtesans on horseback and
without veils were present among the shāh’s retinue or as an entourage welcoming foreign ambassadors and envoys who had arrived from India, the Ottoman empire, Muscovy, and Spain.\textsuperscript{39} Della Valle specifies that these respectable courtesans were upper-class performers and entertainers who were selected directly by the shāh (Plate 5).\textsuperscript{40} Likewise an Augustinian cleric, Antonio de Gouvea, who traveled with Shāh ‘Abbās I from Mashhad to Isfahan, confirms that the king’s entourage consisted of a number of women who rode horses and wore no veils.\textsuperscript{41}

Every time Shāh ‘Abbās I undertook official visits to various places or traveled to other cities, he was accompanied by a group of professional courtesans who were led by an older experienced woman. This senior courtesan served to organize the entire group and also had influence with the shāh. In the words of De Silva y Figueroa, “the shāh and his courtiers indeed were lavish in their appreciation, which allowed these women to live luxuriously.”\textsuperscript{42}

It was toward the end of the reign of Shāh ‘Abbās I that Āqā Mo’men Moşannef, a leading composer of Isfahan, found his way into the circle of court musicians and later became the chālchi-bāshi throughout the reign of Shāh Ṣafi (r. 1629-1642) and the first half of the reign of Shāh ‘Abbās II (r. 1642-1666).\textsuperscript{43} In the course of his career, Āqā Mo’men accompanied his patrons on many expeditions and summer resort encampments while he wrote a number of vocal compositions or taṣnifs for ceremonial or state occasions. His taṣnifs include fourteen praise songs that he wrote for his three patrons, and five victory songs that he composed in celebration of capturing neighboring regions.\textsuperscript{44} We know from Della Valle that when Shāh ‘Abbās I conquered Qandahar in 1622 he had a group of courtesans led by Dallâleh Chizi (= Qezi) enter the city first. This was done to humiliate the Mughal army, establishing a pretense that the fortress had been defeated by a group of soft women.\textsuperscript{45} Āqā Mo’men, who accompanied the king and the courtesans in the same expedition, wrote a victory song after the conquest of Qandahar.\textsuperscript{46} It is therefore safe to assume
that that victory song and probably the majority of the songs in the surviving song-text collection of Āqā Mo’men were compositions intended to be performed by courtesans in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Aside from those highly respected and select courtesans associated with the royal court and the gentry, there were less esteemed and indigent female singers and dancers who were active in courtesan salons and caravanserais; their activities was always kept under some measure of control and supervision by the authorities. In urban centers, courtesans, along with other entertainers, were always monitored by the dārugheh (chief of police) and they were called upon especially when the authorities wished to provide music and dance for an auspicious occasion.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century more than 12,000 prostitutes and courtesans were registered in Isfahan alone; a figure that would constitute five percent of the city’s female population at that time.47 These women and the assorted courtesan salons would have certainly provided a large amount of tax revenue for the government. The taxes were collected by mashʿaldār-bāshi, the chief of the royal department of lighting who was primarily in charge of city lighting and official fireworks. Shāh ‘Abbās I was known to have been uncomfortable and doubtful about the revenues collected from brothels and courtesan salons: “fearing to sully his Treasury with money rais’d from so infamous a commerce, [he] order’d it should pass the Fire to purifie it, that is, he employ’d to defray the expense of Flambeaux, Illuminations, and other artificial fireworks that are made at the King’s charges.”48 An anonymous Dutch visitor writing in the 1630s states:

It is said that in this city there are 12,000 loose women over and above the married ones, who must appear before the darugheh each month and who have to pay great tribute according to their beauty and the extent to which they are in demand. Many of these women have great assets, are draped in precious gold cloth or wear gold and pearls, often go riding with their horses equipped with gold briddles and other decorations, with two or three servants accompanying them on foot.49
European travel accounts usually mention differing classes of courtesans in this period that were distinguished by their ethnicity, appearance, and wealth and by the amount of money they would charge their patrons. Courtesans were also distinguished from plain and simple prostitutes by the fact that they supplemented their services as prostitutes by entertaining customers with music and dance. In 1637, Adam Olearius wrote that brothels and courtesan salons thrived in all cities except Ardabil and that they were protected by the authorities.\textsuperscript{50} Ardabil was considered a sacred city by Shāh ‘Abbās I as it was the burial place of his ancestor, Shaykh Ṣafī al-Din, and hence he banned activities of courtesan salons there. However, this proscription did not have a lasting effect, for in 1670 Struys reports that he saw several courtesans in Ardabil who were singing religious epic songs in praise of ‘Ali and Ḥosayn and some were dancing before the governor.\textsuperscript{51}

Shāh ‘Abbās I’s successors, Shāh Ṣafī and Shāh ‘Abbās II, were also ardent patrons of female musicians and dancers during their reigns. Once a courtesan had danced so well at court that Shāh ‘Abbās II, who had become enamored, gave her a caravanserai as a reward for her performance, namely a property that yielded significant rental income. The following day the grand vizier advised the shāh to cancel the gift and instead give her 100 tumāns. The courtesan at first insisted upon her right to the original award, but finally gave in when told that she would otherwise receive nothing.\textsuperscript{52}

Jean Chardin (1643-1713), a French traveler and a long-time resident of Iran who had indirect access to the internal establishments of the court, reports that there was a group of twenty-four female musicians and dancers at the service of Shāh Solaymān (r. 1666-1694) and that these performers were celebrated as the most renowned and superior courtesans of the country. This group of upper-class and well-dressed women was supervised by a madam (khānom) who was herself a senior courtesan at the court. They used to live in different neighborhoods of Isfahan and
it was the responsibility of the madam to assemble them for each event or banquet. She would arrange for performances, settle disputes among them, punish them if need be, protect them if they were insulted, and keep an eye on the finances of the troupe. Punishment was administered with a whip, and if the infraction was repeated, the girl would be expelled from the group. The madam also took care of their salaries; she had to make sure that they had proper dress, and appropriate furniture, in short that they were properly equipped for the tasks they had to perform. Chardin mentions:

Each courtesan in the [royal] troupe had a support staff of two maids, a male servant, a cook, a groom with two or three horses. If they traveled with the court, they had four additional horses for their luggage. The annual payment for the entire troupe was 1,800 francs. In addition to this, they received a certain quantity of fabrics for their dresses. Likewise, a sufficient food allowance was sent to them from the court. Some of them made as much as 900 écus; but the level of their salary depended on the shah’s appreciation of their art. This was not their only source of income, for some nights they might be paid as much as 50 pistols.

Each member of this troupe was identified by the amount of money she demanded for each performance, such as the ten tuman or five tuman or two tuman girl. Each tuman equals 15 écus in France. None of them asked less than one tuman, and when she could not command that much, she was let go and another took her place.

As is customary in Iran, in order to invite these girls, one has to send them money in advance. If the invitation is only for dancing, one should talk to the madam and pay two pistols for each dancer. If one wants to have six, seven or eight girls, he has to pay twelve, fourteen and sixteen pistols. If the performance of dancers was enjoyable to the host, he would give them some gifts as well. But if the intention of the host is to receive other services, he has to pay girls in advance.53

In 1665, Chardin met two courtesans in outfits studded with precious stones, whose value he estimated at 10,000 écus.54 Chardin further claims that there were 14,000 registered courtesans and prostitutes throughout the capital who paid the substantial amount of over 13,000 tumāns in taxes. He adds that the same number of courtesans went unregistered for they did not want to be labeled officially as public women.55

While the court was the most important source of patronage for upper-class courtesans in the seventeenth century, a more extensive portion of their musical activities took place in courtesan
salons and the homes of noblemen, merchants, and literati. As a contemporary traveler wrote, “in Persia they never organized a banquet without music or prostitute.”

Chardin also confirms that the patrons of upper-class courtesans were men of the sword and the young nobility that operated in the court’s orbit. Isfahan’s gentry in this period was in some respects diverse. Many aristocrats would have been assorted princes and other dignitaries associated with the court who were major sources of patronage for courtesan arts. There were also converted Georgian servants (gholāms) in the military and bureaucracy, Christian Armenian merchants, and Indian merchants as well as a group of established merchants from Tabriz and other cities.

Georgian officials were reportedly keen patrons of music and dance in this period. Adam Olearius, visiting Isfahan during the reign of Shāh Ṣafi, writes about a banquet organized by the Georgian grand vizier, Mirzā Moḥammad Taqi (d.1645) better known as Sāru Taqi, at which Indian courtesans entertained the guests with juggling, dance, and music. Another contemporary visitor, Van Mandelslo, reports attending a similar banquet hosted by the head of the royal stables (amir ākhor-bāshi) as follows:

There were three dances. The first was performed by four women with castanets one span in length in their hands, which they moved in accordance with the music. … The second dance was done by other persons with cymbals. The third one, however, was farcical and was performed by a woman who at times lay on her stomach with a Persian turban on her ass, which she managed, through specific body movements, to throw up to the height of a man, thereby merrily accompanied by the music makers.

There were also individuals among the literati who were especially fond of music. The most renowned philosopher and mathematician of Isfahan in this period, Shaykh Bahā’i (1547-1621), appears to have been a patron-connoisseur of courtesans and had female singers performing for him even while he was praying at dawn.

In 1608, Manżar, a courtesan of Isfahan, repented and married a perfumer (ˈattār) called ‘Abdoli. The former lovers of Manżar became extremely upset to the point where one night they
cut down all the trees in ‘Abdoli’s garden. The second night, they broke into his shop and destroyed all his jars and liquids. Later they dug up his father’s corpse from the cemetery and burnt it in a city square. When their story spread out throughout the city, a certain Bāqer came to be inspired to compose a song in the naqsh genre describing the love story of Manzar and ‘Abdoli which later attracted the attention of the royal court. Shāh ‘Abbās I invited them to his court and the two lovers, who were sweet-voiced singers, performed the song together for him. The potentate became very touched after their performance; he recompensed them and punished the perpetrators for their evil deeds. ⁶¹

Non-Muslim and convert female performers, notably Georgian, Circassian, and Armenian concubines and courtesans as well as Indian performers, are frequently mentioned in travelers’ accounts and they seem to have played a significant role in musical life of the seraglio in particular and certain urban centers in general during the seventeenth century.

Caucasian influence and power in the Safavid court was particularly strong from the reign of Shāh Ṭahmāsp up until the end of the seventeenth century. More than four of Shāh Ṭahmāsp’s surviving sons had Georgian mothers, and the queen mother in the seventeenth century was always a Circassian woman. The Portuguese cleric Antonio de Gouvea describes how, during a visit with his men at the court of Shāh ‘Abbās I in 1603, he was entertained by a group of eight Circassian dancers. ⁶² Among the upper-class courtesans in the reign of Shāh Solaymān were reportedly six Georgian slave girls living in a single house in Isfahan where they were supervised by a madam. ⁶³ A few Georgian servants, viz. Amir Khān Gorji and Morteżā Qoli Bayg, also came to be prominent court musicians and composers during this period and it is possible that they composed their Persian and particularly Turkish songs (varsāqīs) to be performed by Caucasian courtesans. ⁶⁴ Furthermore, during the campaign of Shāh ‘Abbās I to Armenia in 1604-1605, numerous women
were purchased with the intention of putting them to work as public women in courtesan salons and brothels.\textsuperscript{65} As mentioned previously, the favorite dancer of Shāh ‘Abbās I was also an Armenian performer called Ghazāl. Thus, from all available evidence, it is safe to assume that most of the rulers retained Caucasian performers in their harems both for the entertainment of their wives and concubines and for ceremonial and formal gatherings.

Moreover, Olearius reports that 12,000 Indians, including an envoy from the Mughal emperor and many affluent merchants, were settled in Isfahan around the middle of the seventeenth century, and he further mentions that on one occasion he was entertained by Indian courtesans in Sāru Taqi’s house (Plate 6).\textsuperscript{66} Chardin also informs us that a group of Indian musicians were moved by Shāh ‘Abbās II from Qandahar to Isfahan where they were given a house by the shāh.\textsuperscript{67} These courtesans must have had a profound knowledge of Persian songs and poetry, for otherwise their arts might have seemed foreign, if not distasteful to a Persian clientele in seventeenth-century Isfahan. The BnF copy of Amir Khān Gorji’s song-text collection, in fact, contains a \textit{tarāneh} (\textit{terana}) set to a poem of Indian poet Amir Khosrow (1253-1325) that could well be a surviving specimen of typical songs performed by Indian courtesans in this period.\textsuperscript{68}

Chardin claims that there were almost 1000 gypsies (\textit{kawlis}) in the capital in the second half of the seventeenth century and that the majority were musicians of less esteemed social position. While the men of this community were mostly active as hereditary instrumentalists, the women were predominantly engaged in dancing near caravanserais where they could entice spectators and travelers.\textsuperscript{69} Yet some of the male gypsy musicians who were associated with courtesan salons in the sixteenth century, such as Ostād Zaytun and probably Ostād Āhu, were outstanding \textit{sāzandehs} in their own right and a few of the prominent instrumentalists in the succeeding generation of musicians even claimed to be their students.\textsuperscript{70}
Female performers have always been the predominant exponents of various forms of urban and rural folk dances. De Mans relates that they would engage in thousands of dances before the men with their faces unveiled, and that their services were highly costly. Charles Lockyer describes a gathering in Bandar ‘Abbās which was held in honor of the British party with whom he was traveling. He writes:

Here the English Chief was diverted with Dancing Girls, and Jugling, after the Country fashion. The Dancing Girls differ much from those about Madrass, and other Parts of India; where they are the most comely, and best clad young Wenches they can find: But these were a Parcel of old, dirty, ragged Creatures, who shook themselves in so simple the manner, that, if they were capable of raising any Passion in their Spectators, it must be that of Detestation. Most of the Indian Women are plump about the Buttocks; but these endeavour’d to make that Part seem so loose, as if it was rather an Excruciscence, than natural to the Body. They were always stamping in such a Posture, as gave a quaggy trembling to every fleshy Part about them; and to render that of their Buttocks the more remarkable, they tied their Clouts tight, which before were loose from their Wasts to their Knees.

Chardin declares that dancing in public was mostly performed by prostitutes and public women and that from a religious perspective it was considered more dishonorable and reproachable than performing musical instruments. It seems that men did not dance, except for Georgian and Armenian boys who were also involved in male prostitution. In this respect Thomas Herbert’s description of dancing boys in 1629 is worth quoting in full:

The Ganymedes with incanting voices and distorted bodies sympathizing, and poesy, mirth, and wine raising the sport commonly to admiration. But were this all, ‘twere excusable; for though persons of quality here have their several seraglions, these dancers seldom go without their wages; and in a higher degree of baseness, the pederasts affect those painted antic-robed youths or catamites, a vice se detestable, so damnable, so unnatural as forces Hell to show its ugliness before its season.

There is evidence that professional upper-class courtesans continued to be patronized by the court and the nobility almost until the end of the reign of Shāh Solaymān in 1694. When Shāh Soltān Ḥosayn acceded to the throne, courtesan districts were still active in the capital and other cities as the centers of musical activity, but under the influence of his conservative advisers, especially
Moḥammad Bāqer Majlesi (1627-1699), the shāh issued a decree banning courtesan salons and all houses of ill-repute. However, this does not seem to have affected the activity of courtesans much, either in the court milieu or in urban centers in general. In fact, Shāh Soltān ოsayn appears to have shown strong interest in music and courtesan culture during his reign (Plate 7). Gemelli Careri mentions attending some of the official banquets of the shāh at which musicians were present. In 1697, Shāh Soltān ოsayn also commissioned the aforementioned Amir Khān, a Georgian servant and court composer, to compile a collection of courtly vocal compositions. The *taṣnifs* were written by male composers and cultivated mostly by courtesans in Isfahan and other urban centers throughout the seventeenth century.

**The Eighteenth Century**

The early part of the eighteenth century marks a period of chaos and political disarray in the history of Persia. The Afghan invasion in 1722 and the downfall of the Safavid Empire truncated Isfahan’s prominence as a cultural center and eventually culminated in the transformation of the intellectual, political, and artistic life of the entire country. Already in the late seventeenth century, the nobility and wealthy families who had supported the fine arts and especially music had come to ruin and the prosperity of upper-class courtesans in Isfahan was at a low point. However, soon after the Afghan invasion, Nāder began to gain power and established a military camp that eventually comprised a massive number of 200,000 solders and 20,000 women. During his campaigns, he gradually collected and hoarded a large number of urban and rural courtesans as well as village girls to serve in his encampments. Historical sources of the Afsharid period attest to the activity of numerous female musicians, dancing girls, and acrobats who were employed at the camp of Nāder along with male instrumentalists, comedians, tightrope walkers, and fireworks technicians. The
male and female entertainers and dancers, who were broadly referred to as *bāzigars*, accompanied Nāder and his army during their campaigns while providing music, dance, and acrobatics at various festivities and ceremonial occasions.79 Père Louis Bazin, the French physician in the camp of Nāder between 1741 and 1747, sketched a map of the camp where five tents are marked as the housing of courtesans and musicians. He also depicts a large circular area containing two other tents and marks them as the residential area of special courtesans associated with the harem (Plate 8).80

Evidence suggests that in addition to the courtesans of urban and rural backgrounds that Nāder himself accumulated or received from chieftains and regional governors, he had a number of Ottoman and European female performers and dancers in his camp that he likely obtained as gifts from other rulers.81 It also seems to have been common among the feudal rulers, governors, and chieftains who were fond of music and dance to recruit attractive girls from various sources and train them in their harems. Nāder’s chronicler, Moḥammad Kāẓem Marvi, mentions for instance Yusef Khān, a contemporary of Nāder and the feudal ruler of Kunduz who retained a large number of courtesans:

Yusef Khān had almost 600 moon-faced, statuesque, rosy-cheeked, dazzling girls in his harem. Throughout his life, anytime and anywhere he found out that someone among his tribesmen, servants, or city dwelling subjects had a beautiful girl, he ordered him to bring the girl to him dressed up in the most exquisite and seductive attire possible. After some time, he had 600 beautiful girls trained in playing musical instruments, singing, rope-dancing, juggling, and various aspects of music.82

Between 1738 and 1740 an Ottoman-Armenian *tanbur* player called Harutin was in the service of Nāder, and he later wrote a travel account in which he refers to some of the musical norms that he observed during his stay in the camp of Nāder. He specifies that the male *sāzandebs* were hosted in a tent separate from the courtesans and also tents of musicians and performers were off limits to soldiers and other people in the camp.83
Another important eyewitness account from this period is provided by the Armenian catholicos, Abraham Kretatsi, who lived in the camp of Nāder for two years preceding his accession in the field of Moghān in 1736. While he recounts several occasions where a number of rituals and performances were enacted in the camp, he specifically describes a new year ceremony in which a troupe of twenty-two dancing boys wearing ankle-bells danced in front of Nāder and his military officials. The dancers were accompanied by performers on tanbur (long-necked lute), kamānčeh (spike fiddle), qānun (plucked zither), anutak (glass harp), and santur (hammer dulcimer).84

Nāder invaded India in 1739 and, after defeating the Mughals at the battle of Karnal, his army eventually captured Delhi. According to ʿAbd al-Karim Kashmiri, while staying in Delhi, Nāder frequently spent his time in the company of Indian courtesans. Among them he became infatuated with Nur Bay who was a talented singer and accomplished reciter of Persian poetry. Upon Nāder’s departure, Nur Bay sang an amatory poem that affected the shāh so much that he ordered his servants to give the girl 3,000 rupees. When Nāder returned to Iran, he brought back several courtesans and dancers from Delhi. Astarābādi writes that those courtesans stayed in the camp of Nāder for four years and transmitted their artistic knowledge and expertise to their Iranian counterparts.85

In the second half of the eighteenth century, Fars and the south came under the beneficent rule of Karim Khān Zand (r. 1751-1779), who served not as shāh but as a regent (vakil) for the last Safavid puppets with Shiraz, a city 300 miles south-west of Isfahan, as his capital. Shiraz was already a political and economic urban center with a cultural flavor of its own. Moreover, a substantial courtesan community especially trained in music and dance had already existed in this city during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.86
From the very beginning of his reign, Karim Khān displayed great fondness for the fine arts and in particular for the courtesan community and culture. He was well aware of the fact that taxes collected from courtesans and prostitutes were a source of prodigious revenue for the state and, unlike his Safavid predecessors, he felt no constraints in exhibiting his interest in supporting female musicians and dancers in the new capital. He soon established a courtesan district called *khayl* in the kharābāt quarter of Shiraz where he gathered and even imported between 5000 to 6000 urban and rural courtesans and dancing boys catering to the tastes of the nobility and more specifically those of his military officials.87 The intention of Karim Khān in creating the *khayl* district was to distract the assorted gentry and dignitaries of Shiraz with lavish entertainment and delectations so as to avert their interference with the administration of the state and to prevent conspiracies or political attempts against himself.88 He also maintained a large number of courtesans, especially a group of gypsies (*foyuj*), in his military camp. Aside from making music, dancing, and other forms of entertainment, these performers provided members of the army a channeled outlet for their sexual energy.89

Among the female performers in the *khayl* district, there was a small but prominent group of upper-class urban courtesans. These women were notable for their beauty (*zibā‘i*), seductive manners (*delrobā‘i*), polished etiquette (*adab* and *kamāl*), knowledge (*ma‘refat*), witty conversation (*nokteh-pardāzī*), and companionship (*mu‘nes-e jān*) above all, they were accomplished singers (*khosh-āvāz*), dancers (*raqqās*), and professional performers (*bāzigars*) capable of entertaining both the elite and common people.90 The historian and literary figure of the late eighteenth century, Rostam al-Ḥokamā‘, names seventy cultured courtesans of Shiraz during the Zand period as follows:

Golnār, Keshvar, Moraşṣa‘, Setāreh, Zohreh, Mahpaykar, Khorshid, Nāhid, Māhsimā, Parizād, Māhpāreh, Golchehreh, Māyel, Sarv-e Nāz, Shirin, Shekar, Mollā Fāṭemeh,
Rostam al-Ḥokamā’ further narrates several stories about Mollā Fāṭemeh and one story about Moraṣṣa‘ that yield valuable insights into the basic nature of the courtesan culture in that time.

Mollā Fāṭemeh was a famous singer and dancer renowned for her collection of memorized poetry. Her repertoire included some 20,000 verses from both classical and contemporary poets that she performed in a manner commensurate with the various moods, emotional states, and dispositions of her patrons, a technique known among singers and courtesans as *monāseb-khānī* (selecting relevant verses for singing in various contexts). At a purely aesthetic level, she sought to please by her talent and poetry, so that she would receive generous honoraria or tips, and be asked to perform again. Moraṣṣa‘ instead was a celebrated courtesan who attended the *bazm* or private gatherings of connoisseurs in Shiraz and would be escorted by a few subsidiary courtesans (*golrokhān-e zirdastash*) who accompanied her mostly with dancing and playing musical instruments as she entertained her patrons.

As mentioned previously, Karim Khān displayed great fondness for epicurean enjoyments. He spent the last eighteen years of his reign in Shiraz where, according to the author of the *Golshan-e morād*, he enthusiastically invited musicians and courtesans to his court almost every evening for *mahfels* and official banquets. Among the courtesans of *khayl* district, Shākh-e Nabāt was a distinguished *setār* player and singer in her own right who became Karim Khān’s mistress for many years. Edward Scott Waring, a British traveler visiting Shiraz shortly after Shākh-e Nabāt’s death, includes her image in his book, *A Tour to Sheeraz* (Plate 9), and writes:
She is said to have possessed a wonderful influence over the mind of the Vakeel, obliging him, upon every occasion, to submit to her wishes. The king was sensibly affected at her death and paid her memory the same attention as he would have shewn if she had been legally married to him.95

Evidence clearly indicates that the upper-class courtesans, though considered to be prostitutes in the view of the general public, were prominent exponents of the fine arts and custodians of refined culture in Shiraz in the second half of the eighteenth century. Pictorial sources such as lacquer works and miniature paintings show that these performers were sometimes accompanied by subsidiary or lower ranking female performers who were responsible for playing musical instruments and dancing during a bazm session (Plates 10 and 11). Likewise, one can presume that male sāzandehs of the city came to be in charge of training and accompanying courtesans as well as performing independently in various public venues.

Waring speaks of two instrumentalists that he met in Shiraz where they were “considered to be very superior players on an instrument very like a violin [probably kamāncheh].” He heard and admired them very “much, but could form no judgment on their performance.” He further adds that these men and courtesans drank wine in enormous quantities, in a manner he found too public.96 The courtesans and those who were in charge of courtesan salons were paying large amounts of tax and they were under the close scrutiny and control of the dārugheh. Waring writes:

… people who pay the heaviest tax to government, are the female dancer, and the votaries of pleasure. They exercise their profession under the immediate patronage of the governor; their names, ages, &c. are carefully registered, and if one should die or marry, another instantly supplies her place. They are divided into classes, agreeably to their merits, and the estimation they are held in; each class inhabit separate streets, so that you may descend from the doo Toomunees to the Pooli Seeahs, without the chance of making mistakes.97

However, neither the courtesan community nor the gentry of Shiraz were homogenous by any means in this period. On the one hand, innumerable artists, poets, and musicians had migrated from Isfahan and other places to Shiraz largely after the collapse of the Safavids to enjoy the
patronage of the new aristocracy. On the other hand, Karim Khān forced the migration of many tribes to the new capital.

Carsten Niebuhr, who arrived in Shiraz in this period, observes that music received more attention in Persia than in the Ottoman region and Arab lands.98 Rostam al-Ḥokamā’ also declares that during the reign of Karim Khān music making came to be widespread and quite exquisite in Shiraz while musical instruments such as *daf* (frame drum), *naqqāreh* (a pair of kettle drums) *sornāy* (shawm), *musiqār* (panpipe), *nay* (flute), *dombak* (goblet drum), *tanbur* (long-necked lute), *santūr* (hammer dulcimer), and *chahārtār* (long-necked lute) were all ubiquitous and cultivated to an impressive extent.99 Thus, we can infer that the multiethnic society of Shiraz in the second half of the eighteenth century sustained a large number of provincial and rural courtesans who were performers of regional folk songs and dance tunes. These courtesans, as will be discussed later, played a major role in the expansion of the urban music repertoire and the introduction of folk musical elements that subsequently contributed to the further development of the āvāz-dastgāh system.

Moreover, the Safavid tradition of training Georgian boys as dancers seems to have still been prevalent at the end of the eighteenth century. Waring confirms that many of the prominent men kept sets of Georgian boys, who were instructed to sing, to play on various instruments, and perform feats of creativity.100 It is also apparent that dances performed by both urban and rural courtesans were not considered refined forms of art. Waring adds:

> Although the Persian music is so greatly superior to that of India, their dances are as much inferior, being nothing more than an exhibition of the most indecent and disgusting movements and gestures. The dances in India are admirably calculated to set off an elegant figure to the highest advantage; and, notwithstanding the warm and animated descriptions which have been given of the indelicacy and voluptuousness of Eastern dances, I must confess that many of them appear to me wholly unobjectionable.

> The most beautiful women in Persia are devoted to the profession of dancing; the transparency of their shift, which is the only covering they use to conceal their persons, the
exquisite symmetry of their forms, their apparent agitation, and the licentiousness of their verses, are so many incentives to a passion, which requires more philosophy that the Persians possess to restrain.101

While Shiraz was the most important hub of upper-class courtesans in this period, Isfahan was still hosting a significant courtesan community. Unfortunately, there are no substantial accounts of courtesan art and culture in Isfahan for much of the eighteenth century, but some of the courtesans that were brought to Tehran right after the demise of the Zands and the accession of the Qajars were reportedly from Isfahan.

**The Early Nineteenth Century**

When Āqā Moḥammad Khān (r. 1786-1797), the founder of the Qajar dynasty, rose to power, he made Tehran his capital, and soon after that he captured Isfahan and Shiraz in a series of campaigns against the Zands. During the last decade of the eighteenth century, Āqā Moḥammad Khān began to consolidate his authority and administration in the growing metropolis of Tehran, while at the same time he sent his nephew and crown prince, Bābā Khān (later known as Fatḥ-ʿAli Shāh), to Shiraz as prince-regent of Fars. During his stay in Shiraz (1793-1797), Bābā Khān became exposed to courtesan art and culture and also seized the opportunity to acquire a refined taste for courtly life.

Unlike his uncle, who was a eunuch, Fatḥ-ʿAli Shāh (r. 1797-1834) had a profound liking for women in general, and during his reign he married more than 160 wives and concubines of various ethnic origins. It is evident that upon his arrival in Tehran, he summoned to the city a large number of courtesans and female entertainers who seem to have transmitted the musical traditions of the Zands and many other urban and regional folk cultures to the new capital.
Fatḥ-‘Ali Shāh soon established an institution called dastgāh-e bāzīgar-khāneh (chamber of entertainers), and housed two troupes of female musicians and entertainers at his court, each consisting of more than twenty-five accomplished instrumentalists, singers, dancers, and acrobats. These troupes were organized and managed both offstage and on by two reputable senior courtesans of Isfahan, Ostād Zohreh and Ostād Minā. While Ostād Zohreh was a performer on the tār, setār, and kamāncheh, Ostād Minā was primarily a singer and setār player. In the mornings, members of each troupe were trained by two non-Muslim male master musicians: Sohrāb, an Armenian musician of Isfahan, and Rostam, a Jewish musician of Shiraz. Sohrāb and Rostam seem to have particularly specialized in training courtesans in the dastgāh-e bāzīgar-khāneh, and in addition to music, they most likely taught them dance and acrobatics as well (Plates 12-18).

During this period, several male instrumentalists were also associated with the dastgāh-e bāzīgar-khāneh, among whom Rajab-‘Ali Khān Kermāni (d. 1835) was the chief of musicians and courtesans (motreb-bāshi) at the court. As the most distinguished multi-instrumentalist, he played the kamāncheh, tār, setār, and santur and specifically taught these instruments and dancing to the female musicians of the harem. When he left the court for the province of Gilān, his position was delegated to a certain Chālānchi Khān (d. 1836), a Jewish convert to Islam who played kamāncheh and santur. Equally prominent during this period was Āqā Moḥammad-Reżā, an accomplished tār and setār player who, together with his daughter Shāhverdi Khānom, played a central role in the training and educating of female musicians in the harem. Shāhverdi Khānom, who was a prominent female performer on her own right, later became one of the concubines of the shāh.

Among the female musicians in Fatḥ-‘Ali Shāh’s harem, contemporary accounts enumerate eight artists of note and introduce them as follows:
1. Bāji Moshtari, a hereditary courtesan (*moṭreb-zādeh*) of Shiraz, adept at singing and *setār* playing. As a concubine of the shāh, she bore more children for Fath-‘Ali Shāh than any of his other wives.¹⁰⁷
2. Ṭuṭi Khānom, a courtesan originally from Alvār Zand tribe. She was the shāh’s favorite singer and dancer who died at an early age.
3. Shāhpasand Khānom, a hereditary courtesan and dancer from Shiraz who came to be shāh’s concubine.
4. Shāhnavāz Khānom, a Kurdish dancer who was shāh’s concubine.
5. Shāhparvar Khānom, a *chagur* and *setār* player, originally from Qarachehdāgh.
6. Parishāh Khānom, an Armenian *bāzigar*, proficient in tightrope walking.¹⁰⁸

The harem of Fath-‘Ali Shāh was also a multicultural environment where all women including the shāh’s wives, concubines, ladies-in-waiting and courtesans came from various ethnic groups. A large number of these women, particularly urban courtesans, came from Shiraz and Isfahan. Some of the female musicians later came to be concubines of the shāh and his close relatives, who in that case remained active only inside the harem, and according to the author of Tārikh-e ‘āzodi were not allowed to amuse anyone but the shāh. However, a group of upper-class courtesans mostly associated with the *dastgāh-e bāzigar-khāneh* were still active as professional performers in the seraglio, moving around the palace courtyard on horseback, and often had a maid in their attendance.¹⁰⁹ According to pictorial sources of this period these courtesans do not seem to have been among the concubines of the shāh and they probably served the gentry and other clients outside of the court as well.

In the 1840s, *dastgāh-e bāzigar-khāneh* began to decline and by the middle of the nineteenth century the music of the Qajar court was almost dominated by professional male musicians. Nonetheless, female singers and dancers came to be trained by male master musicians of the court who later played a significant role in the music making of the indoor ceremonies of
the seraglio. By the late nineteenth century, courtesans were still enormously active outside of the court but largely in the form of small ensembles comprised of three to six performers. These female performers including singers, instrumentalists and particularly dancers were regularly invited to perform at the court and the house of aristocracy. The term qavvāl continued to be used occasionally referring to courtesans throughout the nineteenth and even the first half of the twentieth centuries. In an official farmān (decree) issued in 1882, a certain Luṭi Şāleḥ was appointed as the chief of qavvālān and arbāb-e ṭarab in Shāhrud and Bastām. Likewise around 1950s professional female moṭrebs were still sometimes called qavvāls in Shiraz.

In general, female court performers in pre-modern Iran were valued items who were often sold or presented as gifts to other rulers, and they have constituted the major conduit for the transmission and exchange of musical ideas and stylistic features between courts. In the period between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, the influence of female performers and (Georgian and subsequently Jewish) dancing boys was notably strong in the performance practice of music in the capital and other urban centers. Moreover, one can presume that the main reason music and dance were stigmatized and frequently proclaimed as harām was their associations with male and female prostitution and drinking alcohol, behaviors that have long been considered evidence of moral decay in Islamic society.


6. For further information, see Abolala Soudavar, Art of the Persian Courts (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), 90.


9. Ibid., 2:245.


11. Ḥosayn Modarresi Ṭābātabā’ī, Farmānhā-ye torkamānān-e Qaraqoyunlu va Āqqoyunlu (Qom: Chāpkhāneh-ye ḥekmat, 1973), 76.


18. In 1544, the Mughal emperor, Homayun sought asylum in Iran and entered the city of Herat. Upon his arrival, Shāh Ṭahmāsp sent a farmān ordering that Homayun be treated in the best possible way. In that farmān, Shāh Ṭahmāsp mentions prominent musicians and entertainers of
Herat by name which indicates that he was closely familiar with the musical scene of the city. For further information, see ‘Abd al-Ḥosayn Navā’i, Shāh Ṭahmāsb-e Ṣafavi (Tehran: Enteshārāt-e bonyād-e farhang-e Irān, 1971), 51-61.

19 Ibid., 513.

20 Qāżī Ahmad Qomi, Kholāšat al-tavārikh, 1:255.

21 Engelbert Kaempfer, Album of Persian Costomes and Animals with some Drawings, British Museum, London, 1974,0617,0.1.21.


25 Ibid., 113.

26 Ibid., 155.


28 Ibid., 156.

29 Ibid., 68; 321-322.

30 Ibid., 155.

31 Ibid., 117.

32 Navā’i, Shāh Ṭahmāsb-e Ṣafavi, 457.


35 Eskandar Beg Torkamān, Tārikh-e ‘ālamārā’ ‘Abbāsi, 2: 1109.

36 Mollā Jalāl Monajjem, Tārikh-e ‘Abbāsi, 352.
37 Matthee, “Prostitutes, Courtesans, and Dancing Girls,” 143.
41 Antonio de Gouvea, Relation des grandes guerres et victoires obtenues par le roy de Perse, 149.
42 De Silva y Figueroa, Comentarios, 2:210-211.
44 Ibid., 110-129.
48 Nicholas Sanson, The present state of Persia (London, 1695), 70-71.
50 Adam Olearius, Vermehrte newe Beschreibung der moscowitischen und persischen Reyse, ed. D. Lohmeier (Schleswig, 1656 [rep. Tübingen, 1971]), 532; 592.
51 J. J. Struys, Drie aanmerkelijke en seer rampspoedige reysen door Italie, Griekenlandt, Lijflandt, Moscovien, Tartarijen, Meden, Persien, Oast-Indien, Japan, en verscheeyden andere gewesten (Amsterdam, 1676), 303-304.
52 Monsieur de Thevenot, The Travels of [...] into the levant into three parts (London: 1686), 2: 100.

54 Ibid., 205-211.

55 Ibid., 211-212.


57 See Matthee, “Prostitutes, Courtesans, and Dancing Girls,” 134.

58 Olearius, *Vermehrte newe Beschreibung*, 531.


64 *Varsāqi* was a Turkish vocal genre mostly composed and performed by Turkish or Caucasian musicians in the Safavid court. For further information about Caucasian musicians and composers see Pourjavady, *The Musical Codex of Amir Khān Gorji*, 160-167.


66 Olearius, *Vermehrte newe Beschreibung*, 531; as cited in Matthee, “Prostitutes, Courtesans, and Dancing Girls,” 141.


68 Amir Khān Gorji, *Resāleḥ*, Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris) MS Suppl. persan 1087, 13a

Zaytun and Āhu are not traditional Muslim names. For further information about Ostād Āhu see Mollā Jalāl Monajjem, *Tārikh-e ‘Abbāsī*, 156; Sayyed Hosayn Maythami, *musiqi-ye ‘asr-e Šafavi* (Tehran: Farhangestān-e honar, 2010), 71; 178.


Matthee, “Prostitutes, Courtesans, and Dancing Girls,” 139; Floor, *A Social History of Sexual Relations in Iran*, 207.


For further information about this collection see Pourjavady, *The Musical Codex of Amir Khān Gorjī*.


During the Safavid period Shiraz hosted a considerable number of courtesans and musicians. The Portuguese traveler Tenreiro, visiting the city during the reign of Shāh Esmāʿīl I, mentions a banquet organized by the governor in 1524 where he was entertained by female singers. A century later, Hubert Visnich, the director of the Dutch East India Company in Iran, relates how he was


88 Ibid.

89 Ibid., 329-331.

90 Ibid., 340.

91 Ibid., 341.

92 Ibid., 342.

93 Ibid., 348-348.


96 Ibid., 54.

97 Ibid., 80.


100 Waring, *A Tour to Sheeraz*, 53.

101 Ibid., 54-55.


Shāhverdi Khānom is mentioned in Nāsekh al-tavarikh as the daughter of Āqā Moḥammad-Rezā. For further discussion, see ‘Aţod al-Dowleh, Tārikh-e ‘Aţodi, 344.


‘Aţod-al-Dowleh, Tārikh-e ‘Aţodi, 47-49.

Farmān-e riyāsat-e Luţī Şāleḥ be moţrebān va qavvālān, University of Tehran (Tehran) MS 3935.

Personal communication from Maryam Iravāniān in San Diego, CA.
CHAPTER TWO
MUSICAL LIFE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Writing a fairly coherent survey of the musical life and social organization of musicians in Iran during the nineteenth century has been a formidable challenge until very recently, mostly due to a lack of sufficient data. Initial attempts to gather information from both oral and written sources, however, were made by the two eminent Persian scholars, Ruḥollāh Khāleqi and Ḥaṣan Mashḥun, who mostly dealt with the biographies of musicians and were less concerned with socio-cultural phenomena such as patronage, class origins, and modes of production.

Yet over the past thirty years, a large number of new resources have been revealed and have become available to scholars of Persian music. The diary of Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh (r. 1848-1896) and several journals composed by the nineteenth-century princes and noblemen have been edited and published; numerous photography albums including images of male and female musicians and entertainers have been analyzed and made available; a number of musical treatises containing information on hitherto unknown musical figures have been discovered; and finally, Persian recordings (78 rpm records) made by the Gramophone Company between 1899 and 1934 have been digitized and released as albums. All these documents can help us to construct a better picture of musical life in Iran during the Qajar period and its social organization, performance contexts, patronage structures, hereditary traditions, maktabas (stylistic schools), and contact with other cultural spheres among other subjects.

Āqā Moḥammad Khān

The founder of the Qajar dynasty, Āqā Moḥammad Khān (r. 1786-1797), rose to power immediately after Karim Khān’s death. He belonged to the Qajar Turkmen clans who had
vanquished the Afshārs and taken control of the Northern provinces. He captured Isfahan and Shiraz in a series of campaigns against the Zands and finally made Tehran his capital. He reasserted Persia’s control over its former territories in Georgia and the Caucasus. During his eighteen years of conquest and consolidation, Āqā Moḥammad Khān finally managed to integrate Iran under a single monarch and thus enabled the country to weather the storms of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Like his predecessors Nāder and Karim Khān, Āqā Moḥammad Khān allegedly had a number of musicians and entertainers in his service, most of them from Isfahan. Guillaume Olivier, a French traveler who visited his court in 1796, reports on a banquet in which musicians and comic actors entertained the guests before the dinner. Musicians continuously played soothing background music while the dinner was being served and finally a group of dancers dazzled the audience with exquisite dances. Olivier expresses his surprise, however, that unlike what he was used to in Europe, no one from the courtiers and guests participated in the performance of music and dance over the course of the night.¹

Except for Zohreh and Minā, the two female performers who seem to have entered the Qajar court and later became directors of two groups of twenty-five courtesans at the dastgāh-e bāzīgar-khāneh, no other prominent musician is mentioned specifically as associated with the court in this period. Yet Āqā Moḥammad Khān’s grandson refers to the shāh’s own musical talent and further declares that “whenever the potentate was in a good disposition and felt exuberant, he played the dōtār, an instrument widely used among the Turkmen.”²
**Fatḥ-‘Ali Shāh**

Āqā Moḥammad Khān was assassinated in 1797 and was succeeded by his nephew, Fatḥ-‘Ali Shāh (r. 1797-1834), who attempted to maintain Iran’s sovereignty over its new territories. Nonetheless, the new ruler was disastrously defeated by Russia in two wars (1804–13 and 1826–28) and thus lost Georgia, Armenia, and northern Azerbaijan.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, with the establishment of the *dastgāh-e bāzigar-khāneh* at the court of Fatḥ-‘Ali Shāh, a number of courtesans were brought to Tehran. Along with these courtesans, several male instrumentalists, singers, and dance instructors also found their way to the Qajar court. These masters of music and dance, who were mainly from Isfahan and Shiraz, soon became in charge of training promising female performers, and at the same time performed independently at many court celebrations and gatherings. Little is known about the background of these musicians and it is not clear whether they came from families of hereditary musicians or not, but we may presume that most of them, such as the Armenian Sohrāb and the Jew Rostam, were experienced instrumentalists and dance instructors, and accordingly, they would have been previously engaged in the training of performing artists. They even came to Tehran presumably with their own small troupes of performers (*dastehs*).

The most respected musician at the court of Fatḥ-‘Ali Shāh was Āqā Bābā Makhmur (d. c. 1820), a singer from Isfahan who was held to be superior to all of his contemporaries. He was the favored singer in the Shāh’s service, with his broad knowledge of both theory and performance of music. Two musical treatises written in the first half of the nineteenth century refer to him as the most influential figure in the development of the *dastgāh* system and as an active mentor who trained a number of disciples. He is specifically credited as the first person to combine a vast collection of melody-types together into the twelve ordered structures known as *dastgāhs*.³
The principle instrumentalist and the chief of musicians and entertainers (moṭreb-bāshi) at the court was Rajab-ʿAli Khān Kermānī (d. 1835), who was adept at a number of instruments, in particular the kamāncheh, tār, setār, and santur. The early stages of his career are unclear, but judging from his epithet Kermānī, it is safe to assume that he came from Kermān. In Tehran, he was the pupil of Āqā Bābā Makhmur, whose tutelage he followed closely. The Polish orientalist Alexander Chodźko (1804-1891), who met Rajab-ʿAli Khān during his stay in Tehran, describes him as a superior kamāncheh player and the dance instructor of courtesans, and as one of his own informants regarding taṣnīfs or vocal compositions. As a highly paid musician, Rajab-ʿAli Khān enjoyed great renown during his lifetime and never played in other contexts outside the court milieu except for a close circle of princes and the nobility. He was the director of the dastgāh-e bāzīgar-khāneh for a while and toward the end of the reign of Fatḥ-ʿAli Shāh migrated to Gilan, where he wound up in the service of Manuchehr Khān Gorji (d. 1846), the Georgian de facto ruler of that region. Ultimately, he moved with the latter from Gilan to Shiraz in 1834 and died there a year later.

Three other instrumentalists, Chālānchi Khān (d. 1836), Āqā Moḥammad-Rezā, and Āqā Ebrāhim, were also associated with the dastgāh-e bāzīgar-khāneh, with each teaching specific instruments under the supervision of Rajab-ʿAli Khān.

The first musician, Chālānchi Khān, was an adolescent Jewish boy who, upon entering the court, became a Muslim. He received his music education, his vocal training in particular, at the court and soon came to be the favorite singer of Fatḥ-ʿAli Shāh. However, after puberty his voice deteriorated and subsequently, he began to play the santur. Eventually, the shāh ordered him to play the kamāncheh and he ended up becoming an eminent virtuoso on that instrument. After Rajab-ʿAli Khān, Chālānchi was appointed as the moṭreb-bāshi. This is also probably when he
received the title of Chālānchi Khān, for chālānchi was not his surname. Chālānchi was a Turkish nickname literally meaning ‘instrumentalist,’ but it was apparently employed to refer to the chief of court musicians. The second instrumentalist, Āqā Moḥammad-Rezā, was commonly recognized as the most celebrated tār and setār teacher at the court, and was also renowned for his broad and systematic approach to the twelve dastgāhs and their structures. He knew a large number of melody-types by name and sought to include them all in his arrangements of dastgāhs.

Moḥammad-Rezā’s daughter, Shāhverdi Khānom, was also a musician at that time and was responsible for training performers in the female quarter at the court. Āqā Ebrāhim was the santur teacher. According to a contemporary writer, while he lacked a particularly striking style, the consensus at the time was that he was the best santur player of his day.

In addition to Āqā Bābā Makhmur, there were other singers reportedly active at the court. Chodżko mentions a certain Mollā Karim as a proficient singer and trainer of courtesans who also assisted Chodżko when he was making a collection of vocal compositions performed by the female performers. Another contemporary account confirms that Mollā Karim was a musical authority that besides writing taṣnifs and playing the tār, was particularly adept at singing the mathnavi.

According to the author of Tārikh-e ‘Ažodi, every morning the male masters (ostād-e mardānehs) including Āqā Moḥammad-Rezā, Rajab-‘Ali Khān, and Chālānchi Khān came to the mo‘allem-khāneh or the ‘chamber of instruction’ to teach the female performers. The female performers were collectively known as bāzīgars, yet the word bāzīgar more specifically referred to those who were dancers and acrobats. They were dressed up in such a way that their entire bodies except for their faces were covered. Nonetheless, the eunuchs were sitting in the room during the entire session while the bāzīgars were taking lessons (mashq) from male instructors (Plates 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23).
Moḥammad Shāh

By the beginning of the reign of Moḥammad Shāh (r. 1834-1848), Fatḥ-ʿAli Shāh’s successor, while the *dastgāh-e bāzīgar-khāneh* was still active and young girls were still being recruited, the organization of courtesans into two groups of twenty-five professional female performers was no longer maintained. Moḥammad Shāh did not pursue an extravagant way of living and he was reportedly under the influence of his advisors, more specifically his grand vizier Ḫāji Mirzā Āqāsi (c. 1783-1848), who was a cunning dervish. By the middle of his reign, the šāh apparently had ceased to support professional courtesans in his court while at the same time dancing boys, also known as *bāzigars*, had become more prominent on the music scene. Like their female counterparts, dancing boys seem to have received their training at the *moʿallem-khāneh* as well.

The most preeminent musician toward the end of the reign of Moḥammad Shāh was Āqā ‘Ali-Akbar Farāhāni (d. c. 1861), a master *tār* player who was renowned for his superb instrumental technique and a remarkable repertoire of Persian and adopted foreign tunes. Comte de Gobineau, the French ambassador who spent some years in Iran (1855-1858), met Āqā ‘Ali-Akbar at the court and described him in the following words:

*In order to find performers, we need to get away from the “serious” classes, and so we have Aly-Ekber, who the Persians speak willingly of as divine and who, indeed, plays the tar marvelously. I myself concede him all of this, and I’ve seen Europeans who were indifferent to Persian music who have succumbed nonetheless to admiration upon hearing him perform Russian melodies he had arranged for his instrument. Aly-Ekber plays with soul, with marvelous feeling, and would be considered a great artist in any of the world’s countries. He comes across as extremely capricious, vain, and nervous; his outbursts are fabled, and it is often an ordeal to get him to perform.*

In the early modern history of Persian music, Āqā ‘Ali-Akbar is regarded as the most prominent *tār* player who was responsible for establishing an instrumental *maktab* (stylistic school) for the *tār* and *setār*. He developed a distinct repertoire for these instruments incorporating a highly efficient plucking system that was perpetuated and further refined in the hands of his descendants
(khāndān), in particular his sons, Mirzā ‘Abdollāh and Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli. Therefore, Āqā ‘Ali-Akbar’s background and musical education have been particularly important for the following generation of musicians to establish the authenticity of the court repertoire. Āqā ‘Ali-Akbar could have been the pupil of Āqā Moḥammad-Reżā, the distinguished tār and setār player at the court. In fact, he had an older brother named Moḥammad-Reżā who was also a tār player and some researchers have argued that these two Moḥammad-Reżās could have been the same person.17 Furthermore, it is hard to assume that Āqā ‘Ali-Akbar received his primary musical education in Farāhān, the area he allegedly was from, for Farāhān was not a center of cultural or political significance at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Thus, one can presume that he was born in Farāhān and later came to the Qajar court where he probably studied with master musicians including Āqā Moḥammad-Reżā in the mo’alleh-khāneh.

During his professional career, ‘Ali-Akbar Farāhāni was involved in training male and female singers and instrumentalists as well as bāzīgars. Abu al-Ḥasan Ghaffāri, better known as Ṣani’ al-Molk (1814-66), who was the celebrated court painter in the middle of the nineteenth century, depicted Āqā ‘Ali-Akbar with a group of young musicians and performers (Plate 24). Musical artists in the picture are labeled as Kowkab Khānom, Mirzā ‘Abdollāh Khān ‘Alā’ al-Molk, ‘Ali-Akbar Bāzīgar, Ḥasan Khān, Mas’ud Mirzā, Solṭān Khānom, and Mirzā Haydar-‘Ali Sarhang. Among these musicians we only know something about Solṭān Khānom, who came to be a celebrated singer and composer at the seraglio during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Two other distinguished male instrumentalists, Khoshnavāz Khān and Moḥammad Ḥasan, were also contemporaries of ‘Ali-Akbar but the extent of their involvement with the mo’alleh-khāneh is not clear to us. Gobineau, who met these musicians, only mentions a few words about
their characters. He declares that Khoshnavāz Khan, a player of kamāncheh, had a joyful personality with a fondness for alcohol. Moḥammad Ḥasan Khan was instead a serious musician whose technique of santur playing was unrivalled, yet he did not remain completely impervious to the comic routines of his colleagues. He was appointed as the chālānchi at the beginning of the reign of Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh (r. 1848-1896) and later received particular attention from the shāh, being asked to perform exclusively for him most nights. The earliest photographs of Qajar court musicians reveal that Moḥammad Ḥasan Khan was still active in 1863, but Khoshnavāz Khan was no longer in the service of the court and instead his son had taken on his role as a kamāncheh player in the male court ensemble (see plate 26).

The custom of having troupes of female instrumentalists, singers, and dancers in the harem doesn’t seem to have been confined to the royal court in Tehran. During the first half of the nineteenth century, a number of princes and dignitaries who were appointed as governors in various urban centers retained female performers at their local courts. In fact, the number and quality of female performers in a court was a vital part of the atmosphere of court life and a measure of its ruler’s prestige. The female performers in some cases were just hired courtesans, especially in big cities such as Isfahan and Shiraz where a long tradition of courtesan culture can be traced back to the Safavid period or even earlier. In some cases, female performers were concubines of princes or nobles and accordingly they almost never performed for any male spectator outside of the harem.

The French painter and archaeologist Eugène Flandin (1809-1889) was once invited to the harem of Malek Qāsem Mirzā (d. 1860), a son of Faṭḥ-ʿAli Shāh, in Tabriz. Flandin reports that his host had some twenty female performers at his court. Over the course of the dinner, a group of performers including two instrumentalists, two accompanists, and two dancers entertained the
guests with music and dance. Among the female performers, Flandin mentions that a blind male musician was also present who performed on the kamāncheh\(^2\). It is ambiguous however as to whether the male musician was really blind or was just blindfolded, a tradition in situations where a male instrumentalist was brought to perform before a harem or all-female gathering. More often than not, the male instrumentalist was the trainer of female performers and attended the gathering with his own ensemble.

Another traveler, A. H. Layard, observed a performance by female entertainers at the house of a Lur chieftain in Isfahan in around 1840. From Layard's account, one can infer that the female performers at the house of this nobleman were probably professional urban courtesans rather than his concubines.

But the most characteristic and curious scenes of Persian life were those in the house of a Lur chief who has left his native mountains and had established himself in Isfahan, professing to be a ‘sufi,’ or free-thinker. He was an intimate friend and a distant connection of Shefi’a Khān, by whom I was introduced to him. He invited me more than once to dinner, and I was present at some of those orgies in which Persians of his class were too apt to indulge. On these occasions he would take his guests into the ‘enderun,’ or women’s apartments, in which he was safe from intrusion and less liable to cause public scandal. They were served liberally with arak and sweetmeats, whilst dancing girls performed before them. Many of these girls were strikingly handsome–some were celebrated for their beauty. Their costume consisted of loose silk jackets of some gay colour, entirely open in front so as to show the naked figure to the waist; ample silk ‘shalwars’ or trousers so full that they could scarcely be distinguished from petticoats, and embroidered skullcaps. Long braided tresses descended to their heels, and they had the usual ‘zulfs’ or ringlets on both sides of the face. The soles of their feet, the palms of their hands, and their fingers, and toenails were stained dark red, or rather brown, with henna. Their eyebrows were coloured black, and made to meet; their eyes, which were generally large and dark, were rendered more brilliant and expressive by the use of ‘kohl’. Their movements were not wanting in grace, their postures, however, were frequently extravagant and more like gymnastic exercises than dancing. Bending themselves backwards, they would almost bring their heads and their heels together. Such dancers were commonly presented in Persian paintings, which have not became well known out of Persia. The musicians were women who played on guitar and dulcimers. These orgies usually ended by the guest getting very drunk, and falling asleep on the carpets, where they remained until sufficiently sober to return to their homes in the morning\(^2\).
Princes were among the leisure class who had a serious involvement with music. While lavishly patronizing all forms of entertainment and competing with one another for musical renown, several princes were also adept in playing musical instruments. There is no doubt that some of them had direct access to the mo’alleml-khāneh at the court and therefore they might have studied with the most accomplished master musicians of their own time. Nonetheless, the extent of musical knowledge they acquired essentially depended upon their own personal motivations and it doesn’t seem to have been part of the general training a prince was required to receive. The surviving accounts on this issue are very scarce, yet there is some scattered information about the musical talents and contributions of a few princes.

Fatḥollāḥ Mirzā Shoʿā al-Salṭāneh (1811-1869), the thirty-fifth son of Fatḥ-ʿAli Shāh and the governor of Zanjān, and Firuz Mirzā Noṣrat al-Dowleh (1818-1886), a brother of Moḥammad Shāh, were both kamāncheh players. Another grandson of Fatḥ-ʿAli Shāh, Taymur Mirzā, a son of Ḥosayn-ʿAli Mirzā Farmānārā, was also skilled in playing the santur. Taymur Mirzā spent several years in exile living in London, Baghdad, Najaf, and Karbalā. Eventually he came back to Tehran during the reign of Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh and was appointed as the head of qush-khāneh (house of falconry).

Smaller Troupes of Performers

Apart from the dastgāh-e bāzīgar-khāneh and the female performers who were primary sources of musical entertainment in courts and houses of the nobility, there were smaller dastehs (troupes) comprised of professional male musicians, dancing boys, and acrobats, who were either patronized by the gentry or were independently active in urban and rural centers. These dastehs usually consisted of half a dozen or so entertainers that mostly performed at celebrations or public
gatherings. In 1833, James Baillie Fraser (1783-1856), a Scottish traveler and artist, attended a courtly celebration where musicians and dancing boys were brought to perform in front of Fatḥ-‘Ali Shāh and his courtiers. He portrays the performance of musicians as follows:

> During the whole of this time the dancers were dancing, and the musicians tearing away on their instruments; and certainly the tumbling performed by the dancers was the thing of all others best of its kind, had there not been too much of it. There were four boys, I think, and a little creature scarcely seven years old, as it appeared to us; and they not only danced, but tumbled and twisted their figures into every shape that suppleness of imagination could teach to suppleness of joint and muscle. They performed what is called the “scorpion,” in India,—that is, lay on their bellies on the ground, and bent up back and legs till their heels touched their head, and every joint of the back in succession downwards, like a scorpion flourishing its tail:—they leaned backwards on their hands, bending their bodies till their faces were on the ground, or looking through between their legs, and in this manner they tumbled and twisted about like balls; they twisted themselves like ball and socket, from the small of their back upwards, and in this way they performed sundry tumbles and somersets. Then they would stand up their hands, feet in air, and kiss the ground; or, crossing the legs, roll about the platform one after another. Then again they would go in pairs, wreathing themselves together into a grotesque ball, and tumble over and over as if with an involuntary impulse. In short, there was scarcely a conceivable leap, attitude, contortion, prank, or posture, which they did not practice or assume. … His majesty, who sat with great and praiseworthy patience, dolling out pieces of coin to those [who] performed well, at length retired, and we all followed his example.24

Another account of such small ensembles is provided by Moritz von Kotzebue (1789-1861), a German traveler who came to Iran in 1817 in the cortège of a Russian embassy. Kotzebue describes a ceremony in the house of the Sardār (general) of Yerevan that was held in honor of the Russian embassy (Plate 25).

> The attendants presented water to us to wash our hands, but without napkins: the Persians allow their hands to dry; and we were obliged to wipe ours with our handkerchiefs. This operation had scarcely been completed, when, to our dismay, immense dishes were again brought in; but this time we were let off more easily, for they consisted of fruits and sweets; and to our relief, only one was placed before each of us, otherwise, indeed, we should not have been able to see the dancers, who had just entered this hall and situated themselves by the door. Their music consisted of a guitar, a sort of violin, of three strings, two tambourines, and a singer. The latter wore a frightful grimace, and strained his throat with what seemed to be strong convulsions; fortunately for us, however, he frequently covered his face with a piece of paper, in accordance with the customs of the country, and spared us the sight of his hideous grimaces. The musicians did not play out the tune; but still the effect on the whole was a sound not unlike a chorus of cats. Three handsome boys, clothed
in long garments, decorated with silk and ribbons of different colors, were so inspired by this discordant music, and by the screams of the singer, that they began to dance, throwing themselves into various poses. They had small metal castanets, which they struck in time with the dance. I believe that two of these youth were meant to represent females, because their motions were slower and more modest; but the third boy tumbled about most furiously, turning alternately to each of the others. The most ludicrous part of the entertainment, however, followed when the music suddenly rose to a loud pitch, the singer screamed mercilessly, and the three boys tumbled, doing somersaults, to the extremity of the hall, where two of them remained in a graceful posture, while the third stood upon his head, showing his pantaloons and naked feet. There was one particular feat, which the dancers performed with great flair: they leapt and turned several times in the air, without touching the ground with their hands or feet. With our ears well filled, and our stomachs empty, we at last dispersed: the ambassador took leave of his liberal host, and the whole party returned home in the same state—to dinner!25

From the accounts of these two travelers we can perhaps gain a glimpse of the structure of small male troupes in this period. A typical professional ensemble seems to have included one tār player, one kamāncheh player, one or two singer-accompanists playing daf or dombak (and sometimes even a pair of naqqāreh), and two to four dancing boys. According to some accounts, these musicians as a general category were called moṭreb. Dancing boys seem to have been distinguished as two different categories of bāzigar and raqqāṣ. Both used to dance in women’s clothes and with their long heir let down. While bāzigars were more acrobat dancers who as Kotzebue tells us “tumbled about most furiously turning alternately to each of the others,” a raqqāṣ had more feminine gestures and his “motions were slower, and more modest.”

Military and European Bands

In 1803, the Qajar court went to war against the Russians due to the Russian expansion into the Caucasus, most notably Georgia, which was an Iranian domain. The Qajar army suffered a major military defeat in the war and under the terms of the Treaty of Golestān in 1813, Persia was forced to cede most of its Caucasian territories comprising modern day Georgia, Dagestan, and most of Azerbaijan. The second Russo-Persian War of the late 1820s ended for Qajar Iran with a temporary
occupation of Tabriz and the signing of the Treaty of Turkmenchây in 1828, acknowledging Russian sovereignty over the entire South Caucasus and Dagestan, as well as ceding what is nowadays Armenia and the remaining part of Azerbaijan.

Music making at the court of Fath-‘Ali Shâh and other urban centers during this period was not completely confined to Persian music. In fact, the shâh and his crown prince, ‘Abbâs Mirzâ, were both introduced at least to western style military bands. Likewise, a group of Russian musicians reportedly performed in Tabriz and Yerevan for ‘Abbâs Mirzâ and later they were sent to Soltâniyeh, the summer encampment of Fath-‘Ali Shâh, to play for the potentate. Therefore, it is perhaps not surprising when some years later court musicians were imitating Russian tunes on Persian instruments.

Amateur Musicians, Music Theorists, and Poets

Throughout the nineteenth century groups of amateur musicians and singers were associated with the royal court in Tehran and other provincial courts—most notably in Shiraz, Isfahan, Tabriz, Kashan, and Gilan—whose primary occupations were not music making. These nonprofessional and nonhereditary musicians were among the court literati, a group of classical poets, calligraphers, painters, storytellers, etc. They were often invited to the literary and artistic gatherings of the nobility where they performed for a small number of patrons. Several of these individuals were also poet-composers who achieved some renown in their lives and are remembered even today through written and oral traditions. Likewise, a few of them had some knowledge of music theory, and it is safe to assume that some of the musical treatises compiled in this period and even earlier were written by such individuals.
During the reign of Fatḥ-ʿAli Shāh one such amateur court musician was ‘Ali Moḥammad Khvānsāri, a noble of Khvānsār and boon companion (laleh-ye ḥoẓur) of the shāh who also wrote poetry under the nom de plume of “Qerqi.” He had an excellent working knowledge of music theory and performance but was reluctant to be recognized as a musician in public. ‘Ali Moḥammad Khvānsāri had a gruff and low-pitched voice and only performed at nights or on certain occasions privately for the shāh.28

In the same period those who were studying theology and philosophy at less conservative seminaries, particularly in Tehran and Isfahan, still studied mathematics from Ebn Sinā’s Ketāb al-shefā’ (Book of remedies) or similar texts, and in some cases medieval music theory was included in their curriculum. Thus, it is no surprise to find that some of the religious scholars at that time were major exponents of music theory, although they often frowned upon music performance. Gobineau reports that Mollā ‘Abd al-Javād Khorāsānī, the outstanding mathematician of Isfahan, had a large circle of students and disciples at the time and was renowned as a prominent music theorist with some knowledge of playing the tār. Yet since the performance of music was not held in high esteem, nobody had ever seen him playing the instrument.29 Another such religious scholar was Ākhund Mollā ‘Ali, who had a reputation as a mathematician and music theorist, but he had no knowledge of playing musical instruments.30

Among the literati, poets were notably familiar with music, more so than any other group, and they often had close connections to court musicians. Sometimes poets were either songwriters themselves or their poems were set to vocal compositions by their contemporary taṣnīf and āvāz singers. During the reign of Moḥammad Shāh, the most eminent poet, Forūghi Baštāmī, was reportedly educated in music as well. He wrote a poem in praise of the shāh in which he names three tār players, Zāghi, Rayḥān and the Jewish musician Melikhāy, as well as three accompanists
Another member of the literati and a prominent patron of music in this period was Moḥammad Shāh’s grand vizier Ḥāji Mirzā Āqāsi (c. 1783-1848), a respected aristocrat initiated into the Neʿmatollāhi Sufi order who composed poetry and vocal compositions. He is credited with the composition of a taṣnif that was later transformed into an instrumental composition known as reng-e farah.

Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh

The long reign of Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh (r. 1848-1896) was certainly the period of greatest flourishing for Persian music, mostly due to its lavish patronage by the shāh and his princes. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the musicians sustained by the court were divided into two broad groups of male and female professionals. Female musicians and entertainers were few in number, they performed exclusively in the andarun (harem), and they were preeminent exponents of taṣnifs and rengs. Professional male musicians and entertainers, on the contrary, formed a community known as the ʿamaleh-ye ṭarab (lit., servants in the office of entertainment) or ahl-e ṭarab-e mardāneh (community of male entertainers), two titles that were alternatively employed by the shāh and his courtiers. They performed mostly in the khalvat (male intimate domain) at various social gatherings of the court and fell into three different categories in descending order of rank: (1) ʿamale-ye ṭarab-e khāṣṣeh, (2) ʿamaleh-ye ṭarab, and (3) moṭreb.

ʿAmaleh-ye Ṭarab-e Khāṣṣeh

The first category, ʿamaleh-ye ṭarab-e khāṣṣeh or the ‘special musicians of the royal court,’ consisted of solo specialists including both instrumentalists and singers who enjoyed the highest
esteem at the court. They were allowed to sit and perform in the presence of the shāh and also received monthly stipends.

The majority of these professionals belonged to hereditary musical families who were active in the nineteenth century for at least two or three generations. During the reign of Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh, there were about two outstanding families (khāndān) and five minor families among the ‘amaleh-ye ūrab-e khāsēh. While in many cases a given family emerged as dominant in their specialization on one particular instrument, there were also families that comprised an ensemble and therefore their members were trained in various musical instruments. The founders of these musical families and their prominent subsequent members were:

1. Āqā Moṭalleb, who was from Shiraz and specialized in playing the kamāncheh. His first son, Mohammād Şādeq Khān, was a master santur player at the court. His second son, Mirzā Shafi’, was also a tār player.
2. Āqā ‘Ali-Akbar, who was supposedly from Farāhān and specialized in playing the tār. After him, his nephew Āqā Gholām-Ḥosayn and his three sons Mirzā Ḥasan, Mirzā ‘Abdollāh, and Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli were all members of ‘amaleh-ye ūrab-e khāsēh as tār players.
3. Khoshnavāz Khān and his son, who were both kamāncheh players.
4. Esmā‘il Khān, his brother Qoli Khān, and his son Ḥosayn Khān, who were all kamāncheh players.
5. Moḥammad Ḥasan Khān, who was a santur player. His daughter Sakineh was a pupil of ‘Ali-Akbar and became a famous musician at the female quarter.
6. Āqā Ḥasan, who was a singer and tār player. His son was a singer and dombak player.
7. Āqā Gholām-Ḥosayn, who was a kamāncheh player. His son, Ḥabibollāh Samā‘-Ḥożur was a renowned taṣnīf singer and santur player. His daughter, Zivar al-Solṭān, was also the most celebrated taṣnīf singer in the andarun.

The first two musical families enjoyed a more celebrated status than the others. They were predominantly performers of the santur and tār, two stringed instruments, at the court, where much
of the refined and classical music making of the time can be attributed to them either as performers or as supervisors. The significance of the first family is located above all in Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khān, a musical prodigy who far surpassed his father in renown, so that it is commonly held that he himself founded the musical family. The second family is comprised of Āqā ʿAli-Akbar Farāhāni and his descendants, who were prominent exponents of the tār and setār at the court and later arranged an ordered repertoire that came to be known as the radif.

In 1863, a few pictures were taken of professional male musicians of the court. Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh, who himself took a particular interest in photography and in documenting various aspects of court life, later added the names and titles of the musicians at the bottom of the pictures (Plate 26). In one picture the entire group of male professionals were captured in a long shot (Plate 27). In this picture, musicians appear to have been seated from left to right in descending order of rank, as dictated by their authority and age. The first group of musicians includes three instrumentalists: Moḥammad Ḥasan Khān (head of the court musicians and santur player), Āqā Moţalleb (kamāncheh player), and Āqā Gholām-Ḥosayn (tār player). The second group are five singers of āvāz and taṣnif including Āqā ʿAli Kāshi (singer), Āqā Ḥasan (singer and tār player), Režā-Qoli (singer-accompanist), Sayyed Ghorāb (singer), and Āqā Ḥasan’s son (dombak player). And the last group consists of three younger instrumentalists comprising Khoshnavāz Khān’s son (a kamāncheh player), Moḥammad Šādeq (a santur player), and a son of the deceased Āqā ʿAli-Akbar (a tār player).36

In the first decade of the reign of Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh many court musicians were those who were active during the reign of his father, including Āqā ʿAli-Akbar, Khoshnavāz Khān and Moḥammad Ḥasan Khān. The aforementioned picture reveals that later on more musicians joined the circle of professional court musicians. Nonetheless, by 1880 the number of ‘amaleh-ye farab-
had rapidly and dramatically decreased, and all at once the instrumentalists who were recognized as such only included Moḥammad Šādeq Khān, Āqā Gholām-Ḥosayn, Esmāʿīl Khān (d.1885) and Ḥājī Ḥakim (singer) (Plate 28). Toward the end of the reign of Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh, four other musicians, Mirzā ‘Abdollāh, Āqā Ḥosayn Qoli, Ḥabibollāh Samāʿ-Ḥożur and Abu al-Qāsem Khāldār (singer-accompanist) gradually attained that position. While these musicians were primarily soloists, they also performed together in various ensembles and they were occasionally accompanied by dancing boys (Plate 29).

The ‘amaleh-ye ṭarab-e khāṣṣeh were not only active as performers at the court but were also involved in training disciples. At times they received orders from the court to train a particular person, either a member of the royal family or a promising girl for the andarun. They had an exclusive chamber and more often than not some of their members were present at the court whether or not music was to be performed. In most cases, musicians were scheduled to be present at the court for certain evenings of the week, but sometimes they were specifically summoned to perform at a special gathering or banquet. Evidence shows that respected musicians were allowed to reject these orders under certain conditions. Moḥammad Irānī Mojarrad (d. 1971), an authority of traditional music and a disciple of the Farāhānī family, related a story that was told to me by Dāriush Šafvat:

One day I had class at Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli’s house. While he was teaching, a courier came in and delivered a message on behalf of the shāh. The shāh had asked for Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli to perform at the court that evening. Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli apologized and said that he had been feeling sick that day and therefore could not come to the court. When the courier left, I asked my teacher if he was really unwell? He replied: “no, but the days that I am scheduled to perform at court, I usually practice at least for four to five hours in the morning. Today was my day off and I was teaching students all day long, so I didn’t have the chance to practice and get myself in good enough shape to perform in front of shāh.”

An enthusiastic patron of all forms of music and entertainment, Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh had a particular interest in listening to dastgāh-e homāyun (a modal structure). He often had male musicians and
moqalleds performing for him in the khalvat, except during the months of moharram and safar in which mourning ceremonies were held to commemorate the martyrdom of Ḥosayn, the grandson of the Prophet and the third Imam of Shiite Muslims. Throughout the years, he held weekly performances of music and dance for his wives and concubines at the Golestān Palace and during the month of Muharram he held performances of rowżeh, taʿziyeh and shabih-khvāni (Shiite ritual ceremonies) (Plate 30). He also participated actively in the female musical gatherings (bazm-e zanāneh) that his wives and concubines arranged regularly to entertain themselves and attract the attention of the shāh, enticing him to spend time with them in the andarun. Many of the professional female performers at these gatherings were concubines of the shāh (sighehs) at one point or another.

The Shāh used to make short trips to the suburbs of Tehran, usually at the beginning of fall, and was always accompanied by a number of ‘amaleh-ye ṭarab, including at least a few professional male and female musicians, moqalleds (jesters), maskharehs (buffoons) and bāzigars. The trips mostly lasted between two and ten days, and were primarily centered around a cooking ceremony called āshpazān (making soup) that was held inside a large tent. According to several accounts, during the ceremony the entire entourage was involved in the preparation of ingredients for the soup, while the shāh would sit on his throne smoking a water pipe (qalyān) and the ‘amaleh-ye ṭarab would perform music and dance for people off to the sides in the tent (Plates 31 and 32).

A particular focal point for the performance of refined classical music at the court occurred at night. Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh was reportedly in the habit of falling asleep to the sound of music and storytelling. Thus, some of the prominent musicians, who were known as navāzandegān-e khvābgāh or musicians of the bedroom, performed for him almost every night. Dust-ʿAli Moʿayyer al-Mamālek, a contemporary observer, reports that each side of the royal bedroom opened to a
particular room and on one side it opened to the room of musicians. More often than not, Naqib- 
al-Mamâlek, the celebrated storyteller of the court, would have sat in an adjacent room with the 
door slightly ajar while he narrated a tale in prose. At the same time, he also sang alternative lines 
in verse accompanied by the soft sound of a kamâncheh played by Javâd Khân Qazvini. He further 
describes the situation as follows:

Among the musicians in the royal bedroom was Sorur-al-Molk, the god of music, who put 
a piece of cloth on the santur when he played the instrument, so he could create such a 
mesmerizing sound perfectly suitable to fall asleep with. The other [musician] was Āqā 
Gholâm-Ḥosayn, the master of târ who was the most distinguished virtuoso in his own 
right. He was a relative of the renowned Āqā ‘Ali-Akbar and was trained by him. The third 
[musician] was Esmâ‘il Khân, the unrivaled kamâncheh player, whose command and taste 
[of music] were peerless. The last [musician] was Ḥāj Ḥakim, the singer; no one ever sang 
so well with such a short vocal range (dō dāng). He sang together with Naqib al-Mamâlek 
either taking turns or in unison. The [musicians] usually performed for a period of time and 
then stopped. If shâh made a sigh, they would have continued playing, if he did not make 
a sound, they would have left the royal bedroom on tip toe.40

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the social status of the ‘amaleh-ye ṭarab-e khâşsheh 
was certainly higher than that of any other members of the ‘amaleh-ye ṭarab, but the status of 
musicians in general was lower than that of most of the ‘amaleh-ye khalvat or the servants of 
intimate gatherings at the court. Unlike the Safavid court musicians, musicians at the Qajar court, 
especially in the second half of the nineteenth century, were considered recruited servants of the 
potentate and the royal family, hence they never bore the surname of ostād.41

A typical ensemble at the court included santur, târ, and kamâncheh flanked by two or 
three taṣnîfkhân-żarbûgir (singer-accompanists). Târ and kamâncheh could be doubled in an 
ensemble, but rarely would two santurs play together. A hierarchy among the soloists and 
instrumentalists in the court ensemble and elsewhere was also related to the performing technique 
and repertoire cultivated on each instrument. In general, santur players were very few in number 
and they enjoyed the highest status among both musicians and the public at large. The textures and
virtuosic patterns that characterized solo performances of santur were particularly mesmerizing for listeners. Tār players were second in rank and in the absence of a santur, a tār player would lead the ensemble. Finally, kamāncheh and dombak players were lowest in status and rank among the sāzandehs, mostly recognized as lower class moṭrebs.42

Court ensembles particularly included separate āvāz and taṣnīf singers, as their functions, roles and repertoires were different. In some cases, an ensemble had more than one taṣnīf singer and each one accompanied himself and the entire ensemble on the dombak or daf. It was common for two taṣnīf singers in an ensemble to sing a composition entirely in unison or to alternate various sections.43 Control of the repertoire and the number of taṣnifs they could perform were among the merits of singers. Celebrated soloists such as Moḥammad Šādeq Khān, Āqā Gholām-Ḥosayn and later Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli had their own singer-accompanists. In general, the social status of featured instrumentalists was significantly higher than that of singers, in contrast to much of the twentieth century where we find quite the opposite situation.

Musicians were called by various social tags. In the context of court music, instrumentalists were referred to by the name of the instrument they played followed by the Turkish suffix “chi,” such as santurchi, tārchi, kamānchehchi, sornāchi, dombakchi, naqqārehchi, etc. Outside the court, where the instrumentalists were no longer servants, these social tags were not employed and referring to musicians as such was even derogatory. Average instrumentalists were referred to as santurzan, tārzan, kamānchehkesh, sornāzan, dombakzan, etc. We know that only in one case within the court, Moḥammad Ḥasan Khān, who was highly respected and the head of court musicians, received the title of santurkhān.44

Sometimes musicians, like many other servants of the court, received titles (laqabs) from shāhs. Moḥammad Šādeq Khān, for instance, received the honorific title of Sorur al-Molk
(euphoria of the kingdom), and Zivar al-Soltān, the celebrated female singer of the andarun, received the title of ‘Andalib al-Saltāneh (nightingale of the empire). Her brother, Ḩabibollāh, was a dignified and respected singer-accompanist and santur player who received the title of Samā’-Hożur (evoking ecstasy through his presence). Another singer was Qoli Khān who received the title of Shāhpasand (pleasing to the king) toward the end of the nineteenth century. Although one or two instrumentalists were also awarded titles, most titles seem to have been given to singers who came to be favored by the shāhs.45

Professional male musicians who were recruited at the royal court were always Muslims. In cases where a non-Muslim musician sought to enter the court service, he had to convert to Islam. Jewish musicians, however, were prominently active throughout the capital and other urban centers. Being recognized as lower class motrebs, Jewish musicians were major exponents of dance tunes.

Chief of Court Musicians

As early as the sixteenth century, the entire office of music and entertainment at the court was called the naqqāreh-khāneh (lit., house of kettledrum), and it primarily incorporated three categories of musicians. The first consisted of professional male and female instrumentalists, singers, and dancers; the second category included the naqqārehchis, who were in fact members of military and ceremonial bands; and finally, the third category was made up of less esteemed entertainers including jesters and buffoons. During the Safavid period, the person who was in charge of a city’s entire community of musicians, and more specifically the naqqāreh-khāneh, was called the chālchi-bāshi. This person was often selected among the court composers and in most cases he was expected to manage the courtesan community and their accompanying
instrumentalists in various ways. However, within the office of the *chālchi-bāshi*, various classes of musicians and entertainers seem to have had their own heads. In his enumeration of 137 *bāshis* or assorted offices at the court of the last Safavid ruler, Shāh Solṭān Ḥosayn, Rostam al-Ḥokamā’ mentions five ancillary offices pertaining to music and entertainment: *moghanni-bāshi, moṭreb-bāshi, moqalled-bāshi, maskhareh-bāshi,* and *luṭi-bāshi.* During the eighteenth century, mostly due to a lack of sufficient documentation, the situation is a little vague. Nonetheless, in his travel accounts, Harutin, the Ottoman-Armenian *tanbur* player at the camp of Nāder, refers specifically to the tent of the *sāzandeh-bāshi*, indicating that *sāzandehs* still possessed a head. Maryam Ekhtiyar’s explication on the position and office of *bāshis* in the Qajar court, although dealing with visual artists, is particularly informative and worth quoting here at length:

The election and duties of the *bāshīs* under the Qajars followed much the same pattern as in earlier periods. Each *bāshī* of the royal workshop had a dual function: he was responsible for the royal workshops, as well as for corresponding guilds in the town bazaar and sometimes for respective guilds throughout the country. Appointed by the shāh or by provincial governors, he served as the liaison in the royal workshop with the bazaar guilds and government. This role, which reached its peak during the Safavid period, was regarded as an instrument of centralization by the government and persisted into the early Qajar period, albeit with much less rigidity. …

During the late Safavid period the *bāshīs* of a particular craft were selected by the members of the workshops (on the basis of outstanding performance in, and unquestionable devotion to, their craft; experience; reliability; reputability; wisdom; uprightness; and religious piety) and then appointed by the shāh. The numerous royal edicts of the Qajar period appointing painters, calligraphers, jewelers, and architects to the office of *bāshī* and the inscriptions and signatures bearing this title reflect the continuation of these conventions in the nineteenth century.

At the beginning of the Qajar period, the office of music at the court was still called the *naqqāreh-khāneh* in general, and the chief of court musicians who supervised both male and female musicians of *dastgāh-e bāzigar-khāneh* as well as the *naqqārehchis* (musicians of the ceremonial band) was known as *moṭreb-bāshi.* During the reign of Fatḥ-ʿAli Shāh, Rajab-ʿAli Khān Kermānī initially held this position but later a musician of Jewish background, who converted to Islam,
replaced him and received the title of Chālānchi Khān, as mentioned earlier. Subsequently, chālānchi became an official tag employed interchangeably with moţreb-bāshi. According to Ruḥollāh Khāleqi, Moḥammad Ḥasan Khān, the prominent santur player at the courts of Moḥammad Shāh and Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh, was a chālānchi at some point. Moreover, in the picture of court musicians taken in 1863, Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh labels Moḥammad Ḥasan Khān as the naqqārehchi-bāshi. This label not only demonstrates that Moḥammad Ḥasan Khān was the chief of court musicians at that time, but also confirms that the entire office of court music was still known as naqqārehkhāneh and that the moţreb-bāshi could alternatively referred to as naqqārehchi-bāshi. The accounts of chālānchis in this period are very rare and in most cases ambiguous. Nonetheless, a later courtier, Eʿtemād al-Saltāneh notes that after the first chālānchi, two other instrumentalists, Āqā ʿAli-Akbar and Āqā Moṭalleb, were also appointed as the chief of court musicians during the first half of the reign of Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh.

By the second half of the reign of Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh, the titles of moţreb-bāshi, chālānchi or naqqārehchi-bāshi were no longer employed to denote the chief of court musicians. In this period, this position was awarded to the celebrated santur player, Moḥammad Šādeq Khān, who came to be known as the raʿīs or chief of the ʿamaleh-ye ṣarab. While he seems to have been mainly in charge of professional court musicians, his nāyeb or deputy, Karim Shireḥ’i, was responsible for arranging performances of moţrebs and moqalleds at the court. Karim Shireḥ’i was the most outstanding court comedian who had a troupe of jesters and buffoons and performed with them frequently in the presence of the shāh. Afterwards, he established connections with various officials, courtiers, and musical artists, both inside and outside of the court, and became a renowned figure in the capital. ʿAbdollāh Mostowfi offers the following description of Karim Shireḥ’i’s character and his activities:
Karim Shireh’i was the second in command (nāyeb) of the naqqāreh-khāneh [= office of music and entertainment at the court]. Appointed by the chief of this office as his deputy, he came to be overseeing the musicians at the naqqāreh-khāneh while supervising mainly the second and third rate troupes of moṭrebs who were dispersed and active throughout the capital independently from the court. He usually asked a certain amount of money unofficially to provide a business license for the latter and also resolved their fiscal and legal disputes when needed.\footnote{51}

Finally, we know that after Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khān, at a certain point toward the end of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli, and subsequently Ḥosayn Khān Esmāʿīlzdēh, the distinguished kamāncheh player of the court, were appointed successively as the raʾis and that various groups of court musicians and entertainers, including naqqārehchis and ‘amaleh-ye tarabs, were under their supervision.\footnote{52}

In the second half of the Qajar period, a raʾis evidently had a nāyeb who was technically responsible for overseeing the activities of various troupes of moṭrebs throughout the capital. Nonetheless, the precise roles and responsibilities of a raʾis and his nāyeb cannot be delineated clearly from the surviving accounts, especially after the reign of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh. Eugène Aubin, the French ambassador during the reign of Moẓaffar al-Din Shāh (r. 1896-1907), reports that the person in charge of the entire community of musicians and dancers was a courtier called Eʿteṣām Khalvat, who was also responsible for selecting the chief of naqqāreh-khānehis in other cities. Aubin finally points to a certain Kāẓem Khān Bāshi, who came to supervise urban troupes of entertainers in Tehran, a position that, according to Aubin, was previously held by Kāẓem Khān’s father.\footnote{53}

Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khān

The most celebrated musician in the second half of the nineteenth century in the Qajar court was Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khān (c. 1847-1904), a renowned soloist with a dazzling technique and
beautifully articulated style of *santur* playing. According to oral accounts, his repertoire and technique were extraordinary in and of themselves, but his greatest virtue was his brilliant sense of melody and nuance.\(^{54}\)

He received his initial training from his father, Āqā Moṭalleb, a court *kamāncheh* player who came from Shiraz to the capital with his three sons.\(^{55}\) Later he continued to learn, whether formally or informally, from various court musicians including the most eminent *santur* player, Moḥammad Ḥasan Khān. Moḥammad Šādeq Khān’s musical talents were quickly recognized among his colleagues and soon he was an accomplished *santur* player at the court, far surpassing all other musicians in renown. In the 1870s, he was appointed as the *ra’is* or the chief of the entire community of musicians and entertainers and subsequently received the honorific title of *Sorur-al-Molk* (‘the euphoria of the kingdom’). As the *ra’is* of *‘amaleh-ye ṭarab*, he arranged for different groups of male musicians to perform at various court gatherings while also taking charge of their salaries and financial demands.

He reportedly assembled distinct versions of melody-types and compositions into an order and nomenclature notably distinguishable from those of his contemporaries such as Mirzā ‘Abdollāh and Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli.\(^{56}\) Evidence indicates that Mirzā ‘Abdollāh was particularly keen to incorporate pieces played by Moḥammad Šādeq Khān into his own *radif*. However, Moḥammad Šādeq Khān was very secretive and protective of his own repertoire to the extent that he even hardly taught his own sons.\(^{57}\)

Moḥammad Šādeq Khān was adept at a number of instruments, especially the *santur*, the *setār*, and the *kamāncheh*, as well as some less common instruments. When the piano was first brought to the court, no one was able to play the instrument. He managed to adopt the piano to Persian classical music by modifying it and introducing a new tuning system. This tuning system,
which contained quarter tones, was further developed by the following generation of musicians and came to be known as the *kuk-e shur* (tuning of *shur*). Another instrument that seems to have been common in Persia for several centuries, still played at the Qajar court, mainly by Moḥammad Şādeq Khān, was the *chini* (a set of sounding bowls beaten by mallets). The *chini* was known throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth century as *anutak* or *nutak*, though it is not exactly clear that it was still recognized by these same names during the nineteenth century. Moḥammad Şādeq Khān is mentioned as having played this instrument for Nāṣer al-Din Shāh, entertaining him mostly on certain occasions when the latter went to bathe.

Perhaps the most disappointing aspect of Moḥammad Şādeq Khān’s life was the fact that he seldom taught students, and hence his complete repertoire hasn’t been passed down to us. His most prominent student, Ḫabibollāh Samā‘-Ḥożur (d. 1921), who acted primarily as his singer-accompanist for many years, also studied the *santur* with him. Ḫabibollāh once declared that it was extremely challenging and difficult to learn anything from his teacher. Nonetheless, according to general opinion, Moḥammad Şādeq Khān’s style and repertoire of *santur* playing were later perpetuated only via Ḫabibollāh, who also imparted the art to his son, Ḫabib Samā‘i (d. 1946). Two other students of Moḥammad Şādeq Khān were Mehdi Ṣolḥi, better known as Montaẓam al-Ḥokamā’ (d. 1931), and Ḫabibollāh Shahrdār, known as Moshir-Homāyun (1885-1970). Montaẓam al-Ḥokamā’ was a court physician and a renowned *setār* player who later developed a *radif* incorporating elements of both the repertoire of Moḥammad Şādeq Khān as well as that of his other *setār* teacher, Mirzā ʿAbdollāh. In his *radif*, he marked the version of melody-types (later called *gushehs*) that he adopted from the repertoire of Moḥammad Şādeq Khān as *sorur-al-molki* or *moḥammad-şādeq-khāni*. Moshir-Homāyun is said to have been the piano student of Moḥammad Şādeq Khān and also studied with other master musicians, including Āqā Ḩosayn-
Qoli and Ḫosayn Khān Esmāʿīlzādeh. Being active as the mayor of Shiraz and Isfahan and the music director of Iran Radio for many years, he was one of the first Iranian pianists who was recorded by the His Master’s Voice in London in 1909.  

Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khān also had two sons, Moṭalleb and ‘Abdollāh, who both received initial training from their father. While Moṭalleb came to be a santur player at the court for a while, he died when he was still young. ‘Abdollāh only came to be known as a mediocre musician and never pursued the santur in a professional capacity (Plate 33).  

Finally, it has to be mentioned that Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khān was recorded on phonograph or wax cylinder in the late nineteenth century, and some of his recordings are now available in private collections.

The Farāhāni Family

It is fair to say that during the Qajar period, playing the tār at the court was primarily the monopoly of the Farāhāni family and almost all tār players were either a member or a disciple of this family. When Āqā ‘Ali-Akbar died in early 1860s, his nephew, Āqā Gholām-Ḥosayn, immediately came to be his jāneshin (successor) as the leading tār player among the ‘amaleh-ye ṭarab-e khāṣṣeh. He came to be the foremost tār player at the court for more than two decades from the beginning of the 1860s till the middle of the 1880s, at which point he mostly accompanied Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khān, Esmāʿīl Khān and Ḫāji Ḥakim in various ensembles. At the same time, he also married his uncle’s widow and began training his cousins Mirzā Ḥasan, Mirzā ‘Abdollāh, and Āqā Ḫosayn-Qoli, as well as his own son, Āqā Reżā. He also trained certain disciples outside of the family circle. Nonetheless, like many master musicians of this period, he was known for being very secretive and protective of his repertoire and musical technique, to the extent that he was almost
hesitant to teach advanced and intelligent students. From the middle of the 1880s Āqā Gholām-Ḥosayn was no longer active at the court, and his cousins Mirzā ‘Abdollāh (d. 1917) and Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli (d. 1915), the two sons of Āqā ‘Ali-Akbar, replaced him as the predominant tār players in court ensembles.

Mirzā ‘Abdollāh and Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli first began to study with their father and older brother, and later enhanced their studies with Āqā Gholām-Ḥosayn. Throughout their careers, these two brothers worked very closely with each other and while maintaining their shared stylistic maktab, they supplemented their family repertoire and instruction with further training from various court musicians. Mirzā ‘Abdollāh is mentioned as having studied also with a respected vocalist called Sayyed Ḥasan or Sayyed Aḥmad. According to Montaẓam al-Ḥokamā’, “Mirzā ‘Abdollāh only incorporated those materials into his repertoire of dastgāhs whose authenticity he had already verified with Sayyed Ḥasan.”67 Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli married Sakineh, a former student of his father and one of the most celebrated female musicians of the court, and therefore came to be exposed to the whole range of female repertoire that was being performed in the andarun, including various taṣnifs and rengs (dance tunes).68

Evidence suggests that from the very beginning of the nineteenth century, the tār and setār masters of the court would cultivate a meticulous and systematic approach to the nomenclature, grouping, and sequencing of materials in their performances of dastgāhs.69 Their stylistic manner of arranging their repertoire was not perhaps as strictly observed or even deemed practical among performers of other instruments at that time.

Mirzā ‘Abdollāh was not a high caliber soloist, and he was allegedly most proficient on the setār, an instrument which was rarely performed in the context of court music by male musicians. However, Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli was a prodigy on the tār and according to both oral and written
accounts, all the tār players of his generation were fascinated by his dazzling technique. While both brothers were enormously active in training disciples, Mirzā ‘Abdollāh was primarily a pedagogue and, in order to teach his students, he sought to establish a fixed version of his repertoire which gradually came to be known as the radif (Plate 34). In fact, radif as a musical term and concept was likely coined by Mirzā ‘Abdollāh as the first references to this term appear to have been recorded in connection with his teaching. At the same time the idea of radif was also adopted by Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli, who synthesized the repertoires of his brother, Mirzā ‘Abdollāh, and cousin, Āqā Gholām-Ḥosayn, with his own creative input. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Mirzā ‘Abdollāh’s radif was transmitted through his students and it was subsequently recorded and transcribed, thereby bringing a substantial degree of standardization and canonization to twentieth century Persian music.

‘Amaleh-ye Ṭarab and Moṭrebs

Apart from the ‘amaleh-ye ṭarab-e khāṣṣeh, a number of lesser instrumentalists, singers, accompanists, dancing boys, and moqalleds were associated with the court who were collectively referred to as ‘amaleh-ye ṭarab. All these musicians and entertainers received monthly salaries from the court. Instrumentalists and singers of this category were neither as educated and accomplished as ‘amaleh-ye ṭarab-e khāṣṣeh nor permitted to sit in the presence (ḥożur) of the Shāh at a private majles.

Finally, the last category, moṭrebs, were hereditary professional musicians who were not recruited to the court; they were only brought to perform occasionally when referred to the shāh by courtiers and the nobility or at times when special celebrations or public gatherings were taking place. These musicians were usually active in the form of small dastehs in the capital and in most
cases their troupes included dancing boys or girls. The other characteristic feature of moṭrebbs concerned their repertoire for professional purposes, which mostly consisted of lighter songs and dance-oriented pieces.

Instrumentalists, Singers, and Accompanists

Throughout the Nāšeri period, several terms were used to denote various types of musician. A hereditary professional instrumentalist in both urban and rural circles was still called sāzandeh, a term which was frequently employed in the context of court music as well. At the same time, navāzandeh seems to have been primarily used in urban centers to refer to a player of hand drums or stringed instruments strummed with the bare fingers. In the second half of the nineteenth century the term sāzandeh came to be gradually replaced by navāzandeh as a performer of both melody instruments and percussion, and subsequently the former continued to be employed only in the context of regional folk music.\(^{71}\)

In keeping with a tradition established during the Safavid period or even earlier, two types of male vocalist can be identified in Persian court music during the Qajar period: (1) the singer of the free rhythmic āvāz (mostly ghazal and dōbaytī), and (2) the performer of taṣnīf. While the first type often had an initial training in religious genres, the second type was more of an entertainer, predominantly adept in performing various types of metric song. The repertoire of the latter contained light vocal compositions and he largely accompanied himself on the daf or dombak. The demarcation line between these two types of vocalist, however, was not always sharp. An āvāz singer would sometimes perform metric songs, especially those that were set to classical poems, when there was no taṣnīf singer, and likewise a professional taṣnīf singer usually incorporated one or two lines of āvāz in the course of his performance.
In urban musical culture of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the performer of āvāz was usually a male singer called ḥāfez or khvānandeh and the performer of taṣnif was known as guyandeh. However, the terms ḥāfez and guyandeh were no longer common throughout the nineteenth century in Iran and both types of vocalist were either called khvānandeh or āvāz-khvān. While a singer of āvāz often possessed a wider vocal range and was more proficient in performing subtleties of melody-types and modulations, a taṣnif singer usually had a short vocal range and his ability was judged by the number and variety of vocal compositions he knew by heart. If the performer of taṣnif was a professional dombak player who also accompanied sāzandehs in rendering instrumental compositions, he was referred to as žarbqir (‘the keeper of the time’) as well. Nonetheless, on rare occasions, especially in the context of court music, a žarbqir was merely expert in playing the dombak and not adept in performing taṣnifs.

In the course of the nineteenth century, adolescent boy singers were widely popular and sometimes highly respected in urban centers. Most of these boys had their own dastehs and were often maintained by a certain prince or nobleman. Evidence shows that they were brought to perform occasionally at the royal court in both andarun and khalvat as well. Around 1866 the most celebrated adolescent boy singer was ʿAbdollāh who is also mentioned in Nāṣer al-Din Shāh’s diaries.

Raqqāṣ and Bāzigar
Dancing boys continued to be known as raqqāṣ or bāzigar throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and they were integral parts of light ensembles in Tehran and other cities. They used to dance either in long colorfully embroidered coats and pants or in women’s clothes with their long heir let down (Plate 35). While a bāzigar evidently performed various tumbling
acts, typically handsprings and somersaults in the air, a *raqqās* performed dances mainly in feminine and seductive manner (Plate 36).

Some of the courtiers and noblemen of this period were particularly fond of dancing boys and invited them to court celebrations and to their private gatherings. It also seems that most of the musicians performing at the court, including the ‘*amaleh-ye ẓarab-e khāṣṣeh*, employed one or two dancing boys in their ensembles or at least accompanied them on some occasions.

A number of the dancing boys were quite well-known and respected in their time and remained legendary throughout the Qajar period. They were first recruited and trained by a professional musician who was the proprietor of a troupe (*sardasteh*) but as they became famous were able to claim their independence and secure their own positions of authority within the business. Nonetheless, the period of their activity as a dancer was very short, mostly from age ten to seventeen. Some of the dancing boys, however, still performed even in their early twenties and many of them remained afterward in the field as professional entertainers. It would appear that, unlike the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when non-Muslim boys (mostly Georgian and Jewish) dominated the roles of *raqqās* or *bāzigar*, towards the end of the nineteenth century the majority of dancing boys, at least in Tehran, were Muslim. Qahramān Mirzā Sālur, a late Qajar prince, reports on a wedding ceremony in 1907 in which, in addition to twenty Muslim dancing boys, five Jewish dancing boys accompanied the music of *motreb* after the lunch. He further states that the tradition of dancing boys was beginning to decline at that time and dancing girls and courtesans were more venerated throughout the capital.⁷⁴
Moqalleds

The other group of entertainers associated with the office of naqqāreh-khāneh was the moqalleds or taqlidchis. These were buffoons who performed various forms of stand-up comedy and comic skit collectively known as taqlid (lit. mimicry). The practice of taqlid was to ridicule various classes and ethnic groups through burlesque imitation, especially those who were considered outside of social norms by certain standards or had been disobedient to the shāh at one point or another. Harutin for instance writes a story about Nāder which is quite revealing:

When he was young, Nāder went to Isfahan [the Safavid capital] to file a complaint. He spent almost two years in Isfahan so he could follow his case. Sometimes, he presented gifts to the court. When the people at court received a gift, they often gave him respect and appreciation, but they never heard his case. When he had no gifts, they rejected him and even beat him up. He spent two years in this way, but with no progress on his complaint, which was never processed. When he became the shāh, he told the story of his attempts to seek justice to his moqalleds and motrebs. They made a satiric play of his story and performed it for him a few times a month.75

It seems that comic actors in the early eighteenth century were divided into two groups, moqalleds and maskharehs (jesters or clowns), which, according to Rostam al-Ḥokamā’, had separate heads at the court.76 However, throughout the nineteenth century, these performers were largely grouped into a single category and were involved in four types of activities: (1) ridiculing and mocking accents of people from different cities, most notably Kāshān, Yazd, Qazvin, Isfahan, Shiraz, Mashhad, Tabriz, etc., (2) joking about the character of courtiers, servants, and acquaintances of the shāh in a mocking way, (3) reciting humorous poems (fokāhi), and (4) performing comic skits.

The moqalleds did not work alone as the nature of taqlid required the interaction of a small number of performers. Often an ensemble of taqlid included one or two musicians (mostly a kamāncheh player and a dombak player) and dancing boys. Likewise, an ensemble of motrebs could include one or two moqalleds, in which case they usually performed short comic skits interspersed with two sections of dance or music.
Moqalleds in the court of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh often made critical remarks about courtiers in their acts and as long as the Shāh did not take offence, they would have felt safe in their position. Among the moqalleds in the court, Karim Shireh’i and Esmā‘il Bazzāz were prominent figures who both had their own dastehs, with each appointed as the nāyeb or deputy of the naqqāreh-khāneh for a certain period (Plates 37, 38). Chorki, Shaykh Shaypur and Shaykh Karnā (d. c 1931) were also three moqalleds who performed solo taqlid in different periods at the court; their performances were characterized by the recitation and singing of humorous poems (Plate 39). The Gramophone Company recorded Shaykh Shaypur in 1906 and Shaykh Karnā in 1928, and of particular interest among the recordings was a comic song called bayāt-e gāv (the song of cow) that was performed by both moqalleds. Two other moqalleds, Ḥāji Loreh and ‘Ali-Akbar Nafti, were also celebrated performers specializing in imitating and ridiculing various accents—Kashani, Yazdi, Qazvini, Isfahani, etc.—and were recorded by the Gramophone company in 1906 and 1912 respectively.

Female Court Performers

As mentioned previously, during the first half of the nineteenth century professional female musicians and dancers played a significant role in music making at the Qajar court. During this period, female performers were largely courtesans who were brought to Tehran from Isfahan and Shiraz, along with a number of girls who received training from master musicians in the mo‘allekhāneh. There also seem to have been Armenian, Georgian and Turkmen dancing girls at the court who, if they were not professional performers in the dastgāh-e bāzīgar-khāneh, were active as amateur entertainers in the andarun, serving numerous Persian, Turkish, Caucasian, and Jewish concubines of the shāh. By the middle of the reign of Moḩammad Shāh, the dastgāh-e bāzīgar-
khāneh had fallen into decline and a few years later only its memory was alive in the minds of courtiers.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the wives, concubines, and daughters of the shāh maintained among their ladies-in-waiting mostly female entertainers especially trained in music and dance. These women performed frequently at the court as well as at the homes of the nobles, providing music for auspicious occasions like bridal showers (ḥenā bandāns), weddings (‘arūsis or toys), circumcision ceremonies (khatneh surāns), and religious festivities such as birth of the Prophet or of his daughter (mowluds). Mahd-‘olyā (d. 1873), the queen mother of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh, was one of the ardent patrons of female musicians and dancers in the andarun. She assigned Solṭān Khānom, one of her maids, to study the tār with Āqā ‘Ali-Akbar. Solṭān Khānom later became the preeminent exponent of taṣnif in the andarun and was also credited with the composition of many songs, some of which have survived even to this date.81 Another hereditary musical figure who later found her way into the andarun was Zivar al-Solṭān, the daughter of the court kamāncheh player, Gholām-Ḥosayn. Zivar al-Solṭān was an eminent taṣnif singer and santur player who received the title of ‘Andalib-al-Salṭāneh from the Shāh and together with her brother, Ḥabibollāh Samā‘-Ḥoẓur, served as the major conduit for the transmission of female court repertoire to the following generation of singers in the twentieth century.82 Finally Akram al-Salṭāneh was another celebrated singer who became renowned in the andarun and is credited with the composition of one or two taṣnifs.83

During the reign of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh, ‘amaleh-ye ṭarab-e khāsše were responsible for training female court musicians and dancers, among whom Āqā ‘Ali-Akbar, Āqā Gholām-Ḥosayn, Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khān, Esmā‘il Khān, and Mirzā ‘Abdollāh probably played the most significant
roles. Zaynab and Gol’ozār were two female musicians reportedly trained by Moḥammad Šādeq Khān to play the santur in the andarun.84

Mo’ayyer al-Mamālek mentions that at some point during his reign, Nāṣer al-Din Shāh ordered Māhnesā’ Khānom (the harem supervisor and Mo’ayyer al-Mamālek’s paternal grandmother) to find a number of talented and beautiful maidens and have them trained in various types of musical instruments, singing and dance. After a long period of audition, twelve promising girls were finally selected for this purpose and they were put to training by male master musicians of the court for two years. Upon their first performance, the shāh became so excited that he showered Māhnesā’ Khānom and the master male musicians with gifts. The female performers were sent to the andarun where a few who looked more beautiful and attractive to the shāh later came to be his concubines. Some of those female performers included Delbar Khānom, Delpasand Khānom, ‘Āliyeh Khānom, Fāṭemeh al-Soltān Khānom, Khāvar al-Soltān Khānom, and Zinat Khānom (Plate 40).85

Furthermore, musical education suddenly became common among the wives, princesses and the daughters of the nobility in this period (Plate 41). Several princesses were reportedly engaged in receiving musical training, often directly from ‘amaleh-ye ṭarab-e khāsseh and sometimes just through the female performers in the andarun. Mo’ayyer-al-Mamālek, the grandson of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh, relates a story about his mother’s musical training that is worth mentioning here in full:

There was an old piano in the attic of Anis al-Dowleh [one of the shāh’s wives] that nobody knew how to play. At that time, only five to six pianos were in Tehran and hardly anyone knew how to play them.
Moḥammad Šādeq Khān, the master of santur who received the title of ‘Sorur-al-Molk’ toward the end of his career, could play the piano beautifully. Thus my mother sent Tabassom, one of her maids, to the aforementioned musician to study the piano and then teach my mother whatever she learned. This became a common practice among the women of the andarun and the shāh was also pleased with what was happening. Later on, my
mother was ordered to play the piano for the shāh almost every night. More often than not, after a free rhythmic āvāz session [on the piano], one of the women who was capable of singing taṣnifs would have started to sing.\textsuperscript{86}

Mo‘ayyer-al-Mamālek also reports that his mother, the shāh’s daughter, ‘Eṣmat al-Dowleh, had two more maids, Maliḥeh and Jamileh, both trained in music. While Maliḥeh was a disciple of Āqā Gholām-Ḥosayn in playing the tār, Jamileh studied with Esmā’īl Khān, the celebrated kamāncheh player of the court.\textsuperscript{87} Another one of the shāh’s daughters, Tāj al-Saltaneh (1884-1936), was an educated woman trained in poetry and music who later played a significant role in the development of women’s movements in the early twentieth century. As a princess in the harem, she studied the tār with Mirzā ‘Abdollāh and the piano with Maḥmud Mofakhkhham.\textsuperscript{88}

Female performers of the andarun were the preeminent exponents of instrumental and vocal dance tunes as well as of dance proper. According to oral accounts, the repertoire of these performers was largely unknown to outsiders, and often male musicians were particularly keen to learn the taṣnifs and instrumental compositions that were performed at all female gatherings. One of the major female musicians of the andarun was Sakineh, who was allegedly the daughter of Moḥammad Ḵasan Khān and a disciple of Āqā ‘Ali-Akbar. Ruḥollāh Khāleqi reports that Sakineh married Āqā Ḵosayn-Qoli and that she was particularly influential in shaping Āqā Ḵosayn-Qoli’s repertoire and style of tār playing.\textsuperscript{89}

\textit{Patrons of Music}

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Tehran, as a large and prosperous capital of the Qajar kings, was the hub for all forms of music. While the Qajar court was undoubtedly the most visible center of musical patronage, a substantial amount of classical and semi-classical musical activity still took place in the homes of princes, ministers, and merchants.
The third son of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh, Kāmrān Mirzā Nāyeb-al-Salṭaneh (1856-1929), the minister of war and commander of the armed forces, was the foremost patron of music in the last decade of the nineteenth century. He hosted classical musicians in his house, and also arranged many musical activities—especially those of military bands—at the royal court. One of the most celebrated and accomplished singers in his service was a certain ‘Ali Khān who later became known as ‘Ali Khān-e Nāyeb-al-Salṭana.90

In Isfahan, Mas‘ūd Mirzā Žell-al-Solṭān (1849-1918), the oldest son of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh and the governor of the city, and his sister, Bānū ‘Ozmā’, were both fond of music and sustained a number of musicians in their service. Ebrāhīm Āghābāshi, a eunuch at the court of Žell al-Solṭān, is mentioned as the doyen of nay players and singers and as having trained many musicians, including the renowned nay player, Nāyeb Asadollāh, and the singer, Sayyed Rahim.91 Musā Kāshi (d. 1931), a Jewish kamāncheh player, and his disciple Bāqer Khān Rāmeshgar were other active musicians at the court of Isfahan. They both came to Tehran later to study and further their own careers (Plate 42).92

The two brothers, Nāyeb-al-Salṭaneh and Žell-al-Solṭān, seem to have competed for musical renown. This is evident from the account of ‘Ali-Akbar Shāhi, who was primarily a musician in the service of Nāyeb-al-Salṭaneh. Žell-al-Solṭān, who lacked a santur player, ordered him to move to Isfahan and join his own court musicians. ‘Ali-Akbar was on his way to Isfahan when he learned that Nāyeb-al-Salṭaneh resented his transfer. He stayed in Qom for a few days and finally moved back to Tehran, where he took refuge in the royal court’s kitchen (ābdār-khāneh). After a while, he came to be known as ‘Ali-Akbar-e Ābdār-khāneh and subsequently became a musician in the service of Możaffar al-Din Shāh.93

84
Among the statesmen and ministers were also a few enthusiastic patrons of music with whom some musicians were associated. For instance, the last prime minister of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh, Mirzā ‘Ali-Aṣghar Khān Atābak (1858-1907), the prime minister of Moţaffar al-Din Shāh, ‘Ayn al-Dowleh (1845-1926), and Nāṣer al-Din Shāh’s minister of foreign affairs, Yahyā Khān Moshir al-Dowleh (1831-1891), all supported a few musicians in their own service. Likewise, the involvement of princes and the nobility with music sometimes went beyond just supporting two or three musicians or a professional dasteh. Sālār al-Salṭaneh, the fourth son of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh, was himself an artist and setār player.

Urban Musical Ensembles in the Capital
Numerous urban musical ensembles were active throughout the capital in the second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. These ensembles were generally known as dasteh-ye moṭreb and they consisted of various numbers of instruments, singers, dancers, and sometimes moqalleds. While celebrated dastehs would mostly be hired to perform at the court or the homes of princes, noblemen, and wealthy merchants, less prominent dastehs also performed at the homes of the middle class citizens. Families with religious and conservative backgrounds rarely hosted moṭrebs at their homes, and instead on auspicious occasions like a wedding ceremony they only invited a maddāh (singer of religious poems) for the male majles. In the female majles, a mowludi khvān (a singer of religious poems celebrating the birth of Prophet Moḥammad) could be invited but in most cases, music was provided by the women of the family.

Eugène Aubin reports that in the late Qajar period, about fourteen male ensembles and more than forty female ensembles were registered in Tehran, all of whom paid monthly taxes to E’tešām Khalvat. The activities of these dastehs were closely supervised and sometimes
documented by the police department (*nazmiyeh*), and one can glean much information from the reports of *nazmiyeh* on the accounts of those ensembles. The *dastehs* of this period were made up of female performers, male performers, or both.

The ensemble of female performers (*dasteh-yen zanâneh*) usually performed for all-female gatherings. There was no typical size or special instrumentation associated with a female troupe. But as a whole, they included two or three dancers, one or two singers, one or two *dombak* and *daf*, and at least two melodic instruments such as *tār*, *kamāncheh*, *santur*, or harmonium. Some of the ensembles also had *taqlidchis*. Dancing girls usually wore different costumes and they were trained in various folk and urban dances (Plate 43 and 44).

The ensembles of male performers (*dasteh-yen mardâneh*) were fewer in number throughout the capital and performed at all-male gatherings. The size and instrumentation of male ensembles was more or less similar to that of female ensembles except that harmonium doesn’t seem to have been played by men and instead this type of ensemble may have included the *nay*. A male ensemble sometimes had one or two *taqlidchis*, but in general a *taqlid* ensemble proper was larger in size and certainly would have included *kamāncheh* and *dombak* players. A *dasteh-yen mardâneh* usually contained one to four dancing boys who joined the musicians throughout the performance. Those boys who were more talented and had naturally sweet voices would often receive vocal training as well, and some of them even became celebrated singers of this period (Plate 45 and 46).

Finally, two major types of mixed ensemble included both male and female performers. The first type was led by a male proprietor or *sardasteh* who was himself a musician and dance instructor and who in most cases would train performing artists including female musicians and dancers. He was often related to the female performers either through familial or pedagogical ties. The second category was led by a female proprietor and was dominated by female performers. In
this case, one or two male musicians were employed partly to carry musical instruments and further to protect the women of the dasteh from physical abuse. While both types seem to have been prevalent throughout the capital and probably other major cities, both were simply known as a dasteh-ye moṭreb. These ensembles varied significantly in terms of their numbers and other interrelated factors such as their members, instrumentation, and the inclusion of male and female singers and dancers. The most significant characteristic feature of a mixed dasteh was the inclusion of at least one female singer. Dancers were usually female, but sometimes dancing boys were employed as well. These ensembles were often invited to perform at female gatherings or gatherings where women were accompanied by close male relatives. In these circumstances, male performers were either blind or isolated in such a way so as not to be exposed to the female audience (Plate 47).

As stated previously, the number of female and mixed dastehs was much greater than that of male dastehs, and it seems that what really made a mixed ensemble female or male in character was its singer. If a mixed ensemble included a female singer, it was still considered a female ensemble despite the inclusion of male performers. Members of these urban ensembles were mostly hereditary professional performers and they could be either Muslim or Jewish. Jews, however, dominated the performance of dance in particular, as many Jewish dancing boys and girls were reportedly active throughout major cities. Some of the sources also claim that urban ensembles were predominantly composed of Jewish musicians, but lack of sufficient evidence prevents us from making a pronouncement on this issue.99

The majority of urban and often rural ensembles maintained at least one kamāncheh and one dombak, these being the stereotypical instruments associated with moṭrebs in the Qajar period. The second most popular musical instrument among them was tār. Santur was less common in
general, but it was still played every now and then by both male and female musicians. Harmonium was primarily played by women, while *nay* was an instrument that belonged exclusively to the male domain. By the late nineteenth century, some western musical instruments such as the violin, flute and even mandolin were also introduced and adopted by some *dastehs*.

*Moṭrebs* were the predominant exponents of light and rhapsodic forms of Persian music. They never performed rigid and elaborate *dastgāhs* with sequences of *gushehs* in an ordered structure, a performance format which was particularly practiced by master musicians at the court. Although *moṭrebs* performed short segments of *āvāz*, the majority of the pieces in their repertoires included *žarbis*, which is to say metric vocal and instrumental compositions known as *taṣnif* and *reng*. Even among the metric compositions, those that were primarily dance tunes or set to *žarb-e rengi* (6/8) constituted the larger part of their repertoire.

An ensemble of *Moṭrebs* would have been invited to perform at a *majles*, usually in the evening. Edward Browne, the British scholar of Persian literature, describes the circumstances of a typical performance at the house of a nobleman as follows:

Most of the Persians with whom I was intimate at Teheran had adopted European habits to a considerable extent; and during my residence there I was only on two occasions present at a really national entertainment.

The order of procedure is always much the same. The guests arrive about sundown, and are ushered into what corresponds to the drawing-room, where they are received by their host and his male relations (for women are, of course, secluded). Kalyans (water-pipes) and wine, or undiluted spirits (the latter being preferred), are offered them, and they continue to smoke and drink intermittently during the whole of the evening. Dishes of "ajil" (pistachio nuts and the like) are handed round or placed near the guests; and from time to time a spit of kebabs (pieces of broiled meat) enveloped in a folded sheet of the flat bread called *nan-i-sangak*, is brought in. These things bring out the flavour of the wine, and serve to stimulate, and at the same time appease, the appetite of the guests, for the actual supper is not served till the time for breaking up the assembly has almost arrived, which is rarely much before midnight.

As a rule, music is provided for the entertainment of the guests. The musicians are usually three in number: one plays a stringed instrument (the *si-tar*); one a drum (dunbak), consisting of an earthenware framework, shaped something like a huge egg-cup and covered with parchment at one end only; the third sings to the accompaniment of his
fellow-performers. Sometimes dancing-boys are also present, who excite the admiration and applause of the spectators by their elaborate posturing, which is usually more remarkable for acrobatic skill than for grace, at any rate according to our ideas. These, however, are more often seen in Shiraz than at Teheran. Occasionally the singer is a boy; and, if his voice be sweet and his appearance comely, he will be greeted with rapturous applause. At one entertainment to which I had been invited, the guests were so moved by the performance of the boy-singer that they all joined hands and danced round him in a circle, chanting in a kind of monotonous chorus, "Baraka'llah, Kuchulu! Baraka'llah, Kuchulu!" ("God bless thee, little one! God bless thee, little one!"), till sheer exhaustion compelled them to stop.

When the host thinks that the entertainment has lasted long enough, he gives the signal for supper, which is served either in the same or in another room.100

During the reign of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh, the most distinguished urban ensembles in Tehran were directed by two blind male musicians and several female performers who were primarily singers or dancers. The proprietors of two ensembles were also women of African descent who had close connections with the women of the andarun. Most of these dastehs were frequently invited to perform at the court. Some of the ensembles could be roughly listed and described as follows:

1. The Ensemble of Blind Mo’men

The sardasteh of this troupe, according to Mo‘ayyer-al-Mamālek, was Mo’men Kur, a blind musician who formed a family troupe with his wife, two daughters, and probably two other blind male musicians. Mo’men was a singer and daf player himself, his wife was a dombak player and one daughter, Ḥājiyeh, was a singer and harmonium player and the other daughter, Kbrā, was a dancer. Kbrā was particularly adept in knee dancing (raqs-e charkh-e zānu). In March 17, 1870 Nāṣer al-Din Shāh writes in his diary:

In the evening after dinner, [servants] brought the ensemble of Mo’men Kur to the andarun. Women were all sitting in a circle around the hall. The troupe of blind performers were positioned in the center. They had a seven-year-old dancing girl, very gorgeous, polite who danced very well. She was stunning! They had also a disheveled little boy dressed shabbily who was in charge of managing the blind fellows.

They played and sang for two hours. [The ensemble] included a blind, oblivious kamāncheh player, a nay player and two singers. It was highly amusing. The women were
tremendously delighted. Adolescent male servers and eunuchs were all present. The maids were [watching] from outside behind the windows. When they all left, I gave [the musicians] twenty-four tumāns as a reward. I went to sleep afterwards.\textsuperscript{101}

Mo’men and his troupe were frequently called upon to perform in the andarun, where besides the Shāh’s wives, concubines, and daughters, a number of courtiers and wives of the gentry were also present. This troupe was often invited during 1870s and 1880s to perform at celebrations of the birth of Fāṭemeh, the prophet’s daughter. Mo’men Kur’s troupe also performed at many private male and female gatherings as well as at wedding parties throughout the capital.\textsuperscript{102}

2. The Ensemble of Blind Karim

Karim Kur (d. 1892) was another blind musician who led a troupe consisting of eight members, both male and female performers: Karim played kamāncheh and tār; Ḥosayn was a singer and dombak player; Šādeq played daf; another male member also played daf; Vajiheh, Karim’s daughter, played kamāncheh; a female member was a singer; and two sons of Ḥosayn were dancing boys. According to Mo’ayyer-al-Mamālek, some other members of Karim Kur’s troupe–most likely adult male performers–were also blind and the entire troupe was brought most often to perform at the banquets of the andarun.\textsuperscript{103}

3. The Ensemble of Bāji Qadamshād

Bāji Qadamshād (also called Ḥāji Qadamshād) was a woman of African descent who led one of the most renowned female dastehs in Tehran in the 1880s and 1890s. She was a dancer herself and her troupe consisted of several female musicians and dancers. She reportedly charged six tumāns for performing at a wedding party, a high fee that many people would not have been able to afford.
at that time. One member of her troupe, Keshvar Shāhi, later came to be the favored female performer to Moẓaffar al-Din Shāh and received considerable wealth from the latter (Plate 48). 104

4. The Ensemble of Māšā’allāh

Quite possibly the most sought-after female dasteh in the last quarter of the nineteenth century in Tehran was led by a famous courtesan and entertainer known as Māšā’allāh. She is said to have been a brilliant dancer and kamānccheh player who positioned her instrument on her belly and played it while she was dancing. The exact number of individuals in her troupe is not mentioned, but we know that her younger sister, Gowhar, was a dancer and another performer, Zahrā al-Soltān, was also associated with her. Mo‘ayyer-al-Mamālek reports that Māšā’allāh’s ensemble was also among the dastehs that were frequently invited to perform in the andarun. 105

5. The Ensemble of Gol Rashti

This troupe was formed by Gol Rashti, who was a singer. Nothing is known about the members of her troupe and their activities beyond the fact that they were frequently invited to perform in the female gatherings of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh’s court (Plate 49). 106

6. The Ensemble of Monavvar

Monavvar was a dancer from Shiraz who formed a dance troupe and trained several female performers. She also had a player of org (harmonium) in her dasteh who accompanied dancers. Monavvar was mentioned as an expert in various dance forms and was especially known for writing the name of spectators and drawing flowers with her toes while she was dancing. 107
7. The Ensemble of Zahrā Qomi

The *sardasteh* of this troupe, Zahrā Qomi, was a dancer and a proficient *moqalled* particularly adept at mocking the accent of people from Shiraz. Evidence shows that Zahrā Qomi often invited other female performers such as Bāji Qadamshād and Gowhar Khomāri to perform in her ensemble.¹⁰⁸

8. The Ensemble of Za‘farān Bāji

Za‘farān Bāji, a woman of African descent, was the *sardasteh* of a troupe of female *taqlidchīs* that was invited to perform frequently in the *andarun* of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh. Toward the end of her life, Za‘farān Bāji repented and gave up her profession as a *moṭreb*. She became a religious singer and subsequently donated much of her wealth to build a *bāzārcheh* (shopping center), *āb-anbār* (cistern of drinking water), and *sagqā-khāneh* (traditional place to supply drinking water) for a charitable cause (Plate 50).¹⁰⁹

9. The Ensemble of Galin

Galin was a singer and dancer active during the reign of Mozaffar al-Din Shāh. She trained several disciples including Malus, Jalīs, Turān, and Şādiqeh who all came to be prominent dancers in Tehran and performed mostly as members in her *dasteh*.¹¹⁰

*Miscellaneous Ensembles*

Besides the above *dastehs*, several other female troupes and independent female performers were active in Tehran during the reign of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh. For instance, Gowhar Khomāri directed a
troupe in which she sang and played daf. The Ensembles of ‘Aziz-‘Aṭā, and Tāvus were also more frequently brought to the court to perform at banquets.\footnote{111}

Among the female performers, sometimes two or three sisters formed a small dasteh and performed at all-female gatherings. Mu’nes and Anis, for instance, were famous sisters in this period. While Mu’nes was an accomplished dancer, her sister Ghazal was a tašnif singer and dāyereh player. Two other sisters, Marāl and Ghazāl, were also celebrated dancers in the capital. The latter used to dance often in men’s dress (Plate 51). Likewise, some of the dancers, such as Qamar Sāleki, were tašnif singers as well. Some dancers were particularly adept at playing finger cymbals while dancing, with Akhtar Zangi, Zahrā, and Ḩeshmat among them. Ḩeshmat was also proficient in candelabra dances, a tradition which was previously common among celebrated court bāzīgars throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.\footnote{112}

Court albums show that folk ensembles of both male and female musicians performed sometimes Turkmen, Kurdish, Azeri, and Lori music in the capital and more specifically at the Qajar court. In his 1865 diary Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh refers to two Turkman musicians who played and sang a famous urban tašnif on the dōtār and kamāncheh (Plates 52).\footnote{113}

Furthermore, musical contact with India, Kashmir, and particularly Afghanistan also increased significantly during the nineteenth century. An Indian santur player is mentioned to have been at the court of Moḥammad Shāh and to have trained a court servant named Amir Khān.\footnote{114} An ensemble of Kashmiri musicians performing santur, sitār, sārangī, kamāncheh, and tablā also arrived in the Qajar court around 1865 accompanied by a larger group of entertainers (Plate 53).\footnote{115} During the reign of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh, Ḩosām al-Salṭaneh, who had received by then the title of ‘the Conqueror of Herat,’ brought a group of Herāti musicians including Gholām-Ḥosayn Khān Herāti, Rasul Khān Herāti, and Ja’far Khān, the son of Rasul Khān, to Tehran (Plate 54). These
musicians later made a significant contribution to the development of the performance practice of music at the Qajar court. The complete repertoire of Afghan music has not survived; nonetheless, it is evident from song-text collections of the early twentieth century that several taṣnīfs and a few rengs were still known among the court musicians as afghāni or kāboli.\textsuperscript{116}

\textit{Anjoman-e Okhovvat}

When Zahir al-Dowleh (1864-1924), Nāṣer al-Din Shāh’s son-in-law and a disciple of the Sufi master Ṣafī’alishāh (1835-1898), established a fraternity called \textit{Anjoman-e Okhovvat} in 1885, he began to assemble and support a group of renowned musicians including Darvish Khān (tār and setār), Montazam-al-Ḥokamā’ (setār), Ḥosayn Hangāfarin (violin and setār), Moshir-Homāyun (piano), Ḥosayn Khān Esmāʿilzādeh (kamāncheh), Yusef Khān Ṣafā’i (tār), Ḥosayn Ṭāherzādeh (singer), and Reżā-Qoli Nowruz (singer and dombak) in his circle.\textsuperscript{117} During the constitutional period (1906-1911) several concerts were arranged by Darvish Khān in the form of garden parties under the aegis of Zahir al-Dowleh.\textsuperscript{118} The aforementioned musicians, together with some other musicians who were not permanent members of the fraternity, also held monthly concerts and wrote both vocal and instrumental compositions for their special events (Plates 55 and 56).

Among the famous compositions were a taṣnīf in segāh composed by ‘Ali-Akbar Shaydā (d. 1906) in commemoration of Imam ‘Ali’s birth (rajab 13) and another piece known as the salām-e anjoman-e okhovvat (fraternity’s anthem), composed in āvāz-e dashti.\textsuperscript{119}

\textit{Music of Sufi Lodges}

During the nineteenth century, urban Sufi orders of Dhahabiyya and Ne‘matollāhi were active in the capital and major cities such as Isfahan, Shiraz, and Mashhad. However, the performance
practice of music in Sufi lodges (khānegāhs) was almost entirely confined to the recitation of poetry and the Quran. In other words, instrumental music—even the performances of nay and daf—was completely absent from their gatherings. This was mostly due to the fact that Sufi orders were still following the rules of the shari'a and some of the shaykhs had previous religious training or were personally related to the 'olamā’. Vocal genres that developed closely with the performance of music in Sufi lodges were the sāqi-nāme and mathnavī that later crept into the repertoire of the radif and were recognized as gushehs.

Luthiers

The nineteenth century was the age of Armenian families of luthiers. The first Yahyā, tār and setār maker; Zādur, tār and setār maker; Mārkār, santur, tār, and setār maker; and the three brothers Khāchik, Hambartsum, and Megerditch—all tār makers—were originally professional carpenters in the New Jolfā quarter of Isfahan who turned to making musical instruments at the request of customers. Later on Khachik’s son, Hovanes Abkarian better known as the second Yahyā (1876-1932), moved to Tehran and developed the art of tār-making to a peak that has never been surpassed (Plate 57). He standardized the basic form, shape, size, materials and method of construction for the tār. A small group of Armenian instrument makers also lived at the same time in Marāgheh, a city in Azerbaijan, and were famous as makers of both setārs and chogurs.

Around 1890, a craft workshop-bazaar called dār-al-ṣanāye‘ (the house of crafts) was founded in southern Tehran. There Ḥāj Ṭāher, a master setār maker, and Ostād Farajollāh, a tār, setār, and, kamāńcheh maker from Isfahan, also established instrument-making workshops and soon after that they emerged as well-known luthiers in the capital. Ḥāj Ṭāher, who seems to have been strongly influenced by the construction of the mandolin, at that time began to make the belly
of setārs from strips of wood. Likewise, it is generally believed that the second Yahyā in fact modeled his tār on Ostād Farajollāh’s superior construction design.

Equally famous in the second half of the nineteenth century was Ḩāj Moḥammad Karim Khān, who made major developments in the construction of kamāncheh with fully decorated bone inlay work.

Moẓaffar al-Din Shāh

Moẓaffar al-Din Shāh (r. 1896-1907), the son of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh, was named crown prince and sent as governor to the northern province of Azerbaijan in 1861. He spent thirty-five years in Tabriz in the pursuit of pleasure, where he was frequently in the company of performing artists and musicians. We are informed that Javād Khān Qazvini, the eminent kamāncheh player of the court of Nāṣer al-Din Shāh, and Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli were often sent to Tabriz to perform at the court of the crown prince.

When Moẓaffar al-Din Shāh came to Tehran in 1896, he did not display much interest in court music, certainly not in the same manner that his father did. During his reign, he gradually changed the patterns of musical patronage and subsequently musicians retained little presence at the royal court. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khān developed gout and gradually receded from his responsibilities. Likewise, Mirzā ‘Abdollāh, Āqā Ḥosayn-Qolī, and Ḥabībollāh Samā‘-Ḥoẓur were only asked to perform occasionally for banquets. At the same time, the Shāh allegedly sought to patronize the performers of wind instruments, a new development that was not previously common during the reigns of his predecessors. Qahramān Mirzā Sālur or ‘Ayn al-Salṭaneh describes the situation as follows:

The shāh has almost fifty special musicians (‘amale-ye tarab-e makhşus) in his court. ... Of these fifty individuals, twenty play nay-e haftband (end-blown reed flute) and ten just
play the *naylabak* (block flute). These are the instruments they play. [Paradoxically], the shāh is more interested in the *nay*, which is the most disgraceful musical instrument in our time.\(^{123}\)

During the reign of Moẓaffar al-Din Shāh, the two categories of musicians established earlier as ‘*amale-ye ṭarab-e khāṣṣeh* and ‘*amaleh-ye ṭarab* were no longer differentiated at the court. Instead, renowned musicians both inside and outside the court came to be grouped and identified with the names of individuals who patronized them including the shāh, princes, and ministers.

Some of the celebrated court musicians in this period received the title of ‘Shāhi’ suffixed to their names, producing for example ‘Ali-Akbar Shāhi, Qorbān Khān Shāhi, and Qoli Khān Shāhi, while the various court ensembles to which they belonged were typically known as *daste-ye shāhi*. Among the court musicians, ‘Ali-Akbar Shāhi (d. 1923) was the most important figure. He played both *santur* and *tār* while also directing the main court ensemble. ‘Ali-Akbar received his initial training on the *santur* from his father, Amir Khān, who himself was supposedly trained by an Indian *santur* player in the middle of the nineteenth century.\(^{124}\) Other court musicians in this period included Morād Khān, a *tār* player; Ṣafdar Khān, a *kamāncheh* player; Qorbān Khān Shāhi, a singer; Qoli Khān Shāhi, a nay player and singer; and finally Gholām and Ḥabib, *dombak* players.\(^{125}\) Mashḥun mentions that Qoli Khān was the *nay* player favored by the Shāh; hence he received the title of ‘Shāhpasand.’\(^{126}\) Likewise, Morād Khān was a privileged musician who accompanied Moẓaffar al-Din Shāh on his second trip to Europe in 1903 (Plate 58).\(^{127}\)

Dancing boys still played a significant role in courtly and urban ensembles and they seem to have been largely accepted and tolerated by people throughout the capital. It appears that besides dancing, some of these boys were celebrated singers as well. According to Eugène Aubin, the activities of dancing boys were closely supervised by the deputy of *naqqāreh-khāneh*. Through a contract signed in the presence of Eʿteṣām Khalvat, the proprietors of troupes or *sardastehs* were
committed to providing food, shelter, clothing, and health care for the boys.\textsuperscript{128} A photograph of the \textit{daste-ye shāhi} shows that at least two dancing boys–probably around fourteen or fifteen years old–were part of that ensemble (Plate 59). Surviving pictures also indicate that a number of adolescent boy singers and dancing boys, such as Taymur Raqqāṣ and Ḥosayn Bālā Raqqāṣ, were respected and sought after by some of the courtiers and the gentry in this period (Plates 60, 61, 62).

The patrons of these boys in the words of John Baily “were ‘dancing boy fanciers’ just as they might be pigeon fanciers or dog fanciers.”\textsuperscript{129} But this doesn’t indicate by any means that they ever had sexual relations with the boys. Eugène Aubin observed that Iranian men in this period appreciated the seductive manners of dancing boys with no beard more than dancing girls.\textsuperscript{130} Hence the relation between patrons and the boys has been stigmatized and viewed with suspicion. Some of the dancing boys were reportedly objects of adoration even into their twenties. The shāh’s sister, Tāj al-Salṭaneh, refers for instance to a twenty-year old male dancer named Tihu, and further declares that her husband was madly in love with him.\textsuperscript{131}

The activities of dancing boys were not entirely confined to male gatherings. On some occasions, boys were brought to the \textit{andarun} to perform exclusively for a female audience. Concerning this issue, Tāj al-Salṭaneh reports on a night at the court when there was a male boycott (\textit{qoroq}) and the famous ‘Abdi Jan was brought to perform for the women of the harem.\textsuperscript{132} Another contemporary writer, ‘Ayn al-Salṭaneh, talks about a circumcision ceremony in which his sisters were among the attendants while ‘Abdollāh and his ensemble were performing.\textsuperscript{133}

The other group of musicians who frequently performed for Moẓaffar al-Din Shāh consisted of urban female performers and courtesans who received government protection as well. In fact, courtesan troupes engaged in music and dance emerged in great numbers across the capital
and other major cities in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Aubin refers to almost forty female troupes in Tehran during the reign of Moẓaffar al-Din Shāh who paid a fraction of their monthly income to E’teşām Khalvat, but he doesn’t specify much about their musical involvement with the court.\textsuperscript{134} This was around the time of the Constitutional Revolution (1906) and hence it caused several people—including the members of the royal family—to criticize the shāh for patronizing such women of ill-repute. One of the critics of the shāh was his sister, Tāj al-Saltāneh, who was particularly disturbed by the fact that “the potentate frequently hosted courtesans instead of ‘real musicians’ in his court.”\textsuperscript{135}

At the same time, the advancement of modernity within Iranian society was manifesting itself in many areas of music making. Western style military music evolved tremendously during this period, and the shāh became enormously influenced by the musical taste and advice of his special servant, Arslān Nāṣer Homāyun (d. 1920), who was himself the chief of military music and the shāh’s piano teacher. Nāṣer Homāyun accompanied Moẓaffar al-Din Shāh on his all trips to Europe and he was responsible for purchasing western musical instruments for the court.\textsuperscript{136}

\textit{Recording Technology}

One of the most important developments at the beginning of the twentieth century was the introduction of recording technologies by the Gramophone Typewriter Ltd. in 1906. In this year, recording agents from the Gramophone Company arrived in Tehran and, with permission from Moẓaffar al-Din Shāh, began their first recordings in the capital. The arrangements for recording sessions were made by Alfred Jean Baptiste Lemaire (1842-1907), a French composer and the director of military music. Lemaire was commissioned to procure the royal military band, and various court ensembles (\textit{dast-e ye shāhi}) as well as some other top-notch musicians of Tehran for
recording. The recording sessions in Tehran produced an assortment of music that was commonly performed by various ensembles at the Qajar court. Probably the most important project among these recordings was an attempt to produce a set of seven dastgāhs performed by two groups of master court musicians (Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli and his disciples performed chahārgāh, māhur, homāyun, rāst-panigāh and the Dasteh-ye Shāhi performed shur, segāh, navā) as multiple disc sets.137 The recording sessions in Tehran were subsequently followed by recording sessions of Persian musicians in Paris (featuring Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli, Sayyed Aḥmad Khān, Bāqer Khān, Asadollāh Khān, and Moḥammad Bāqer) in 1907 and recording sessions in London (featuring Darvish Khān, Bāqer Khān, Asadollāh Khān, Ḥabibollāh Moshir Homāyun, Akbar Khān, Ḥosayn Khān Hangāfarin, Ḥosayn Ṭāherzādeh, and Reżā-Qoli Nowruz) in 1909. In 1912, the Gramophone Company resumed recording sessions in Tehran, and of particular importance during this period were the recordings of three lesser known female singers, Amjad, Eftekhār and Zari, who performed a repertoire of vocal compositions that amounted to more than fifty discs.138

4 Moḩammadi, “Resāleh-ye davāzdah dastgāh,” 142.
7 Ibid., 143.
8 Ibid.; ‘Aţod al-Dowleh, Tārikh-e ‘Aţodi, 47.
10. Ibid.
11. Ażod al-Dowleh, Tārikh-e ‘Aţodi, 26-27. At the end of his edition of Tārikh-e ‘Aţodi, Navā’i adds a list of the Shāh’s wives from Nāsekh al-tavārīkh, and provides additional information about Shāhverdi Khānom. See ibid., 344.
22. Mehdi-Qoli Hedāyat, Majma‘ al-advār, 10; Ḥasan Mashḥun, Tārikh-e musiqi-ye Irān, 372. In fact, when Firuz Mirzā Noṣrat al-Dowleh was appointed governor of Shiraz he arrived accompanied by Manuchehr Khān Gorji, and Rajab-‘Alī Khān Kermānī, the renowned kamāncheh player at the court. Thus, chances are that he was a student of the latter in playing that instrument.
25. Moritz von Kotzebue, Narrative of a Journey into Persia (London, 1819), 118-120.
Gobineau mentions that ‘Ali-Akbar Farāhāni used to play Russian melodies on his instrument.


Gobineau, Trois ans en Asie, 1855 à 1858, 464

Ibid.


Mashḥun, Tārikh-e musiqi-ye Irān, 362-363, 446.

Ibid., This taṣnīf was recorded by Rezā-Qoli Nowruzī in 1909.

In the royal court, khāṣṣeh was a term referring to the sector of the administration particularly belonging and responding to the crown.

Mashḥun, Tārikh-e musiqi-ye Irān, 387 n. 40.


Personal communication from Dāriush Šafvat who was himself a student of Moḥammad Irani Mojarrad. A version of this story is also mentioned in Khāleqi, Sargodhasht-e musiqi-ye Irān, 1:133.

Mashḥun, Tārikh-e musiqi-ye Irān, 386-390, 402-411.


In the list of musicians provided by Eskandar Beg Monshi, the chronicler of Shāh ‘Abbās some of the musicians are called ‘ostād.’ For further information, see Eskandar Beg Torkamān, Tārikh-e ‘ālamārā‘ Abbāsi, 1:190.

It was still a common belief among twentieth-century musicians that kamāncheh players in the Qajar period largely came from a motre backdrop. Personal communication from Moḥammad-Rezā Lotfī.

In early recordings, several taṣnīfs were jointly performed by two singers.


Mashḥun, Tārikh-e musiqi-ye Irān, 414.

Rostam al-Ḥokamā’, Rostam al-tavārikh, 100.


54 Personal communication from Dāriush Ṣafvat.


58 Ibid., 509.


61 Ibid.


67 Ibid., 569.
Ibid., 575.

In the early Qajar period Āqā Moḩammad-Reżā was renowned for his broad knowledge of melody-types. Cf. Moḩammadi, “Resāleh-ye davāzdah dastgāh,” 143.

Mashḥun, Tārikh-e musiqi-ye Irān, 574-575.


For further information, see chapter 5.


In this respect, taqlid could be comparable to māshrāp, especially as clowning in the Uyghur muqam tradition. As Rachel Harris describes it, “a māshrāp is also a kind of informal court—an occasion when villagers who have done something wrong are called to account—and it is the musicians who act as court officials and clowns. At the māshrāp, they punish lapses in morality by ritual humiliation for the delight of the crowd.” For further account see Rachel Harris, “The Uyghur Muqam,” in The Music of Central Asia, ed. Theodore Levin, Saida Daukeyeva and Elmira Köchümkulova (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2016), 353.


For an account of Shaykh Shaykur see ibid., 1:348-349.


Ibid., 46-47; 83-84.

Mashḥun, Tārikh-e musiqi-ye Irān, 391, 563.

In his interview with Mohammad Rezā Lotfī, the eminent tasnif singer, ‘Abdollāh Davāmi mentions that he learned a substantial section of his repertoire from Ḥabibollāh Samā‘-Ḥożur and his sister. For further information, see Moḩammad-Reżā Loţfī, Musiqi-ye āvāzi-ye Irān: dastgāh-e shur, radif-e ostād ‘Abbollāh Davāmi (Tehran, Enteshārāt-e Gutenberg, 1974), 12.

Khāleqi, Sargodhasht-e musiqi-ye Irān, 1:467; for her compositions see Farāmarz Pāyvar, Radif-e āvāzi va taśnif-hā-ye qadimi be revāyat-e ‘Abbollāh Davāmi (Tehran: Māhur, 1996), 452.

Khāleqi, Sargodhasht-e musiqi-ye Irān, 1:467.

86 Ibid.
87 Khâleqi, Sargodhasht-e musiqi-ye Irân, 1: 469.
89 Khâleqi, Sargodhasht-e musiqi-ye Irân, 1:141-142.
90 Ibid., 372; Mashḥun, Târikh-e musiqi-ye Irân, 664.
91 Ibid., 675.
92 Ibid., 540-541, 545-546.
93 Khâleqi, Sargodhasht-e musiqi-ye Irân, 1:162.
94 Mashḥun, Târikh-e musiqi-ye Irân, 513, 540, 545, 566, 617, 676.
96 Pious people refused to keep or allow musical instruments in their houses.
104 Mostowfi, Shahr-e zengâni-ye man, 1:214; E’temâd al-Saltânah, Ruznâmeh-ye khâferât-e E’temâd al-Saltânah, ed. Iraj Afshâr (Tehran: Amir-Kabir, 2000), 457; Qahramân Mirzâ Sâlur

Ibid.

Khāleqi, Sargodhasht-e musiqi-ye Irān, 1:471; Mashḥun, Tārikh-e musiqi-ye Irān, 394.

Qahramān Mirzā Sālur, Ruznāmeh-ye khāterāt-e ‘Ayn al-Salṭaneh, 920-921.


Khāleqi, Sargodhasht-e musiqi-ye Irān, 1:471, 478; Mashḥun, Tārikh-e musiqi-ye Irān, 394.

Khāleqi, Sargodhasht-e musiqi-ye Irān, 1:471-480; Mashḥun, Tārikh-e musiqi-ye Irān, 388, 394; Fāṭemi, Jashn va musiqi dar farhanghā-ye shahri-ye Irān, 68-70.

Khāleqi, Sargodhasht-e musiqi-ye Irān, 1:480-483.


Khāleqi, Sargodhasht-e musiqi-ye Irān, 1:462-463.


Mashḥun, Tārikh-e musiqi-ye Irān, 543, 681; Khāleqi, Sargodhasht-e musiqi-ye Irān, 1:87.

Ibid., 83.

Ibid., 87-90; Farāmarz Pāyvar, Radif-e āvāzi va taṣnīf-hā-ye qadimi be revāyat-e ‘Abdallāh Davāmī, 348.


Ibid.; for a further account on the subject see Khāleqi, Sargodhasht-e musiqi-ye Irān, 1:169-171; Mashḥun, Tārikh-e musiqi-ye Irān, 693-694.

Ibid., 540.
124 Khāleqi, Sargodhash-e musiqi-ye Irān, 1: 462-463.
125 Mashḥun, Tāriḵ-e musiqi-ye Irān, 643.
126 Ibid., 414.
128 Sāsān Fāṭemi, Jashn va musiqi dar farhanghā-ye shahri-ye Irān, 88.
130 Fāṭemi, Jashn va musiqi dar farhanghā-ye shahri-ye Irān, 75.
131 Tāj al-Salṭaneh, Khāṭerāt, 90.
132 Ibid., 35.
135 Tāj al-Salṭaneh, Khāṭerāt, 71.
136 Mashḥun, Tāriḵ-e musiqi-ye Irān, 438-439, 527.
138 Ibid., 77-83.
Examining the modal system of Persian music and its development between the sixteenth and the late nineteenth centuries is not an easy matter, especially when no sufficient sample of notated melodies has survived prior to the nineteenth century and musical treatises do not include enough information about intervals, scales, modes and rules of modulation. Therefore, the trajectory of such development for much of the period under scrutiny will be mostly confined to the descriptions of modes and melodic types based on musical treatises.

A few authors seem to have been more knowledgeable about the musical concepts and analytical writings of their predecessors. Accordingly, they employ a more elaborate terminology in articulating various features of modal entities and melodic characters. However, their descriptions and interpretations of modal concepts are occasionally difficult for a modern reader to comprehend. In some cases, music theorists use vocabulary that was current within a particular regional school and not shared in other musical centers or even in the preceding or following generations. Hence students of music may come across inconsistencies in usage of terms and concepts in musical treatises. But soon they come to the understanding that these inconsistencies are important evidence of different practices and different ways of thinking about them.

The Major Sources for the Persian Modal System 1500-1900

Following the downfall of the Timurid dynasty (1370-1507) in Herat, the Systematist approach to music theory that had been current for almost two centuries came entirely to an end. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a number of musical treatises appeared in Persia that exhibit a rather conventional perspective on music theory. In general, musical treatises of the Safavid period are relatively short and they largely deal with the three topics of modes, rhythmic cycles,
and compositional genres. Unlike Systematist texts, Safavid musical treatises do not contain the mathematical discussion of intervals or the analysis of modes based on tetrachord and pentachord species. The Greek writers on music such as Euclid, Aristotle, Plato and Ptolemy are sometimes revered as the ‘men of wisdom’ (ḥokama’), but actual Greek musical sources were never in fact discussed or quoted in the writings of this period. A few Safavid music theorists acknowledge the authority of their predecessors, especially Ebn Sinā (980-1037), Ṣafi al-Din Ormavi (d.1294) and Ḥabd al-Qāder Marāghi (d. 1435), while at the same time one author mentions in the beginning of the seventeenth century that the musical texts of Marāghi were no longer available. He further states that Marāghi was primarily known through the oral tradition and a small number of scholars who allegedly had firsthand access to his books.¹

Whether the Systematist texts on music were known during the Safavid period or not cannot be verified, at least not on the basis of the musical writings of the period. However, we know that at least one manuscript of Jāme’ al-alḥān (Compiler of melodies) of Marāghi, which is currently housed in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, was copied in Isfahan in 1656.² Moreover, the tradition of studying the quadrivium in academic schools was still prevalent throughout this period. In fact, another musical codex was copied in Isfahan in 1619 for the celebrated Iranian philosopher, Sayyed Mir Abu al-Qāsem Astarābādi (1562-1640), better known as Mir Fendereski, and this included Ebn Zaileh’s Ketāb al-kāfi fi al-musiqi (Book of sufficiency in music) and the Arabic translation of Sectio Canonis attributed to Euclid.³

Two musical treatises seem to have been composed in the first half of the sixteenth century. The first, Nasim-e tarab (Breeze of euphoria) was presumably written by a certain Nasimi for the provincial ruler of Gilan who was known as Moẓaffar Solṭān. The treatise is in verse and prose and its author attempts to approach music theory with reference to the performance practice of his
own time. While surveying various categories of mode, the author presents a discussion of the general scale and note names followed by a list and definition of modal entities. Of particular interest in this text are references to local terminology regarding modal theory.⁴

The second treatise, which also has some parallels with the Nasim-e ṭarab, is Taqsim al-naghamāt va bayān al-daraj va al-sho’ab va al-maqāmāt (Distribution of notes and explication of scale degrees, sho’behs and maqāms). This treatise is a Safavid musical text that contains an account of the scales and more specifically the melodic contours of the twelve maqāms, six āvāzehs, and twenty-four sho’behs. The author seems to have been a nay-player himself; hence he claims to describe the modal system with reference to the special arrangement of the finger holes of the nay. Making a diagram for each modal entity, he demonstrates graphically—through the shapes of the nay’s finger holes—the melodic contour of every mode. Nonetheless, his diagrams only seem to be symbolically representing the nay’s finger holes, for the number of holes in an actual nay was certainly less than what is depicted in most diagrams.⁵

Right at the turn of the seventeenth century, two other monographs were written, one in Herat, the second most important city, to which the Safavid crown prince was sent, and the other one in Isfahan, the newly established capital. In Herat, Dowreh Beg Kerāmi, the composer and butler (sofrehchi) of ‘Ali Qoli Khān Shāmlu (d. 1589), the governor of the city and guardian of prince ‘Abbas, wrote a musical treatise (c. 1580s) in which he discusses the structure of the modal system as well as instrumental and vocal genres.⁶ The music theory and practice in the Safavid court were described for the first time by Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad Qazvini (d. 1599), a celebrated court calligrapher who was also distinguished as a music theorist and an amateur singer.⁷ While both treatises are short and mostly repeat earlier and contemporary sources, they
provide us in a few cases with valuable information on the development of music and the adoption of new modal elements in this period.

The seventeenth-century music theorists invariably discuss the hierarchical classification of various modal entities. Bāqiyā Nā`ini (d. c. 1640), a prominent musical figure and poet who spent early stages of his career in Nā’in, Isfahan, Mashhad, and Herat and later resided in India, compiled a musical treatise entitled Zamzameh-ye vaḥdat (Murmur of unity). He attempts to examine Persian and Indian music as two separate topics, but in a few cases, he makes a comparison between Persian maqāms and Indian rāgs as well.⁸

It is safe to say that the most important musical text of the seventeenth century is the codex of Amir Khān Gorji, a Georgian servant at the courts of Shāh Solaymān (r. 1666-1694) and Shāh Solṭān Ḥosayn (r. 1694-1722). The codex encompasses three treatises and two song-text collections including those of Āqā Mo’men Moṣannef, the chief of court musicians and composers in Isfahan in the first half of the seventeenth century, and a wide-ranging collection of Persian and Turkish songs representing the repertoire of the Safavids as well as some provincial courts in the second half of the seventeenth century. While the codex includes no musical notation and the discussions of modes are very brief, references to the development of modal entities and the structure of vocal compositions are particularly significant for understanding the way that practicing musicians implemented and experimented with among the hierarchical system of modes.⁹

Another musical treatise, Dar bayān-e ʿelm-e musīqi va dānestan-e sho’abāt-e ou (On the science of music and understanding its branches) was also compiled sometime in the first half of the eighteenth century. The treatise is anonymous, but it is particularly important for its instruction and representation of maqāms and other modal entities in a practical format.¹⁰
The eighteenth century is probably the murkiest period in Persian music history. In the beginning of this period, Isfahan lost much of its socio-cultural and artistic integrity and strength. Nonetheless, throughout this century, this city—and subsequently Shiraz—remained the two most prominent cultural centers and accordingly hosted a substantial community of urban musicians. A few extant musical texts seem to have been composed in this period, yet most of them are anonymous and none can be ascribed with any degree of certitude to the court of a notable ruler. It is certain however that in 1738 the Armenian-Turkish musician, Tanburi Harutin, who spent two years at the camp of Nāder, wrote down some of his observations in a musical treatise in form of a dialogue between himself and Nāder.\textsuperscript{11} The Bahjat al-qolub (Delight of hearts) is another musical treatise that can be attributed to the middle of the eighteenth century. Aside from being an important text on musical instruments, it provides a fresh approach to the emergence and early development of dastgāhs.\textsuperscript{12}

From the middle of the eighteenth century to the middle of nineteenth we possess a series of musical treatises that, except in one or two cases, can neither be accurately dated nor ascribed to any specific author. These treatises sometimes seem to be compilations of various texts and one can find references to both maqām and dastgāh in most of them. Therefore, the interpretation of these texts must be undertaken with considerable caution.

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, some musical treatises appear whose authors are not indicated, but the treatises can be dated with some accuracy. The authors of these texts often provide a list of dastgāhs including their melodic entities in the performance practice of that time. At times, they also mention musicians who had particular styles or made significant contributions to the development of the modal system or compositional genres. Following the style of earlier sources, they reveal that the development of the modal system has been a complex and
ongoing process of synthesis, drawing upon melody types, genres, compositions and features from various regions and classes, yet they hardly present a clear description of the modal entities, rhythms, or genres *per se*.

Two musical treatises that were written around 1840, *Kolliyât-e Yusefî* and *Resâleh-ye davâzdah dastgâh*, have been recently discovered. In both texts, Āqā Bābā Makhmur Eşfahāni is mentioned as the most prominent court singer in the reign of Fatḥ-ʿAli Shâh (r. 1797-1834) who was responsible for combining *maqâms*, *shoʿbehs*, and *āvâzehs* together and arranging them into sequences of twelve *dâstgahs*. The account of *dâstgahs* in *Kolliyât-e Yusefî* is very brief and the other text also seems to have some lacunae. Nonetheless, they provide us with valuable information about the formation and evolution of the *dâstgah* system and also the prominent court musicians in the first half of the nineteenth century.¹³

The most essential text related to the Persian modal theory in the late nineteenth century is the *Majmaʿ al-advâr* (Collection of musical cycles) by Mehdi-Qoli Hedâyat (1928). The author was a statesman in the late Qajar and early Pahlavi periods with a profound knowledge of medieval Muslim and Western music theory. As an amateur *setâr* player, Hedâyat examines the structure and performance practice of *dâstgâhs* and presents the verbal discourse concerning music that was prevalent among the practitioners of the nineteenth century.¹⁴

In the early twentieth century, a few amateur musicians and poets also made some significant contributions to the field of music, most prominent among them Forṣâṭ al-Dowleh Shirāzi, author of *Bohur al-alhân dar ʿelm-e musiqi va nesbat-e ān bā ʿaruţ* (Meters of melodies in the science of music and their relation to the system of poetic meter). Forṣâṭ al-Dowleh authored a collection of poems that were frequently used by classical singers and assigned for each poem the *dâstgâhs* or *āvâẕs* he recognized as most suitable for its performance. This collection is
prefaced by a short treatise describing some technical terms applicable to the contemporary performance practice and a list of dastgāhs and their constituent āvāzs and gushehs.¹⁵

Last but not least, a certain Mirzā Shafiʿ of Kashan wrote a treatise on music at the turn of the twentieth century. While little is known about the author, the arrangement of dastgāhs, the distinctive terminology concerning various melody types, and finally the account of compositions and dance tunes in this treatise are particularly noteworthy and represent an exceptional approach to the dastgāh system.¹⁶

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historical Period</th>
<th>Date of Texts</th>
<th>Author or Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safavid (1501-1736)</td>
<td>mid-16th century (Gilan)</td>
<td>Nasim-e  ṯarab</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>mid-16th century</td>
<td>Taqsim al-naghamāt</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1580s (Herat)</td>
<td>Dowreh Beg Kerāmi</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1590s (Qazvin, Isfahan)</td>
<td>Mir Ṣadr al-Dīn Ḥoḥamād Qazvini</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1630s</td>
<td>Bāqiyyā Nāʿini</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1650s</td>
<td>Bahjat al-ruḥ</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1650s (Isfahan)</td>
<td>ʿĀqā Moʿmen Moṣannef</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1697 (Isfahan)</td>
<td>Amir Khān Gorjī</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>late 17th or early 18th century</td>
<td>Dar bayān-e ʿelm-e musiqi ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Invasion of Afghans (1722)</td>
<td>1740</td>
<td>Tanburi Harutin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Näder and his successors</td>
<td>mid-18th century</td>
<td>Bahjat al-qolub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zand (1751-1794)</td>
<td>late 18th century</td>
<td>Resāleh dar ʿelm-e musiqi¹⁷</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>late 18th century</td>
<td>Resāleh dar bayān-e chahār dastgāh¹⁸</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>late 18th century</td>
<td>Sharḥ-e chahār dastgāh va ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qajar (1795-1925)</td>
<td>early 19th century</td>
<td>Davāzdah dastgāh¹⁹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>early 19th century</td>
<td>Ādāb-e āvāzhā ...²⁰</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. 1840</td>
<td>Resāleh ye davāzdah dastgāh²¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1840s</td>
<td>Kolliyāt-e Yusefī</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1899 (Tehran)</td>
<td>Majmaʿ al-advār</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>Bohur al-ahlān ...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>c. 1900</td>
<td>Hājī Ḥasan b. Hājī Ali-Naqi Ganjehʾi²²</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1912 (Kashan)</td>
<td>Mirzā Shafiʿ</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1. Persian musical treatises written between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries.
The Timurid Period

The contemporary conceptualization of a modal system in the Timurid period is well covered in the writings of the eminent composer and music theorist of the fifteenth century, ‘Abd al-Qāder Marāghi and in subsequent musical treatises of ‘Alishāh b. Buqeh Owbahī (second half of the fifteenth century), ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmi (d. 1492), and ‘Ali b. Moḥammad Banā’ī (d. 1513).

Following in the footsteps of Ṣafī al-Dīn Ormāvī and Qoṭb al-Dīn Shirāzī (d.1311), Marāghi retains the Systematist seventeen-note gamut as the general octave scale and subsequently presents his theoretical discussions in reference to it. Marāghi describes different categories of mode based on scalar sequences of intervals. He adopted Ormāvī’s scheme in defining seven tetrachord and twelve pentachord species while deriving eighty-four cycles (advār) or octave scales by combination and permutation. Moreover, he projected the twelve maqāms, six āvāzehs and twenty-four sho’behs, the three categories of modes that were known to practicing musicians, onto the advār and sought to define the structure and features of all modal entities in terms of this tetrachordal scheme.

According to Marāghi, the twelve maqāms that were referred to (most likely by music theorists) as the advār-e mashhureh, ‘the famous cycles,’ were all octave species and in common practice they were known as pardehs and shadds. He describes sho’behs as differing from maqāms insofar as their range did not necessarily constitute octave species. In the case of maqāms and āvāzehs, he describes them as two separate sets of entities, completely detached from one another. Yet he emphasizes the fact that in practice every two sho’behs were associated with one particular maqām. He also provides in his books, particularly in chapter fifteen of Sharh-e advār, a detailed description of sho’behs and their related pardehs.
Gusheh is another modal term mentioned for the first time by Marāghi. It doesn’t appear to have been a well-established concept in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and Marāghi states that gusheh was only used (perhaps loosely) by some musicians as a synonym for maqām or shadd. In the second half of the fifteenth century, the gusheh is mentioned neither by Owbahi nor by Jāmi and Banā’i, and it seems that it was by no means current in the musical parlance of eastern Persia, by which we mean more specifically a milieu of arts and learning with its center in Herat.

Overview of Accounts of Modal Entities in Safavid Sources

The first sixteenth-century Persian musical text that deals with the modal system is Nasimi’s Nasim-e ṭarab. In contrast with the Systematist music theorists, Nasimi does not bring up the notion of the general scale or the scale of seventeen-notes per octave. He first introduces the entire musical gamut in terms of four hierarchical octaves (marāteb-e darajāt-e arba’eh) with each octave comprising seven basic scale degrees (naghmehs): rāst (G), dōgāh (A), segāh (B♭), chahārgāh (c), panjgāh (d), ḥosayni (e) and ‘ashirān (♯). Subsequently he states that the first degree in higher octaves was referred to as methl (lit. duplicate or replacement) and other pitch levels were just called shabih (similar) to their counterparts in the first octave. Another term, eyvān pardeh (lit. the outstanding note), denotes the predominant note or what he calls naghmeh-ye chahārom az har pardeh (the fourth above each tone).

According to Nasimi, modal entities could be categorized as species of trichord, tetrachord and pentachord. He calls the initial and final notes of modal entities shāmel (lit. all-encompassing) and ghāyat (lit. final) respectively, and mentions that the melodic contours of all these modes could
fall into the tripartite classification of ascending (ṣaʿudi), descending (nozuli) and arched (ṣaʿudi-nozuli) patterns. He further specifies that:

1. The melodic contour in āvāzes was always descending.
2. The melodic contour in the three maqāms of busalik, zanguleh and esfahān was descending and in all other maqāms was ascending.
3. The melodic contour in the nine sho’behs of nahoft, bayāti, sepehri, negārin, ‘ashirān, nayriz, ikiyāt, and neshāburak was descending and in all other sho’behs was ascending.²⁸

While discussing various components of the modal system, Nasimi makes an analogy comparing a maqām with the stem of a white poplar tree (derakht-e khadang) that has two sho’behs —or branches, aqrab (nearest) and qarib (near). Beginning with the maqām-e rāst, the associations of sho’behs with the twelve maqāms are designated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maqām</th>
<th>Sho’beh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rāst</td>
<td>panjgāh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḥosayni</td>
<td>mohayyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>navā</td>
<td>neshāburak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hejāzi</td>
<td>‘ozzāl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rahāvi</td>
<td>nowruz-e ‘ajam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘erāq</td>
<td>maghlub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>busalik</td>
<td>‘ashirān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>esfahān</td>
<td>nayriz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bozorg</td>
<td>homāyun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuchak</td>
<td>negārin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mobarqa'</td>
<td>rakb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

²⁸
Table 3.2. The associations of sho’behs with the twelve maqāms in Nasim-e ṭarab.

Perhaps the most important musical treatise of the first half of the Safavid period discussing the modal system is the Taqsim al-naghamāt va bayān al-daraj va al-sho’ab va al-maqāmāt. The author of this treatise is unknown, but its overall structure and content resemble those of Nasim-e ṭarab in some respects. Unlike Nasimi, who places the entire range of music within four octaves, the author of Taqsim al-naghamāt introduces a registral span of three octaves and designates them as the lower register (taḥt), main register (asl), and higher register (fowq) respectively. His seven basic scale degrees in each octave have the same names as those offered by Nasimi except in one case: rāst (G), dōgāh (A), segāh (B¯), chahārgāh (c), panjgāh (d), ḥosayni (e) and maghlub (♯f). Finally by drawing certain diagrams, the author seeks to demonstrate the scale structure and melodic contour of maqāms, sho’behs and āvāzehs as follows:

1. Maqāms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sho’beh</th>
<th>maqām</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nehāvand (zanguleh)</td>
<td>chārgāh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[‘oshshāq]</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sho’beh</th>
<th>maqām</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rāst</td>
<td>G F♯ E F♯ G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>esfahān</td>
<td>d f e d c# c B¯ c B¯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḥejāz</td>
<td>B¯ c# B¯ A G F# G F#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘erāq</td>
<td>A B¯ A G F#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rahāvi</td>
<td>A B¯ c# B¯ c B¯ A B¯ A G# A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zanguleh</td>
<td>c c# c B¯ A B¯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘oshshāq</td>
<td>e d c B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>navā</td>
<td>c B A G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>busalik</td>
<td>e d g f♯ e d c d e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bozorg</td>
<td>e d f♯ e d c#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuchak</td>
<td>A e c c# c B¯ A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḥosayni</td>
<td>e d c B¯ A B¯ c d e</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Sho‘behs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maqām</th>
<th>Scale Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mobarqa*</td>
<td>G F# E D C D E F# G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>panjgāh</td>
<td>d c B^- A G A B^- c d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nayriz</td>
<td>G d c# B^- A G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neshāburak</td>
<td>d e d c B^-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>segāh</td>
<td>B^- A G A B^-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hesār</td>
<td>♭ f ♭ g a ♭ f d c B^-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maghlub</td>
<td>♭ e d c B^- A G F#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ruy-e ‘erāq</td>
<td>A c B^- A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nowruz-e ‘arab</td>
<td>A B^- B d B^- B^- A G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ajam</td>
<td>f e d c B^- A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chahārgāh</td>
<td>c B^- A G A B^- c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ozzāl</td>
<td>g ♭ f d c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zāvol</td>
<td>e d c d c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>owj</td>
<td>b^- a g ♭ e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nowruz-e khārā</td>
<td>A B^- c c# c B^- A G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>māhur</td>
<td>g ♭ e d c# B^- A G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ashirān</td>
<td>c d e d c A G F# E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nowruz-e šabā</td>
<td>e ♭ g a^- g ♭ e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homāyun</td>
<td>d c# B^- A B^- A B^- c# B^- A^- G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nahoft</td>
<td>a g ♭ e d c# B^- A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rāk</td>
<td>A c B^- A B^- A G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bayāti</td>
<td>c c# c B^- A G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dōgāh</td>
<td>A G A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moḥayyer</td>
<td>g c’ b^- a g ♭ e d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Āvāzechs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Āvāzeh</th>
<th>Scale Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gardāniyeh</td>
<td>g ♭ e d c B^- A G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salmak</td>
<td>d c# c c# A c# c d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mā’e</td>
<td>A G A B^- A G F# E F# G F# E D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gavesht</td>
<td>B^- e d e d c B^-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nowruz</td>
<td>A B^- c# d c# B^- A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shahnāz</td>
<td>e d c# c B^- A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3. The scale structure and melodic contour of maqāms, sho‘behs and āvāzechs in Taqsim al-naghamāt.

The author of Taqsim al-naghamāt offers a terminology that is particularly important for understanding the way modes were conceptualized in the sixteenth century. For instance, he uses
the verb *namudan* (lit. to exhibit or display) with reference to the skeletal scale of each mode which includes the changes of direction shown in the table and employs *rabṭ dādan* (lit. to connect) to convey modulation from one mode to another. In reference to melodic elaboration on a mode, he employs the term *sayr* or *sayr kardan* (lit. to perambulate), a term that in later Ottoman musical parlance came to be interpreted as the melodic progression.

Subsequent music theorists of the Safavid period hardly specify the scale type or melodic contour of modes. For the most part, they list various modal entities and their proper names while describing their interrelations.

In the second half of the sixteenth century, Dowreh Beg Kerāmi indicates that the hierarchical modes in Herat were organized as twelve *maqāms*, six āvâzehs, and twenty-four *shoʿbehs* as well. Kerāmi ascribes the development of *shoʿbehs* to some of the musical luminaries of the past. It is obvious from his account that the number of modes recognized among practicing musicians as *shoʿbehs* was more than twenty-four, but Kerāmi seems rather determined to confine himself, like many other sixteenth and seventeenth-century music theorists, to the canonic number of twenty-four. He also attempts to justify the existence of other *shoʿbehs* as lesser variants or as instances of the relabeling of preexisting *shoʿbehs*.

Know that, after the establishment of twelve *maqāms*, Khᵛājeh Ebrāhim, Ḥosayn Nā’i and Eshāq Mowṣeli established (važ ′ kardand) two *shoʿbehs* for each *maqām* so that the total came to be twenty-four *shoʿbehs* in keeping with hours of a day: *mobarqa*, *panjgāh*, nayriz, nayshāburak, mokhālef, maghlub, rakk, bayātī, homāyun, nahoft, segāh, ḥešār, ʿashirān, šābā, zābol, owj, dōgāh, moḥayyer, chahārgāh, ʿozzāl, nowruz-e khārā, māhur, nowruz-e ʿarab, nowruz-e ʿajam.

Know that there are no more than twenty-four *shoʿbehs*. However, some are called by two names. Bayātī is also called ʾikiyāt; homāyun is called ʿarabān; šābā is called noruz-e šabā; segāh is called ruḥafzā; neshāburak is called jowzi. Mokhālef is also referred to as ruy-e ʿerāq and ʿozzān. Zābol is also called damārāy, deljārīb and sepehri.
At roughly the same time, the account of modes in the Safavid court music in Qazvin and Isfahan is given by Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad Qazvini. In the first three chapters of his treatise, Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad writes on maqāms, āvāzehs, and sho ‘behs respectively, and enumerates each set of modes with their proper names. Giving a privileged position to the maqām-e hosayni, Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad presents the twelve maqāms and their related sho ‘behs as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maqām</th>
<th>Sho‘beh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ḥosayni</td>
<td>dōgāh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>moḥayyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘oshshāq</td>
<td>zāvoli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>owj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>navā</td>
<td>nowruz-e khārā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>māhur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>busalik</td>
<td>‘ashirān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nowruz-e ṣabā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘erāq</td>
<td>maghlub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mokhālef</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>esfahān</td>
<td>nayriz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>neshāburak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḥejāz</td>
<td>chahārgāh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘ozzāl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rāst</td>
<td>mobarqa’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>panjgāh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bozorg</td>
<td>homāyun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nahoft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuchak</td>
<td>rakb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bayāti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rahāvi</td>
<td>nowruz-e ’arab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nowruz-e ’ajam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zanguleh</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.4. The twelve maqāms and their related sho‘behs in the treatise of Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad.

Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad also defines the essential concept of shadd based on the opinions of his predecessors and contemporaries. He emphasizes that the term shadd had acquired
a new meaning in his own time, coming to refer to common pitch levels from which instrumentalists played a maqām. He states that every maqām was typically rendered from two or three pitch levels (shaddās) at the time and further castigates contemporary practicing musicians for their lack of skill in performing maqāms from various scale degrees.

_Shadd_ in Arabic means tightening. Since the notes of these maqāms are positioned along the strings and holes of instruments and tunes (āhang-hā) arise from them, they seem as if they are tightened on the [bodies] of instruments and hence are called shadd. Nowadays instrumentalists are capable of playing maqāms—or rather three or four maqāms—from two or three pitch levels (martabe), and those are called shadd. The rest of the pitch levels of a maqām, from which playing is complicated, and on which they cannot play a composition (kār), are not called shadd. There is no doubt that this is misleading and wrong, and practitioners of this art should be able to play the twelve maqāms at various pitch levels including those that are known as shadd. Rendering a maqām as shadd is not confined and specific to a certain level of acuity (bolandi) or gravity (pastī), as is confirmed in the essays (maqālāt) of the majority of experts in this art. The twelve maqāms can be played on the 'ud from twelve pitch levels of varying acuity and gravity, though, among them, the musicians mentioned are only aware of two or three pitch levels. Here the name of 'ud was mentioned because [one] can play every maqām including its two sho’behs on that instrument, in such a way that the upper sho’beh comes out of the upper range and the lower sho’beh comes out of the lower range [of the instrument]. And unlike the kamāncheh and nāy-e ‘erāqi, better known as black nay, one does not have to play some upper sho’behs in the lower range and some lower sho’behs in the upper range [of the instrument].

In their treatises, Safavid music theorists often include a section on the attribution of various names of maqāms and Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad was no exception. They usually refer to three or four regional schools including those of Māvarā’ al-nahr (Transoxiana), Khorāsān (northeastern Persia), ‘Irāq-e ‘ajam and Fārs (western Persia), and Rum (Anatolia) where some maqāms or other modal entities were known by different names. Concerning this issue, Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad states:

In other cities some maqāms are called by different names. For instance, in Anatolia navā is called bāhur. In Fārs, esfahān is called mokhālef, just as in Khorāsān where esfahān is also called mokhālef. In Transoxiana, zanguleh is called nahāvand. In the past, kuchak was
called *zirafkand* but at the present time this name has come to be obsolete, *kuchak* and *bozorg* are both called *kuchak*.\(^{39}\)

In the second half of the sixteenth century, an important development occurred in the Safavid modal system: the gradual emergence of a new modal category known as *gusheh*. Dowreh Beg Kerāmi, writing in Herat, refers to *gusheh* as the same modal entity already known as *tarkib*, and states that the term *gusheh* was mainly cultivated in the western regions of Iran, more specifically ‘Irāq-e ‘ajam (i.e. Isfahan, Ray, Qazvin and Kashan) and Fārs. He further states that:

> The inhabitants of ‘Irāq [-e ‘ajam] and Fārs invented the *gusheh* and maintained that it was somehow different from the twenty-four *sho’beh*. Those who were expert in this science deduced thirty-six [gushehs] and assigned a name to each one of these *tarkib*. Since further elaboration at this point is beyond the scope of our discussion, the subject will be confined to the description of the aforementioned *maqāms* and *sho’beh*. The truth is that, what will be invented can hardly be outside the scope of twelve *maqāms*, twenty-four *sho’beh* and six *āvāzes*. Of each *maqām*, two *sho’beh* are manifested, one from the lower register (pasti) and the other from the higher register (bolandi).\(^{40}\)

In the same period, Mir Şadr al-Din Moḥammad describes the *gusheh* as a short melody-type that can’t serve as the basis for composition. Yet it seems that by the time of his musical treatise, no conventional set of *gushehs* was established among practicing musicians in the capital.

> In addition to this, there are forty-eight *gushehs*, every two of which arose from a *sho’beh*, in the same way as *sho’beh* were produced from *maqāms*. The range of *gushehs* is not wide and they can hardly be a basis for various compositions (taṣānif); therefore, their names have been neglected in [theoretical] books. Some who have seen *Jāme’ al-alhān* informed us that the names of *gushehs* and their relations with *sho’beh* were all mentioned there. Since I have never seen that treatise and neither have I heard the names of more than a few *gushehs*, I am confined here to the names I knew:

\begin{itemize}
  \item *hojjat*, *bahār*, *golestān*, *mote’addi*, *neshāt*, *negārinak*, *ṭarabangiz*, *ruḥafzā*, *ghamzodā*, *hozzān* that is called *ikiyāt* in Fārs and ‘Irāq and is close to noruz-e ‘ajam. The next one is *nehāvand*, which is called *bayāti* by the inhabitants of Fārs and most of their songs are within the melodic confines of that *gusheh*. Indeed, it has a heavily ornamented (*shekofteh*) and delightful (*maṭbu’*) melody (*āhang*) and in some books it is mentioned among the *sho’beh*. If it were such, then it should be considered a *sho’beh* of *‘oshshāq* instead of *zāvoli*. This is because it sounds closer to *‘oshshāq* than any other *maqāms*.\(^ {41}\)
Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad further comments that gushehs were already known in previous centuries and that those who had access to Marāghi’s Jāme‘ ʿal-ḥān reported the names and correlation of gushehs with the twenty-four shoʿbehs. As for the number of gushehs, Kerāmi states that they are thirty-six, but Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad mentions them as being forty-eight, though he does not present a complete list. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the capital shifted to Isfahan, the gusheh was already an established concept incorporated into the court modal system.

A complete list of forty-eight gushehs was provided for the first time by Bāqiyā Nā’ini (d. c. 1640). Nā’ini’s account of Persian modal entities is very succinct. Nonetheless, in addition to providing a list of gushehs, he also asserts that the entire modal system was recognized as a hierarchical sequence of various components classified into some ninety melody-types or specific tunes (āhang) including 6 āvāzehs, 12 maqāms, 24 shoʿbehs, and 48 gushehs. The list of forty-eight gushehs in Zamzameh-ye vaḥdat is as follows:


In the first half of the seventeenth century, Āqā Moʿmen Moşanef, the chief of court musicians and composers in Isfahan, still denies the significance of the gusheh as an essential modal concept and subsequently rejects the inclusion of gushehs within the classical modes. He insists that the canonic system of twelve maqāms, six āvāzehs, and twenty-four shoʿbehs sufficiently encompasses all the modalities (āhang-e ʿsedā) of his own time and castigates those ‘inexperienced
musicians’ who tend to incorporate a set of forty-eight gushehs into the core of the modal system and ascribe their introduction and further development to ‘Abd al-Qâder Marâghi.44

By the beginning of the eighteenth century when Amir Khân Gorji, the last Safavid composer and music theorist, was compiling his musical treatise and song-text collection, the gusheh was unquestionably an established modal entity even in the context of court music. In his discussion of modes, Amir Khân identifies the āvâzeh as the main component of the modal system and refers to it as the ‘mother of melodies’ (umma al-nagham) with all other modal entities as its progeny (farzandân).45 For each āvâzeh he presents two associated maqâms, twenty-four sho’behs, and a number of gushehs. Amir Khân presents the components of the modal system within four classes of modes and melody-types as follow:46

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Āvâzeh</th>
<th>Maqām</th>
<th>Sho‘beh</th>
<th>Gusheh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gardâniyeh</td>
<td>râst</td>
<td>panjgâh</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>mobarqa’</td>
<td>basteh-esfahân</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>nayriz-e kabir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'oshshâq</td>
<td>zâbol</td>
<td>basteh-negâr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>neshâburakâr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>owj</td>
<td>hejâz-e bozorg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>nehâvand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>esfahân</td>
<td>nayriz</td>
<td>nahof-t-e shah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>neshâburak</td>
<td>nehâvand-e rumî</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>shahanshâhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hejâziye mokhâlef</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salmak</td>
<td>zanguleh</td>
<td>châhârgâh</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'ozzâl</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>navâ</td>
<td>nowruz-e khârâ</td>
<td>'erâq-e shâbbeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>esfahânak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>mâhur</td>
<td>bayât-e kord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>kârsâz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḥeṣār</td>
<td>ḥeṣār-ye ‘erāq</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ḥowr</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ruy-e ‘erāq</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mellānāzi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>maghlub</th>
<th>ruḥ al-arvāh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>zanām</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baḥr-e nāzok</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḥeṣārak</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ṭalq</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>zirafkan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>zirkesh-e ‘ashirān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bayāt</td>
<td>chahārgāh-e ‘ajam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rāvi</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>šabā</th>
<th>ḡodi</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mo‘zaliyāt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ashirān</td>
<td>ekiyāt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khojasteh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moḩayyer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>makhrujeh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dōgāh</td>
<td>majosti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dōgāh-e ‘ajam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| nowruz-e ‘ajam |                   |
| nowruz-e ‘arab |                   |
| nahoft        | roḥāb-e panjgāh  |
| homāyun    | māhur-e kobrā   |
|             | qarachehqāi        |

Table 3.5. The twelve maqāms and their related sho‘behs, āvāzeshs and gushehs in the treatise of Amir Khān Gorji.

The Modal System and its Organization in Safavid Persia

Analyzing the body of information on the modal system and offering a sense of melodic character for each category based on the accounts of treatises is not an easy matter. Even though music theorists attempt to describe certain aspects of modes and classify them as a coherent system, their
descriptions are not always intelligible enough for us to reconstruct a detailed structure and the relationship of assorted modal entities. Moreover, it is not clear to what extent the treatises were rehashing accounts from earlier sources or instead reflecting upon the practice of their own times. One should also consider the fact that music theory in general is not always congruent with actual practice. Nonetheless, these treatises and traces of music in later periods provide us with a wide range of data that can be synthesized and interpreted in a coherent appraisal.

Thus far we outlined the development of the modal system and the discussion around the modal entities in Safavid musical texts. Now we shall examine in more detail what *maqām* and other modal entities were in terms of the basic concept, their function in the musical repertoire and in performance, and their organization into the modal system.

*Maqām*

*Maqāms* are always characterized as the principle set of modes in Persian musical treatises, and two separate concepts are denoted by the term *maqām*. First, a *maqām* is a modulatory scheme theoretically consisting of a few segments including two *sho ‘behs*. Second, it signifies the original mode in this compound structure, which remains dominant throughout the performance.

The first and foremost distinguishing feature of each *maqām* seems to have been its scale. There are always twelve *maqāms*, and unlike their antecedent music theorists who mentioned *rāst* as the primary modal entity or, in their own words, ‘the mother of *maqāms* from which all other *maqāms* are derived,’ Safavid theorists mostly consider *hosayni* as being in that position. One theorist also divides the *maqāms* into two categories of challenging (*moshkel*) and straightforward (*āsān*).
A *maqām*, as a modulatory scheme, stereotypically began with a free-rhythmic exposition of the first mode with typical characteristic phrases.\(^4^9\) The *maqām* proper was indeed this section where the original mode was fully unfolded and developed. The act of unfolding the melody in this section was frequently referred to as ʿāghāz kardan (lit. to initiate) or *darāmad kardan* (lit. to enter), depending on different practices. Once the melodic configuration of the initial mode was foregrounded, the *maqām* was further expanded by modulating to the first or lower *sho’beh* in which a new mode with a distinct tonal center and characteristic phrases was introduced and elaborated. A return to the *maqām* was followed by the upper *sho’beh*, which marked the second modulation in the sequence. While the second *sho’beh* had its own melodic movements and characteristic phrases, it mostly explored an ambitus higher than that of the first *sho’beh*. After each modulation to the lower or upper *sho’beh*, the melody returned to the first mode to punctuate segments of *maqām* with some recognizable melodic phrases (*maḥṭṭs*). At length, the performance concluded with a conspicuous cadential phrase known as the ultimate *maḥṭṭ* (also called *forud*).\(^5^0\)

exposition of *maqām*—lower *sho’beh*—return to *maqām*—upper *sho’beh*—return to *maqām*—*maḥṭṭ*

This seems to have been the typical scheme of modal progression in the performance practice of every *maqām*. The associated ʾāvāzeh may have been interpolated at some point into this sequence. In fact, as will be discussed later, the ʾāvāzeh might have had a modulatory character being performed to move from one *maqām* to another. In that case, we might assume that every two *maqāms* were exclusively associated with one another, and that from one *maqām* one could only modulate to another specific *maqām* and vice-versa. However, this by no means indicates that a modulation to another *maqām* was always mandatory in performance.
In the middle of the sixteenth century, the structure of the hoary *maqām* system seems to have developed through synthesizing numerous elements of both rural and urban music. The development occurred largely in the *sho’beh* segments. Each *sho’beh* became expanded and enhanced by assimilating units derived from rural music, and also due to the creative input of outstanding musicians. A series of miscellaneous urban and rural melody-types and songs began to acquire classical features and receive recognition in the courts. In this process, the preexisting term *gusheh* was adopted to address various types of melodies rendered in *sho’beh* segments. Therefore, in keeping with the division prescribed for other entities, just as two *maqāms* were linked with every āvāzeh and two *sho’behs* were linked with every *maqām*, music theorists began to associate two *gushehs* with every *sho’beh*. Nevertheless, it is likely that the number of *gushehs* performed within the segment of each *sho’beh* was more than two.

\[
(\text{maqām})\rightarrow\text{lower sho’beh (gusheh 1&2)}\rightarrow\text{upper sho’beh (gusheh 1&2)}\rightarrow(\text{maqām})\rightarrow\text{maḥatt}
\]

While today we tend to consider the *maqām* as the modal system of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, for music theorists and musicians of that period it was more of a ‘standard performance format.’ Instructions for sequencing, selection and omission of modes and melody-types in the performance of a *maqām* were seldom prescribed or discussed by music theorists, and any arrangement of the internal structure of a *maqām* was evidently determined by the performer’s repertoire of melodic ideas, temperament and discretion. Nonetheless, there has always been a tendency to move gradually from lower to higher materials or to a climatic point, and then to return to the lower.

The term *darāmad*, as the introductory section of a musical piece or suite, was not used in the Timurid period; no reference to this term can be found in the treatises of Marāghi nor those of his immediate successors. From the mid-sixteenth century, however, some musicians began to
employ *darāmad*, referring to the opening section of both measured compositions and the free-rhythmic exposition of modes, while *āghāz* was still predominately in vogue.\(^{51}\) Likewise, the Arabic term *mahāṭ*, meaning ‘the ending of a piece’ was interchangeably used along the Persian term *forud* (descent) as early as the sixteenth century.\(^{52}\)

*Sho’beh*

The establishment of two *sho’behs* associated with every *maqām* can be traced back to the late fourteenth century, when a set of twenty-four *sho’behs* first appears in the treatises of Marāghi. Earlier, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, Qoṭb al-Din Shirāzi refers to nine *sho’behs* as an independent category, without linking them to the twelve *maqāms*. As for description of the *sho’beh*, he writes, a “*shu’ba* can also be defined by induction as a specific melodic movement upon the notes of a [given] *parda*, scale.”\(^ {53}\) The nine *sho’behs* as mentioned by Qoṭb al-Din Shirāzi are: *dōgāh, segāh, chahārgāh, panjgāh, zavoli, ruy-e ‘erāq, mobarqa’, māye*, and *shahnāz*.\(^ {54}\)

In the gradual and continuous evolution of the *maqām* system, the number of *sho’behs* ostensibly increased throughout the fourteenth century, and they were incorporated and finally established as modal segments into the performance practice of *maqāms*. However, it is hard to assume that the twenty-four *sho’behs* each revealed melodic characteristics that distinguished them from other modal entities and that they all fitted into a single category of modes. By way of further illustration, we may look at some of the dynamics of *maqāms* and *sho’behs* based on the account of the *Taqsim al-naghamāt*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>rāst</th>
<th>G F♯ E F♯ G</th>
<th>G F♯ E D C D E F♯ G</th>
<th>(lower <em>sho’beh</em>)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>mobarqa</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>d c B− A G A B− c d</td>
<td>(upper <em>sho’beh</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>panjgāh</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>eṣfahān</em></td>
<td>d f e d c♯ c B− c B−</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>nayriz</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>G d c♯ B− A G</td>
<td>(lower <em>sho’beh</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maqām</td>
<td>sho’behs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neshāburak</td>
<td>d e d c B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḥejāz</td>
<td>B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; c# B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A G F# G F#</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>segāh</td>
<td>B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A G A B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḥešār</td>
<td>f# f f# g a g f# d c B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘erāq</td>
<td>A B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A G F#</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maghlub</td>
<td>f# e d c B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A G F#</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ruy-e ‘erāq</td>
<td>A c B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rahāvi</td>
<td>A B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; c# B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; c B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A G# A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nowruz-e ‘arab</td>
<td>A B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; B d B B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nowruz-e ‘ajam</td>
<td>f e d c B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zanguleh</td>
<td>c c# c B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chahārgāh</td>
<td>c B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A G A B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; c</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ozzāl</td>
<td>g f# f d c</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘oshshāq</td>
<td>e d c B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zāvol</td>
<td>e d c d c</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>owj</td>
<td>b&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; a g f# e</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>navā</td>
<td>c B A G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nowruz-e khārā</td>
<td>A B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; c c# c B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>māhur</td>
<td>g f# e d c# B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>busalik</td>
<td>e d g f# e d c d e</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ashirān</td>
<td>c d e d c A G F# E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nowruz-e šabbā</td>
<td>e f# g a g f# e</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bozorg</td>
<td>e d f# e d c#</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homāyün</td>
<td>d c# B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; c# B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nahoft</td>
<td>a g f# e d c# B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuchak</td>
<td>A e c c# c B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rakb</td>
<td>A c B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bayāti</td>
<td>c c# c B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḥosayni</td>
<td>e d e B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; A B&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; c d e</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dōgāh</td>
<td>A G A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moḩayyer</td>
<td>g c’ b&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; a g f# e d</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.6. The dynamics of maqāms and sho’behs in the Taqsim al-naghamāt.
Examining the scales and melodic contours of *maqāms* and *sho’behs* and their relations, we can make the following observations:

1. Modes (*maqāms* and *sho’behs*) can be divided into two major groups: those using only basic scale degrees (*parde-ye moṭlaq*) and those using secondary scale degrees (*parde-ye moqayyad*).
2. The seven modes of *rāst*, *dōgāh*, *segāh*, *chahārgāh*, *panjgāh*, *ḥosayni* and *maghlub* were all based on basic scale degrees, commencing and ending on the scale degree of their own namesakes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Scale Degrees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>rāst</em></td>
<td>G F♯ E F♯ G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dōgāh</em></td>
<td>A G A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>segāh</em></td>
<td>B♭ A G A B♭ c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>chahārgāh</em></td>
<td>c B♭ A G A B♭ c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>panjgāh</em></td>
<td>d c B♭ A G A B♭ c d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>maghlub</em></td>
<td>f♯ e d c B♭ A G F♯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ḥosayni</em></td>
<td>e d c B♭ A B♭ c d e</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. The four *maqāms* of *rāst*, *‘erāq*, *busalik* and *ḥosayni* were based on basic scale degrees.
4. The fourteen *sho’behs* of *mobarqa*, *panjgāh*, *neshāburak*, *segāh*, *maghlub*, *ruy-e ‘erāq*, *chahārgāh*, *zāvol*, *owj*, *‘ashirān*, *rakh*, *dōgāh*, *moḥayyer* were also based on basic scale degrees.

In his article on ‘Mode’ in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Harold Powers describes mode as a term applied to a spectrum of entities whose extremes could be defined as ‘particularized scale’ and ‘generalized tune,’ while the position of assorted modal entities in different cultures, or even within a particular system, may vary on the scale-tune spectrum. In view of Powers’ theory, the twelve *maqāms* and twenty-four *sho’behs* exhibit more affinity with ‘scale’ than with ‘tune,’ especially when we consider the directional changes in representations of scale. For one thing, each *sho’beh* had the capacity or flexibility to accommodate a certain number of *gushehs* within its melodic boundaries. Moreover, *sho’behs* were used as models for solo improvisation and bases for composition throughout the Safavid period, hence they seem to have
been closer to the concept of ‘scale’ with apparently certain characteristic phrases. In all likelihood sho’behs were self-sufficient modes that were either rendered in isolation or in conjunction with the related maqāms. Likewise, a composition could be entirely or partly in the melodic confines of a sho’beh. Among the fifty-four vocal compositions in Āqā Mo’men Moṣannef’s song-text collection, only seventeen compositions are in maqāms, while thirty-two compositions are exclusively written in sho’behs.56

While the names of twelve maqāms were generally consistent in Safavid musical texts, only a semi-conventional set of sho’behs was affiliated with them. In other words, the sho’behs to be rendered in a maqām differed among practicing musicians and in various regional schools. Hence, music theorists often mention differences of opinion among musicians regarding the selection of sho’behs and their association with maqāms. They also refer to frequent discrepancies in what was mentioned in theoretical treatises of their predecessors and what was common in the performance practices of their own time, as in the following remark by Mir Šadr al-Din Moḥammad:

There is a difference of opinion over sho’behs of ‘erāq. Some practicing musicians maintain that its first sho’beh is mokhālef and the next one, according to [theoretical] books, is maghlub, nevertheless, they call maghlub ‘owj’ which is wrong for several reasons. For one reason, in theoretical books and treatises mokhālef is mentioned neither as a sho’beh of ‘erāq nor as a sho’beh at all. If there is a difference between mokhālef and segāh, it concerns their gushehs. The sho’beh that arose from the lower register of ‘erāq is ruy-e ‘erāq, and all practicing musicians have a consensus on this issue. For another reason everybody, pro and con, agrees on the fact that the sho’beh based on the upper register of ‘erāq is maghlub and there is no other name mentioned for it in authoritative books. Nobody has called it owj in [musical] writings. In fact, owj and zāvoli—called zābol by lay musicians—are sho’behs of ‘oshshāq, the former arising from its upper register (tizi) and the latter from its lower register (narmi).57

Another significant issue was the number of sho’behs associated with each maqām. Najm al-Din Kowkabi Bokhāri (d. 1535), who tended more to codify a living performance tradition rather than
to present a complete and perfect system, informs us that according to practicing musicians, *sho'beh* of each *maqām* varied in number and the exact association of two *sho'behs* with every *maqām* was mainly to present a rational and balanced system for its protection (*moḥāfezat*). He further states that in practice a *maqām* could contain between one to four *sho'behs*. As two examples, he mentions *rāst*, which with more melodic richness contained four *sho'behs*, and *navā*, perhaps a less prominent *maqām*, which was only associated with one *sho'beh*.

However, the association of more than two *sho'behs* with a *maqām* is sometimes even more complicated than it seems. Evidence suggests that, at least during the sixteenth century, in the actual performance of a *maqām*, a performer was at liberty to deviate from the standard format and modulate to other *sho'behs* that were extraneous to the original *maqām*. The author of *Taqsim al-naghamāt* provides aesthetic guidelines and formulas for such modulations. For instance, he writes:

Connecting (*rabṭ dādan*) two *sho'behs* of *rāst*, performers must commence with *mobarqa* and after that elaborate (*sayr konand*) on *rāst* and from there modulate to *panjgāh*. This is the way (*tariq*) of combining them. However, it is also appropriate here to perform *esfahān*, *nayriz*, *neshāburak*, *hejāz-e tork*, *salmak*, *gardāniyeh*, and *māhur*. It is better to return in conclusion (*forud āvarand*) to *rāst*.

Connecting two *sho'behs* of *esfahān*, performers must commence with *nayriz* and after that elaborate on *esfahān* and from there modulate to *neshāburak*. This is the way of combining them. However, it is also appropriate here to perform *rāst*, *panjgāh*, *neshāburak*, *salmak*, *shahnāz*, *gardāniyeh* and *māhur*. It is better to perform in conclusion the same mode they commenced with at the beginning.

Evidently, the meticulous and systematic exposition of a *maqām* and its two *sho'behs* was something prescribed only by tradition. As the above passage shows, certain modulations within the guidelines of the *maqām* were not only accepted practice but sometimes even encouraged by musical authorities.
Āvāzeh

In general, the concept of āvāzeh appears in all Safavid musical texts as a set of six separate entities, including gardāniyeh, salmak, gavesht, māyeh, nowruz (or nowruz-e asl) and shahnāz. Most of the sources present an unclear delineation of the melodic features of āvāzeh, and its relationship with other modal entities often remains ambiguous. In some sixteenth and seventeenth-century texts, āvāzeh is described as a type of mixed or hybrid mode, containing melodic elements of two maqāms. The anonymous author of Dar bayān-e ‘elm-e musīqi va dānestan-e sho’abāt-e ou, for instance, states that “an āvāzeh was formed when two maqāms meet at a certain point and display the same [melodic] features.”\(^6\) He emphasizes that “if the āvāzeh was rendered before the initiation of the maqām, the performance was improper and irregular.”\(^6\)

Dowreh Beg Kerāmi states that earlier music theorists initially arranged the maqāms and later derived one āvāzeh from every two maqāms. He defines the āvāzeh as a mode commencing with the first relevant maqām and making reference to the second maqām (darāmad-e ān az maqāmi ast va shāhed az maqāmi).\(^6\) His contemporary Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad Qazvini also states that an āvāzeh often combined melodic elements of two maqāms (morakkab az dō maqām ast). However, he confirms that the distinction of āvāzeh from the two principal maqāms and, likewise, its relation to them was a difficult task that required careful analysis.\(^6\) The description of Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad Qazvini suggests two different assumptions.

As stated before, one could imagine āvāzeh as a modulatory scheme, commonly capable of moving between two specific maqāms. Accordingly, in a more standard format every two maqāms were connected with one another, and from one maqām a performer could only modulate to one specific maqām. The author of Taqsim al-naghamāt, who confirms this quality of āvāzeh,
provides a guideline for modulation between two *maqāms* through the associated āvāzeh as follows.\textsuperscript{64}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>āvāzeh</th>
<th>Key Signature</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rāst</td>
<td>G F♯ E F♯ G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gardāniyeh</td>
<td>g f♯ e d c B− A G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'oshshāq</td>
<td>e d c B− A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'erāq</td>
<td>A B− A G F♯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mā‘c</td>
<td>A G A B− A G F♯ E F♯ G F♯ E D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuchak</td>
<td>A e c c♯ c B− A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zanguleh</td>
<td>c c♯ c B− A B−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salmak</td>
<td>d c♯ c c♯ A c♯ c d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ešfahān</td>
<td>d f e d c♯ c B− c B−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḥosayni</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>nowruz</td>
<td>A B− c♯ d c♯ B− A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>busalik</td>
<td>e d g f♯ e d c d e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḥejāz</td>
<td>B− c♯ B− A G F♯ G F♯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gavesht</td>
<td>B− e d e d c B−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>navā</td>
<td>c B A G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rahāvi</td>
<td>A B− c♯ B− c B− A B− A G♯ A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shahnāz</td>
<td>e d c♯ c B− A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bozorg</td>
<td>e d f♯ e d c♯</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is also conceivable that āvāzehs have been a set of independent modes, each traditionally incorporated and rendered in conjunction with more than one *maqām*. In the performance practice of a *maqām*, however, incorporating the associated āvāzeh was of course common, but modulating to other neighboring āvāzehs could also take place. This conclusion is further confirmed in the *Taqsim al-naghamāt* where the author gives aesthetic guidelines for modulations.\textsuperscript{65} Likewise, Āqā Mo’men’s association of six āvāzehs with the canonic set of twelve *maqāms* is somewhat different from those of other music theorists. While discussing the relationships between āvāzehs and *maqāms*, he connects each āvāzeh with a rather different pair of *maqāms*. For example, he
associates gavesht with ḥejāz and zanguleh, and gardāniyyeh with esfahān and rāst, whereas in other Safavid sources gavesht is predominantly associated with navā and ḥejāz, and gardāniyyeh with rāst and ʿoshshāq.66

Characteristic Melodic Phrases

Besides the scale which included changes of direction, an important distinguishing feature of a mode for practicing musicians was evidently its characteristic melodic phrases. Safavid music theorists were keen about the proper exposition of modes and refer to this topic in many instances. As mentioned earlier, Bāqiyā Nā’ini somehow states that each entity with a proper name, including maqāms, āvāzehs, shoʿbehs, and gushehs, was mainly recognized through its āhang, a term that in a technical sense can be interpreted as characteristic motives or specific melodic phrases.67 Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad also employs the same term and, for example, in the case of bayāti mentions that “it has a heavily ornamented (shekofteh) and delightful (maṭbuʿ) āhang.”68

Bāqiyā Nā’ini and Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad do not provide further information on this issue; but there are other sources that allude to significant points. The author of Dar bayān-e ʿelm-e musiqi va dānestan-e shoʿabāt-e ou states that the cadential phrase of mobarqaʿ, one of the shoʿbehs of rāst, contained four passages of maḥāṭfs (in spoken language spelled out as maḥads), and if a musician was unaware of their proper rendition, its āhang would be unconventional and anomalous.69 The same author, while mentioning various gushehs, claims that some retained characteristic ascending phrases (owj) and some contained characteristic descents (maḥāṭfs).70

In the same period the term sayr, which was frequently used by Ottoman Turkish musicians, was also employed by Persian music theorists, though apparently in reference to both melodic progression and elaboration.71
Since the Timurid period, melodic configuration has also been determined by the concept of *tahrir*, which in recent literature on music is sometimes merely interpreted as ‘melismatic vocalization’ or a ‘particular technique involving glottal closure.’ Yet musicians viewed *tahrir* as the most essential feature of a modal entity. In fact, every modal entity is usually considered as having specific and distinguishing characteristic phrases that are often expressed and outlined in its opening, middle and concluding *tahrir* passages. Moreover, *tahrir* is not confined to vocal music; it is possible to render instrumentally and it serves as basis for interpretive melodic improvisation.

*Tarkib and Gusheh*

In his *Ketāb al-adwār*, Ṣafi al-Din Ormavi, the founder of the Systematist school, presents two main classes of modes—twelve *shodud* and six *āvāzāt*—that apparently accounted for a substantial portion of the modal repertoire in the thirteenth century. He also mentions another group of modes called *morakkabs* (compounds) and explains that in theory, the scales of these modes were formed in each case using a tetrachord and pentachord species characteristic of two distinct modes. Subsequently, Qoṭb al-Din Shirāzi uses the term *maqām* as a general category that includes twelve *shodud*, six *āvāzāt*, nine *sho‘ab*, and the miscellaneous *murakkabāt* or—as he calls this last category—*tarkib* (combination). As Owen Wright observes, *tarkib* in *Dorrat al-tāj* was a diverse category of assorted modal entities, consisting of the elements of mostly two modes.

During the fifteenth century, Timurid music theorists did not include *tarkibs* or *morakkabāt* in their hierarchical systems. In fact, Marāghi and especially two subsequent music theorists, Owbahī and Banā‘ī, make no provisions for *morakkabāt* in their own treatises and they only mention some modes as *tarkibs* or *morakkabāt* en passant.
By the sixteenth century, however, the terms morakkab and torkib came to be widely used by both music theorists and practicing musicians in Central Asia, Anatolia, and probably some parts of Persia. The prominent Bukharan music theorist and musician Najm al-Din Kowkabi defines morakkabāt as a category containing elements of either two maqāms, or two sho‘ehs, or one maqām and one sho‘eh. Kowkabi enumerates twenty-four morakkabs and assigns for each one an opening mode or bonyād (lit. foundation, nucleus) and a closing mode or qarār (lit. settling onto the ground).79

In the same period, the Ottoman music theorist Seydi (c. 1500) also exhibits the fact that torkib has been a significant modal structure in the early emergence of the Ottoman musical tradition. Seydi’s description is similar to that of Kowkabi. He mentions the concepts of bonyād and qarār in relation to torkibs and shows that, in addition to the compound structures stated by Kowkabi, a torkib may also emerge through the combination of two āvāzehs, a maqām and an āvāzeh, or a sho‘eh and an āvāzeh. He further names fifty-eight torkibs that were common in musical practice of his own time, sixteen of which appear in Kowkabi’s musical treatise as well. However, rather than listing the two constituent modal entities, Seydi presents a loose melodic contour for each torkib. The list of torkibs in his treatise is as follows:

During the seventeenth century, *terkib* came to be the second most important modal category in Ottoman Turkish music. In his musical treatise, Demetrius Cantemir (d. 1723), who like Qotb al-Din Shirāzi takes the term *maqām* as the superordinate category for mode, divides the *maqāms* into two subsets of *mofrad* (single) and *morakkab* (compound).\(^81\) According to Feldman, Cantemir makes a distinction between the categories of compound *maqām* (*murekkeb makam*) and combination (*terkib*). While the former contained only five members, the latter group had infinite variations. Throughout his musical treatise, Cantemir usually names twenty standard *terkibs* and he also presents the notation of *peşrevs* in some of them.\(^82\) In the sixth chapter of his treatise, he introduces *terkibs* as follows:

In the third chapter, it was mentioned that the *terkibs* were twenty in number but there is no doubt that there is no end to the *terkibs* of music. Nevertheless, due to the fact that a number of *terkibs* are more prominent than others, among the musicians it is a widespread error that they are named “*makam*.” Due to the exaggeration of the vocalists, they claim that since *bestes* and *nakš* were composed of them, they have given them the name “*makam*.” Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that every *terkib* is subordinate to a major makam (ca. 1700: VI:50).\(^83\)

In Persia, the application of the terms *morakkab* and *tarkib* seems to have been somewhat broader than it was in neighboring regions. Persian musicians evidently used these two terms, often referring to a vocal modulatory scheme containing elements of multiple *maqāms* rather than specific compound modes. This interpretation of modulatory or compound structure doesn’t seem to have been a Safavid invention and in fact can be traced back to Marāghi at the beginning of the fifteenth century when he writes:

After having an awareness of the tonic and finalis, singing can be of two types: simple (*mofrad*) and compound (*morakkab*). The simple type is when the entire singing is for instance in *pardeh-yeye ḥosayni* and [in the course of performance] no *pardeh, āvāzeh, sho’beh* or any other melodic modes (*davāye-ye digar*) is added to it. The compound type is when they combine it with one, two, three or more *ajnās* and *jomu*’. They might even combine all the *davāyer* in one session of singing and that is determined by the temperament and discretion of the performer.\(^84\)
In Safavid musical treatises, references to *morakkabs* or *tarkibs* as a ‘category of *maqām*’ are very rare. Bāqiyā Nā’ini is the only music theorist who refers to *tarkib* when he describes it as a modulatory structure, juxtaposing melodic phrases (*tahrirs*) of a few *maqāms.*

Evidence shows that between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries in Iran the term *tarkib* continued to refer to a ‘vocal modulatory scheme.’ Likewise, a competent singer capable of making extended modulations to multiple *maqāms* was commonly known as a *tarkib-band.* This concept of the Safavid *tarkib,* however, is closely related to what is mentioned in Cantemir’s treatise, particularly when the latter states that “there is no end to the *terkibs* of music,” and here he is simply referring to the modulatory character of *tarkibs* in the performance of music, rather than to *tarkibs* as compound modes.

While in post-Timurid Persia the term *tarkib* was not employed as a distinct category in the same way as it probably was in Transoxiana and Anatolia, another modal category called *gusheh* emerged that gradually came to be integrated into the canonic *maqām* system. As noted previously, Dowreh Beg Kerāmi, a Safavid music theorist in Herat, claims that the term *gusheh* was frequently used in the western regions of Persia, more specifically in ‘Irāq-e ‘ajam and Fārs, and that it was to some extents synonymous with *tarkib.* Further evidence also indicates that the standard number of *gushehs* in Persian treatises and of *tarkibs* in Ottoman sources was often forty-eight, and several mode names that were listed in the Ottoman sources as *tarkib* were recognized among Persian musicians as *gusheh.*

Nevertheless, claiming that *tarkib* and *gusheh* were practically the same contributes nothing but further confusion to our understanding of each concept. Evidently there were some parallels between the miscellaneous Persian *gushehs* and Ottoman-Transoxanian *tarkibs* in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Yet just like *tarkibs, gushehs* were not one type of modal
entity. As the names of gushehs imply, some of them were probably tarkibs containing elements of more than one mode such as ḡejāzi-ye mokhālef or ḡejāzi-ye ‘erāq. Some, such as bayāt-e kord, bayāt-e tork, and ḡabarī, were recognized as folk-derived vocal genres.91 A few gushehs were modal types or compositions borrowed from neighboring traditions such as nehāvand-e rumi, qarachehqā-ye rumi and sepehr-e hendi.92 And of course a number of gushehs could have been short compositions or aggregates of particular phrases developed from idiosyncratic styles of prominent musicians, as this was the typical characteristic feature of some gushehs in the nineteenth-century Persian repertoire.

Insufficient evidence, in particular a lack of notated melodies and modal descriptions, prevents us from being able to delineate thoroughly the structure and typology of gushehs in the Safavid period. At the same time, the Safavid and modern concepts of gusheh cannot be considered as entirely the same thing. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, gushehs were regarded as certain melody or modal types integrated within the performance formats of maqām, āvāzeh, and sho’beh, whereas, in the twentieth-century, the generic term gusheh was indiscriminately applied to all modal entities within the dastgāh system. Yet, as will be discussed later, the Safavid concept of gusheh might have been closer to its nineteenth-century counterpart.

It is fair to say that throughout the sixteenth century, the hierarchical maqām, āvāzeh, and sho’beh were considered the established modal components while at the same time the modal system was continuously being influenced by numerous urban and rural elements, including the creative inputs of musicians, folk-derived song-types and genres, and borrowed modal and melody types from neighboring traditions. The maqām system subsequently began expanding through the assimilation of some of these elements that had come to be conceptualized as assorted vocal and instrumental melody types and were labeled by that point as gushehs. Accordingly, by the middle
of the seventeenth century, a number of gushehs began to acquire classical features and came gradually to be integrated into the maqām system as subsets of sho’behs. In general, it may be stated that the integration of gushehs was not considered anomalous, if they were executed with taste and if the image of the original maqām was not totally obscured.

Therefore, it seems that any melody or modal types technically rendered in urban music that could not be situated within the well-defined modal categories of maqām, āvāzeh, and sho’beh, were recognized and labeled by musicians—and subsequently by music theorists—as gusheh. The choice and interpolation of gushehs within the repertoire was primarily determined by the performers’ melodic ideas, ethnic background, and discretion. Performers or stylistic schools associated with particular urban centers presumably had developed and selected their own collections of gushehs. This is in fact evident from the multiple assortments of gushehs in musical treatises of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The nomenclature of gushehs in the treatise of Amir Khān is rather different from the list of gushehs in the treatise of Baqīyā Na’îni and the anonymous Dar bayān-e ‘elm-e musiqi va dānestan-e sho’abāt-e ou. Several other music treatises such as Bahjat al-ruḥ also present a rather different set of names for gushehs. Nonetheless, it is mentioned that the arrangement of forty-eight gushehs has received its final impetus from the contribution of Serāj al-Dīn Moḥammad Ghavvāş (probably a seventeenth-century musician).

To a large extent, instrumentalists and sometimes vocalists were more responsible than composers for the introduction and cultivation of gushehs into the urban music repertoire. Sixteenth and seventeenth-century court composers still wrote their compositions in the melodic confines of the twelve maqāms, six āvāzehs, and twenty-four sho’behs and there was a substantial amount of dispute among the musicians regarding the adoption of gushehs in that period. As mentioned earlier, Mir Ṣadr al-Dīn Moḥammad opines that a gusheh could not be used as the basis
for composition. Likewise, Āqā Mo’men claims that the canonic *maqāms*, *āvāzehs*, and *sho’behs* contained all the modal entities of the time and criticizes those musicians who incorporate *gushehs* into their own repertoire.

All in all, the incorporation of *gushehs* into the modal system and court repertoire somehow indicates that while in theory *maqām* was discussed as a rational construction devised and revised by music theorists, in practice it was more a traditional assemblage of musical entities employed and retained by the practicing musicians. At a broader level, the accretion of *gushehs* certainly enriched the performance palette of Persian music from many perspectives and rendered it distinct from the performance practice of neighboring traditions particularly in Central Asia and Ottoman regions.

*Shadd*

Writers discussing the modal system in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries generally acknowledge that what Persians called *pardeh* was predominantly referred to as *shadd* by Arabs and the two terms were almost synonymous. Nonetheless, during the fourteenth century, *shadd* appears in Persian musical texts referring to another modal structure as well. The first reference to this new concept is mentioned in the epilogue of *Jāme’ al-ḥān* where Marāghi identifies four *shadds* as modulatory schemes (*tarkib-e naghamāt-e davāyer*), each performed through an unusual tuning on the ‘ud. Labeling them as *shadds* of *ruḥ* (soul), ṣabā (caressing breeze, stirring yet soothing) and *khᵛāb* (sleep), he makes it clear that the main purpose of rendering these modulatory schemes was to generate certain emotions in the audience and ultimately move the listeners to tears, make them laugh, or put them to sleep. According to Marāghi, the emotions and feelings
associated with these shadds could be intensified if the performer would also set the melodies to appropriate poems.95

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, four modulatory schemes known as shadds are also occasionally mentioned in musical treatises and their performances seem to have been common in both Persia and Central Asia.96 In Safavid musical texts the four shadds are mostly identified as rāst, dogāh, mokhālef and chahārgāh (ruh). In an anonymous musical treatise included in the Codex of Amir Khān Gorji, the description of shadd reads as follows:

Know that there are four shadd: (1) rāst, (2) dogāh, (3) mokhālef and (4) chahārgāh. The rules and sequence of this practical technique (‘elm) are such that when an instrumentalist or singer begins performing, he commences the shadd with dogāh, and from there he proceeds to ḥeṣār and from ḥeṣār to dogāh-e hosayni and from there to ‘ashirān and from there comes to moḥayyer and from there exhibits kuchak and from there proceeds to bozorg and from there to nowruz-e ‘ajam and from there goes to hosayni and dogāh and concludes the shadd. This practical technique was established essentially to please honored individuals (bozorgān).

The second shadd is called rāst. The performer of the maqām begins the shadd with rāst and from there ascends to panjgāh, after exhibiting salmak, he proceeds to esfahān, nayriz and returns to rāst and exhibits ‘oshshāq, from there he goes to navā and māhur. From māhur he goes to bayāt and from there comes to navā and exhibits ‘oshshāq, then he goes to neshāburak and from there to nowruz-e ‘arab and from there to basteh-negār and from there to māhur and returns to panjgāh and rāst while he concludes the shadd.

The third shadd is mokhālef. When [the performer] begins the shadd in mokhālef, from there he goes to ‘erāq, from there ascends to segāh and proceeds to hejāz and comes to gardāniyeh. From gardāniyeh he proceeds to ‘erāq and concludes the shadd in mokhālef.

The fourth shadd is called shadd-e ruh and that is chahārgāh. [The performer] begins the shadd in chahārgāh, and from there proceeds to ‘ozzāl and ascends to chahārgāh again and from there to nowruz and from there comes to bozorg and ‘ozzāl. Returning to chahārgāh, he exhibits zanguleh, comes to rakb and from there to bayāt and ‘ajam, and from there to neshāburak, ‘erāq, mokhālef and finally goes to chahārgāh and concludes the shadd.97

A few points can be made about shadd between the fourteenth and early eighteenth centuries. During the Timurid period shadd were comprised of a sequence of modal and melodic units performed in such a way as to evoke pleasure or sadness, or to put listeners to sleep. As Marāghi
specifies, *shadds* were performed mostly for a refined audience (*sāme`ān-e sāheb dhowq*) and made prodigious demands upon the listener. While in the Safavid period *shadds* were rendered in special gatherings for respected individuals, it is not clear that the effects or actions attributed to them earlier were still retained and were part of their characteristics. Nonetheless, one of the *shadds* continued to be called *shadd-e ruḥ* in this period. Finally, we may assume that performing *shadds* mostly required the expertise of classically trained musicians especially those who were invited to perform in the gatherings of elite listeners.

**The Eighteenth Century: The Modal System in Transition**

There is no doubt that the eighteenth century is the murkiest period for Persian music. Many musical treatises show that the hierarchical *maqām* system was in decline from many perspectives while a number of modal entities coexisted in this period.

As discussed earlier, the twelve *maqāms*, six *āvāzechs*, twenty-four *sho`behs* and finally forty-eight *gushehs* formed a system of modes that was practiced, upheld, and venerated largely by music theorists and court musicians for more than three centuries. In the first quarter of the eighteenth century with the siege of Isfahan by Afghan invaders, the city was repeatedly sacked and the Safavid court ultimately collapsed in 1736. As a result, the political, economic, and cultural glory of the capital began to decline and court musicians who were once serious practitioners of art music abandoned the profession or moved to other cities. This had repercussions for many long-established aspects of music, including the modal system, rhythmic cycles, and compositional genres.
The Turkish-Armenian musician Tanbūri Harutin, who lived in Iran between 1736 and 1738, reports that Persian musicians used a terminology referring to scale degrees and compares it with the system that was practiced at the same time in Ottoman music (Table 3.7).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nasimi</th>
<th>Taqsim al-naghamāt</th>
<th>Harutin</th>
<th>Ottoman Music</th>
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Table 3.7. Names of scale degrees in Persian and Ottoman musical sources between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.

Harutin’s description particularly in cases of ɾāst and ḥosayni, may indicate that the connection of maqāms with scale degrees was no longer recognized in the first half of the eighteenth century. In fact, either Harutin presents the account of a stratum of music which was not in essence classical or embedded in court tradition, or otherwise the maqām system had undergone substantial developments by then.

After the collapse of Isfahan, those musicians who continued to be active in urban centers and particularly in the camp of Nāder don’t seem to have been extensively trained in court music and therefore were not strictly adhering to standards of maqām tradition. In fact, lay performers and courtesans in Persian culture have long been known as being the major exponents of taṣrif and dance tunes, and hence they were insensitive and even careless about the meticulously correct exposition and elaboration of maqām and its sub-modes. Moreover, they did not employ exactly the same nomenclature that was prevailing among the theorists and court musicians in reference to different categories of mode.
From the beginning of the eighteenth century if not earlier, the two modal categories of \textit{maqām} and \textit{sho’beh}, that were closer to the ‘scale’ end of the scale-tune spectrum, were presumably referred to in semi-classical contexts as \textit{āvāz} or \textit{āvāzeh}, whereas \textit{gusheh} as a separate category still retained its name. In that case, a parallel modal system comprising the two categories of \textit{āvāz} and \textit{gusheh} has coexisted in practice with the older system. In this parallel system \textit{āvāzs}, just like \textit{maqāms}, were performed in sequences of units integrated with various \textit{gushehs} and, at the same time, their melodic materials were used as bases for both improvisation and composition.

While surviving musical treatises from the Safavid period largely deal with the classical \textit{maqām} and its sub-modes, it is hard to establish how far back the term \textit{āvāz} had been used as a modal category. The situation seems further perplexing when we find that \textit{āvāz} has often had multiple connotations in Persian culture. Nonetheless, \textit{āvāz} as a category of mode appears in musical texts at least as early as the thirteenth century.$^{102}$

In the first half of the eighteenth century, the authors of musical treatises still follow the long established theoretical guidelines in introducing the principles of the modal system as \textit{maqāms}, \textit{āvāzehs}, and \textit{sho’ehs}. References to \textit{maqāms} and \textit{sho’ehs} can be found in non-technical literature as well.$^{103}$ Yet it is not clear whether the compilers of these texts were reporting on the performance practice of their own time or just rehashing earlier sources. It seems that the idea of \textit{maqāms} and \textit{sho’ehs} as being the austere, classic, and timeless set of modes was still current among music cognoscenti and scholars while lay musicians simply referred to modes as \textit{āvāz}. Clear evidence of this approach is provided by Harutin who, as a short-term resident of Iran in the first half of the eighteenth century, used the term \textit{āvāz} or \textit{āvāzeh} as a synonym for \textit{maqām}.$^{104}$

In the second half the eighteenth century, when the capital was transferred to Shiraz, the repertoire of \textit{āvāz} kept developing through assimilating various urban and folk melodic elements
including melody and modal types, as well as vocal and instrumental genres. It is conceivable that some of the folk-based and semi-classical modes that later came to be included in the nineteenth-century repertoire of radif such as shur, dastan-e ‘arab, afshari, dashti, shushti, bakhtiyari, dashtestani, hajian, and hejaz-e baghdadi, that are not mentioned in Safavid musical texts, were likely introduced into urban music repertoire in this period. In the early eighteenth century, what was recognized as āvāz was probably a loose and informal version of the Safavid maqāms and sho’behs, as well as some vernacular and folk-derived modes and vocal genres. However, by the early nineteenth century the urban repertoire had already developed and certain modes such as shur, rohab, shushti, and mansuri, evolved into mature āvāzs with clearly defined characteristics.

The Emergence of Dastgāh

Musicians and ethnomusicologists today usually define dastgāh in terms of seven or twelve modal complexes or multi-modal cycles. Hormoz Farhat proposes the following definition for the concept of dastgāh as performed in the modern practice of Persian music:

Two separate ideas are addressed by the dastgāh concept. It identifies a set of pieces, traditionally grouped together, most of which have their own individual modes. It also stands for the modal identity of the initial piece in the group. This mode has a position of dominance as it is brought back frequently, throughout the performance of the group of pieces, in the guise of cadential melodic patterns.

Accordingly, a dastgāh signifies both the title of a grouping of modes, of which there are twelve, and the initial mode presented in each group.

A closer examination, in fact, indicates that the modern dastgāh resembles the seventeenth-century maqām in many ways. Both maqām and dastgāh are modulatory schemes that follow more or less the same form of melodic progression. Both begin with an exposition of the first mode called


*darāmad* followed by a series of *sho’beh/āvāz* and *gusheh*. Throughout the performance of both *maqām* and *dastgāh*, the first mode recurs at the conclusion of every *sho’beh/āvāz* and various sequences are punctuated with a cadential melodic phrase called *forud*. While the number of *maqāms* was always twelve, there was also a tendency to maintain this symbolic number within the arrangement of *dastgāhs* and their associated modes (*mota’aleqāt*).

Be that as it may, *maqām*, *sho’beh*, *shadd*, *āvāz* and *dastgāh* coexisted during the eighteenth century and *dastgāh* emerged mainly out of a musical system whose main modal entities were still referred to as *maqām* and *sho’beh*. In order to understand the origin and evolution of *dastgāh* up to its final conception in the beginning of the twentieth century, we shall examine the musical sources of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in more detail. The accounts furnished by these sources exhibit at times ambiguities in the usage of the terms *maqām* and *dastgāh*, yet provide us with significant information by means of which we can examine the trajectory of these musical concepts.

Explicit references to *dastgāh* appear first in some late Safavid musical treatises. The *Dar bayān-e ‘elm- musiqi va dānestan-e sho’abāt-e ou* seems to be the earliest musical text to mention this term. While describing the sequences of *sho’behs* and *gushehs* within the twelve *maqāms*, the author makes a distinction between the modal entities that have acquired the character of *dastgāh* (*ṣāheb-e dastgāh*) and those that lacked *dastgāh* (*bi dastgāh*) or lacked a substantial character of *dastgāh* (*dastgāh chandāni*). He practically shows that by *dastgāh* he means a free-rhythmic exposition of modal entities followed by one or two metric compositional genres based on the same melodic characteristics.107 As two such modal entities, he mentions ‘*erāq-e moshābeh*, a *gusheh* in which composers made delightful vocal compositions (*tasnīfs*), and *mohseni*, another
gusheh employed by Azeri-Turkish composers in creating charming varṣāqīs. Additionally, in the case of maqām-e kuchak, he directly states that the entire maqām lacked dastgāh throughout.\textsuperscript{108}

The author of another early eighteenth-century musical treatise, Resāleh dar ‘elm-e musiqi, also employs the term dastgāh with reference to maqāms and sho’behs. After a series of short amatory texts identified as sōwt and naqsh in the maqāms of ḡosaynī, rāšt, ‘oshshāq, ‘erāq, and ḫejāz, he emphasizes that while the melodic range of six other maqāms only constitutes a brief sequence of units (nim pardeh), one cannot arrange sōwt and naqsh in them and hence, they lack the status of dastgāh. Similarly, following another collection of short song texts labeled as naqshs in sho’behs of dōgāh, panjgāh, mokhālef, chahārgāh, segāh, nayriz, nayshāburak, and bayāt, he adds that there were other sho’behs comprising nim pardeh and therefore they cannot be used as a basis for metric compositions.\textsuperscript{109}

These two early references to the incipient dastgāh evidently suggest that the term was employed when a sequence of units whether a maqām, sho’beh, or even a gusheh was followed by compositional genres. In other words, a modal entity was recognized as having the character of dastgāh when certain vocal (and probably instrumental) metric compositions were commonly associated with it. While the author of the Resāleh dar ‘elm-e musiqi identifies some maqāms and sho’behs as acquiring the status of dastgāh, the account of Dar bayān-e ‘elm-e musiqi va dānestan-e sho‘abāt-e ou shows that, at least according to some practices, prominent gushehs were rendered in the form of dastgāh as well.

Historical sources, however, suggest that dastgāh did not develop primarily in the context of Safavid court music; for one thing, it does not appear in the late seventeenth-century codex of Amir Khān Gorji. Yet it evidently flourished in urban musical centers or provincial courts mainly fostering the performance practice of maqām and sho’beh.
In the first half of the eighteenth century, *dastgāh* emerges as a more extensive sequence of units or a compound form, displaying closer affinities with the four *shadd* but still maintaining its main character in embracing metric compositions. In an anonymous musical treatise written around the middle of the eighteenth century, four large-scale *dastgāhs* (*chahār dastgāh-e a'żam*) are introduced as (1) *chahārgāḥ*, (2) *navā*, (3) *rāst*, and (4) *rohāb-e dāvudi*. The modulatory scheme and structure of these four *dastgāhs* are detailed as follows:

**Dastgāh-e Chahārgāḥ**

Among the four large-scale *dastgāhs*, one is *chahārgāḥ*. [The performer] commences with *darāmad* from *zanguleh* that is also known as *zanguleh-ye jaras*, and then displays *segāh-e sādeh*, then entering *chahārgāḥ* he renders phrases in its higher and lower registers (*owj* and *haziz*). After that he displays the three *tahrir* passages of *segāh*. While lowering *chahārgāḥ* an octave, he renders its essential component units (*mote‘alleqāt*), and then proceeds to *mokhālef*. Subsequently, he moves to the lower end of *mokhālef* and gets into *hodi*, and after that proceeds to *ruh al-arvāh*—also known as *rāh al-arvāh*, *rāhát al-arvāh*, and *ruhāfzā*—and after exposition of its component units it is up to him if he wants to proceed to *hejāz*, which in that case is not off limits. Otherwise, he can return to *mokhālef* and sing *heṣār* after various types (*aqsām*) of *zābol* and without going to *gardāniyeh*, render *nowruz-e khārā*. After displaying its associated units, he can enter *bayāt-e ‘ajam*—also known as *velāyi*c–via *gardāniyeh*. After displaying its features (*ajzā’*), he can proceed to *rahāvi* better known as *rohāb* which is of two types. The first type is common in Iran and the second type, more common in Turkistan, is also called *māvarā al-nahr*. Again *māvarā al-nahr* is close to *shahnāz* and *mansūri*: he can either sing *shahnāz*, *kuti*, *shur*, *bayāt-e qājār*, or can go to *mansūriyeh* and conclude the performance (*forud*) in *chahārgāḥ* while he becomes busy with pertinent *kār-o-‘amals* and *tašnifs*.

**Dastgāh-e Navā**

It should be apparent that one of the large-scale *dastgāhs* is *navā* which has affinities with most *pardehs* (sequences of units) and *maqāms*. Yours truly knows that the basic element (*māddeh*) of *navā* is at the core of all *maqāms*, yet the most prominent philosopher, Plato, once considered *hosayni* as the father and *rāst* as the mother of all *maqāms*.

After the performer (‘*āmel*) commences with *darāmad-e navā*, he can proceed to *‘ashirān*, *nahoft*, *dōgāh*, *sābā*, *busalik*, and *rahāvi*. In a different form, after *darāmad-e navā* he can elaborate through the twenty-six *rāks* and *sāranj* and while proceeding to *‘oshshāq*, conclude the *dastgāh*.
In a different form, after darāmad-e navā, he can choose to perform rohāb-e dāvudi, and from there proceed to esfahān, and from there to ḥosayni, dōgāh, nowruz ṣabā, and from there to mansuri, shahnāz, bayāt-e ašl, shur, and khāneqāhi. Returning to navā, he can sing nayshābūrak and render the forud in the lower register and conclude with kār-o-ʿamals and taṣnifs.

Dastgāh-e Rāst
The dastgāh-e rāst which is one of the four shadds can be arranged based on the principles set by the contemporary musicians in two forms:

In the first form, the darāmad commences from rāst, and after spicing it up with moʿālef, [the performer] proceeds to nayriz-e ṣaghīr and following its full exposition, he can move to kuchak. Subsequently there could be two close sequences (pardeh). He can either choose to spice it up with navā in the lower register and render the forud, then moving to rāk, play sārang in the higher octave and return to rāk, and after that proceed to ʿoshshāq while ultimately elaborating through the twenty-six rāks or according to some people thirty-six rāks. Otherwise, after kuchak he plays ʿoshshāq, performs panjgāh in the lower octave and proceeds to mobarqa’. While rendering zangulehs of every gusheh and maqām, he can go to ʿerāq, ruy-e ʿerāq, manbar-e ʿerāq, maṇṣuriyeh-ye ʿerāq. If he displays a kār-o-ʿaml, he will make it more embellished. From there he proceeds to nowruz-e ʿarab and nowruz-e ʿajam. Once he performed nowruz-e ʿarab and its component units, he can proceed to the cycle of rahāvandi and while completing its component units, initiate ʿozzāl. Since the units gradually move to a higher range, he can sing ʿozzāl exactly an octave lower. Within ʿozzāl, he can perform bayāt-e ʿajam, and then higher and lower phrases of bozurg in the guise (lebās) of ʿozzāl. Subsequently the performer (ʿāmel) has the option to modulate to homāyun and proceed to wherever he wants. Nonetheless, it is prudent to conclude ʿozzāl in rāst and complete the performance with a few taṣnifs.

Dastgāh-e Rohāb-e Dāvudi
The dastgāh-e rohāb-e dāvudi, better known as rohāb-e khuni, has affinities with most pardehs. To perform its sequence, it is prudent to perform a darāmad followed by esfahānak and its associated units, and then display its delkash; while commencing the moqaddameh-ye ḥosayni, proceed to ḥosayni, and render bozurg in the guise (lebās) of ḥosayni. From there, he can elaborate on dōgāh and its components and subsequently proceed to nowruz-ṣabā. Likewise, if he decides to perform bozurg in the guise of dōgāh, it is not totally out of place. It should be known, however, that recognizing bozurg is a bit complicated, for it only manifests itself in the guise of a different [entity]. Unless it is a perfect master musician who unfolds it, otherwise it wouldn’t be revealed in any other way. Now that the essence of bozurg is perceived, one should know that after dōgāh he has to elaborate on ʿashirān and then on nahofti. After fully elaborating on those and their
component units, he can elaborate on busalik and its associated units and while returning to rohāb-e dāvudi, in conclusion delve into kār-o-‘amals, light or fast (khafīf) and complex or slow (thaqīl) taṣnifs.\textsuperscript{110}

A closer look at the structure of dastgāhs can exhibit some essential facts. The author clearly refers to the affinity of dastgāh and shadd at one point and further identifies maqām, gusheh and pardeh as the main modal entities in the performance of dastgāh. From the above descriptions it is clear that dastgāh was a scheme of modulation containing sequences of units and concluding with metric compositions of kār-o-‘amal (a modulatory vocal genre) and taṣnifs. The sequences of units had more or less the same type of progression as found in the Safavid sho ‘beh and āvāzeh. For instance, in case of the last dastgāh, the sequence was: rohāb-e dāvudi, ḥosayni, dōgāh, nahoft, busalik, and rohāb-e dāvudi. Evidently in some less extensive sequences, the opening unit was called moqaddameh.\textsuperscript{111} Similarly, the units were designated by proper names, yet they were referred to as mota ‘alleqāt (component entities or units) of a particular sequence as well. Some units such as zanguleh and bozorg were probably recognized as rhythmic motifs or specific poetic meters (just like zanguleh and kereshmeh in today’s Persian radif) since the author claims that they could be performed in many sequences, and in fact “they often manifested themselves in the guise (lebās) of a different entity.”\textsuperscript{112}

Each dastgāh was by no means a ‘fixed’ grouping of free-rhythmic units and metric compositions, since a performer was able to exercise considerable latitude with regard to such matters as selection of units, modulation, and length. As the author of this treatise suggests for instance, navā could be performed in three conventional arrangements, with different groupings of units. Likewise, from the middle of rāst a performer had the option to take the progression of navā in two different directions. Furthermore, we may notice that dastgāhs allow for metric vocal compositions of kār-o-‘amal to appear in the middle of sequences as well. Finally, numerous
references to khvândan (singing) in performing various segments and also the actual existence of
total compositional genres, all indicate that dastgâh was a vocal structure in essence, accompanied
by musical instruments, but probably not rendered entirely on instruments.

Some affinities between Safavid maqâms and eighteenth-century dastgâhs could be
suggested from the above descriptions as well. For instance, if we assume that maqâm-e hosayni
and its lower sho’beh, dögâh, retained their modal characteristics, then they were certainly
performed within a new tarkib or modulatory scheme in the eighteenth century. Likewise, when
râst was performed in this period, we may presume that there were two conventional approaches
to its performance practice. In a certain practice which was likely an Indian or Afghan influence,
a sequence of râks (adaptations of Indian râgs) was performed, whereas in a more indigenous
practice râst still retained its sho’behs of panjgâh and mobarqa’. But these are just hypotheses
and, in many cases, the Safavid modal entities seem to have evolved by the late eighteenth century.
For instance, bozorg that used to be a prominent maqâm throughout the Safavid period, according
to the above author came to be characterized only as a rhythmic motif in the eighteenth century.

The terminology employed by the author also directs us toward a set of distinctions that is
fundamental for understanding the way in which musicians conceptualized dastgâh and its melodic
progression. As for commencing a new modal entity or melody type, he uses the verbs āghâz
nemudan (to initiate) and dâkhel shodan (to enter); for exposition and unfolding a modal contrast,
he employs the verbs nemudâr kardan (to display), and zâher nemudan (to make manifest). When
elaborating melodic material through a sequence of units, he mentions the verb sayr kardan (to
make an excursion) and for embellishing a melody type he uses châshni dâdan (lit. to add spices)
or taz’in (ornamentation).
The second eighteenth-century reference to dastgāh is in Bahjat al-qolub, a musical treatise compiled by ‘Abd al-Ḥosayn b. Mehdi al-Shirāzi. The text of Bahjat al-qolub is a compilation of more than one treatise and here and there one finds some curious anomalies. In this treatise, dastgāh is again referred to as a sequence of units followed by a few taṣnifs and kar-o-ʿamals. The author specifies four dastgāhs, but all are characterized as containing elements of two principle modes. The dastgāhs are (1) rāst-panjgāh, (2) chahārgāh-mokhālef, (3) ḥosayni-segāh, and (4) homāyun-dōgāh. The account of dastgāhs is represented in a round diagram or circle (dāyereh) in which a hierarchical set of modal entities together with their appropriate rhythmic cycles are listed.

Dastgāh-e Rāst-Panjgāh

navā, bozorg, esfāhānak, ‘erāq

delāviz-e bozorg, rakh, fayli, zirkesh-e ʿozzāl, maghlub, bayāt, ḥodi, chaghatāʿi
far-e hazaj, far-e māhur, far-e kabir, far-e khārā, far-e homāyun, far-e asl, far-e sārāng
forud in panjgāh-e rāst
kār-o-ʿamal and taṣnif

Dastgāh-e Chahārgāh-Mokhālef

zanguleh, ḥejāz, kuchak, ʿoshshāq
māhur-e kabir, nowruz-e khārā, rāst-e kabir, mohayyer, masihi
maghlub-e mohayyer, maghlub-e bayāt, maghlub-e qajar, maghlub-e homāyun, maghlub-e ḥejāz,

maghlub-e ḥosayni
rāvandi, nowruz-e ʿajam, chakāvak, rohāb
forud in mokhālef-e chahārgāh
kār-o-ʿamal and taṣnif

Dastgāh-e Homāyun-Dōgāh

zābol, mokhālef, nowruz-e ʿarab, hešār
samāʿi, ḥejāz-e kabir, delkash-e rohāb, owj-e ʿashirān, falaknāz, muyeḥ
esfāhānak, rāhavi-e kabir, zarir-e ʿarab, delkash-e ʿajam, ḥejāz-e tork, far-e busalik
navā-ye ʿarab, tork-e kabir, ʿerāq-e nim-thaqil
forud in dōgāh-e homāyun
kār-o-ʿamal and taṣnif

Dastgāh-e Ḥosayni-Segāh

ḥosayni, rāst, busalik, rahāvi
ʿoshshāq, maʿlefat, neshāburak, zābol, basteh-negār, salmak
Besides the four dastgâhs, the author of Bahjat al-qolub includes a separate discussion on tarkib-e pardeh in which he provides a guideline for musicians to acquaint themselves with the name and sequence of a number of tarkibs that he alternatively calls maqâms. He gives sixteen sequences of units as follows:

14. Gavesht: zanguleh, salmak, rahâvi, nahâvandak, busalik, nowruz-e ‘ajam, nowruz-e șâr, ‘erâq, zâbol.\(^{114}\)

The fact that the author refers to these sequences as tarkib and maqâm is an important point and suggests that perhaps other eighteenth-century music theorists who mention maqâm in their
treatises may have used the term with the same implication. In other words, by using the term maqām they did not necessarily mean the Safavid system of twelve maqāms and twenty-four sho‘behs. This assumption is further supported by the account of another musical text titled Davāzdah dastgāh, written around the turn of the nineteenth century. In this text the twelve strophes (davāzdah-band) of the famous elegy composed by Moḥtasham Kāshāni is set to sequences of twelve maqāms, differing significantly from the Safavid modal system. Nonetheless, these twelve maqāms display more affinities at least nominally with the maqāms mentioned in Bahjat al-qolub. The maqāms in Davāzdah dastgāh are:


The text of Davāzdah dastgāh also shows that maqām in this period was conceived as a form of tarkib. While in the case of each maqām the author mentions two concepts of tarkibāt and sho‘behjāt—probably referring to its associated modal entities—he does not specify what exactly they were. Finally, a conspicuous list of miscellaneous āvāzs (āvāz-ye motafarreqeh) is given at the end of the text which is in many cases the earliest reference to āvāzs that later appear in the repertoire of the radif such as abu‘tā, afshār, mollānāzi, qatar-e tork, and layli-o majnum.

As the above list illustrates, the āvāzs also appear in another anonymous treatise known as Ādāb-e āvāzhā (Instructions for Singing Āvāzs). In this treatise the author presents guidelines and the text of āvāzs performed in numerous semi-classical settings including mosques, Sufi lodges, and convivial gatherings (majles-e ahl-e ṭarab). Following a few lines of a didactic poem on maqāms, the author presents a list of more than hundreded modal entities under the broad title of “gushehs, āvāzs, rangs, sho‘behs, pardehs, and naghmehs,” as follows:


As the above list illustrates, the āvāzs show traces of both urban classical and folk music. A large number of names are those of seventeenth-century maqāms, sho‘behs, āvāzehs, and gushehs,
though structurally speaking they may have varied in practice and changed over the eighteenth century. Likewise, a few names especially at the bottom of the list seem to be folk-derived vocal or instrumental melody-types or genres and some composed songs and dance tunes of diverse provenance.

The author does not assign any of the above items specifically to the categories of maqāms, sho’behs, gushehs, or naghmehs, but he labels a number of them as āvāz, and shows that each constitutes a short sequence of units. He also gives the names of certain āvāzs and mentions the unit at the higher end of their ambitus (owj). One may notice that while the names of āvāzs were largely derived from classic maqāms and sho’behs, their component units could include regional melodies as well. The sequence of a few āvāzs is:

bozorg, mokhālef, and tahrir-e shahnāz constitute ‘ozzāl.
nowruz-e aşl, rakb and zanguleh constitute nowruz-e aşl.
rāk-e hendi, kaj-rāk, tahrir-e shahnāz, and tahrir-e sā-rāk constitute mobarga‘.
ḥosayn, zanguleh, and ṣufiyāneh constitute ‘ajam.
ḥosayn, gavesht, rāst-e chini, and ‘erāq constitute ‘oshshāq.\textsuperscript{118}

Another group of modal entities described by the author of Ādāb-e āvāzhā is the rāks. In a separate chapter he states the affinities of rāks and certain āvāzs.\textsuperscript{119} As mentioned previously, after the invasion of Nāder to India in 1739 a number of Indian musicians and dancers joined his camp and were brought to Iran, where they stayed apparently for less than a decade. Evidence shows that during this period, several Indian rāgs were adopted and later came to be incorporated into the Persian music repertoire of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{120}

In general, we may assume that after the collapse of the Safavid court and dispersal of the Isfahan musicians, maqām continued an attenuated existence in urban centers. In the later part of the eighteenth century, musicians still recognized a series of terkibs or sequences of units as
maqāms. Yet the hierarchical set of twelve maqāms, twenty-four sho’behs, six āvāzehs, and forty-eight gushehs, as described in Safavid musical sources, was entirely forsaken. Likewise, āvāz came to be used first in semi-classical and gradually in classical music referring to both sequences of units and vocal genres.

The Qajar Court

By the end of the eighteenth century when the capital was moved from Shiraz to Tehran, two significant developments took place within the modal system that jointly refined and enhanced the concept of dastgāh while simultaneously contributing to the eventual dissolution and disappearance of maqām and sho’beh as prominent structural concepts.

First, a number of vernacular and semi-classical modes used in taṣnifs, dance tunes, and religious genres of the eighteenth century that were not clearly definable and recognizable modal entities in the maqām and sho’beh system, but rather were loose and informal modes, came to be refined into a set of individual āvāzs with relatively clear distinguishing phrases, scales, and characters. It appears that modal entities such as shul (later called shur), qaracheh, abu’ātā, sāranj, afshārī, dashti, hājīānī, gilaki, bidād, shushtari, bakhtiyārī, and fayli mostly have assumed their forms in the beginning of the nineteenth century, as melodic possibilities latent in extent regional and semi-classical modes and vocal genres became crystalized into distinct āvāzs. Most of these āvāzs are not mentioned in treatises predating 1750.121

Secondly, with the establishment of the Qajar court, a number of talented, and classically-trained musicians came to Tehran and some of them contributed effectively to the arrangement of the court music repertoire and the cultivation of new modulatory schemes. In the Kolliyāt-e Yusefi and Resāleḥ-ye davāzdah dastgāh, Āqā Bābā Makhmur Eşfahānī, the most celebrated singer at the
court of Fatḥ-ʿAli Shāh (r. 1797-1834), is credited with refining and shaping twelve ordered repertoires or extensive sequences of dastgāhs. As the author of Resāle-ye davāzdah dastgāh states:

What has been common practice among the singers and instrumentalists in the past and present is based on the system (qānum) established by Āqā Bābā. This master musician combined all the āvāzs, maqāms, sho’behs, and gushehs together and arranged a set of twelve dastgāhs in the following order:

1. rāst-panjgāh, 2. navā-nayshābur, 3. homāyun, 4. mākur, 5. rohāb, 6. shul-shahnāz, 7. chahārgāh-mokhālef, 8. segāh, 9. dōgāh, 10. zābol, 11. ‘ashirān, 12. nayriz.\textsuperscript{122}

While Kolliyāt-e Yusefī only refers to the names of dastgāhs arranged by Āqā Bābā Makhmur, Resāle-ye davāzdah dastgāh details the sequences of three dastgāhs as follows:\textsuperscript{123}

**Dastgāh-e Rāst-o Panjgāh**


**Dastgāh-e Navā-o Nayshābur**


**Dastgāh-e Homāyun**

Commencing the darāmad of homāyun, salmak, zanguleh, nu’i, morādkhāni, gusheh-ye bidād, nashib-o farāz, gusheh-ye ‘ozzāl, dōgāh, laylāni, again nu’i, nowruz-e ‘arab,
Evidently court musicians in the early Qajar period synthesized urban and folk modal entities with a new, classicized sophistication and sobriety. What Āqā Bābā did in this period was to present aesthetic guidelines for twelve modulatory schemes, each comprising an ordered sequence of āvāzs interspaced with vocal and instrumental metric compositions.

All these developments took place in the capital and more specifically within the musical milieu of the court. In all other musical contexts, less extensive sequences of melody-types were mostly recognized as āvāzs. Likewise, what was cultivated in Tehran was not necessarily practiced in provincial towns and other urban centers. Only in the early decades of the twentieth century did musicians in major cities—especially in Isfahan and Shiraz—gradually begin to conform to the musical norms of the capital, while continuing at the same time to retain established local characteristics.

The Second Half of the Nineteenth Century

By the second half of the nineteenth century, the dastgāh was largely recognized as the most prestigious modulatory sequence of units predominantly performed in the context of the Qajar court. The two celebrated court musical families directed respectively by Moḥammad Šādeq Khān and Mirzā ‘Abdollāh developed two separate groupings and repertoires of dastgāhs that differed significantly from each other in terms of classification, inclusion of āvāzs, titles, terminology, and melodic progression. These two groupings can be roughly illustrated as follows:
Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khan’s arrangement of dastgāhs and boyutāt:
1. shur, 2. māhur, 3. homāyun, 4. segāh, 5. chahārgāh, 6. rāst-panjgāh, 7. navā, 8. rohāb, 9. dōgāh, 10. suz-o godāz 11. ṭarz-e tajnis, and a series of sequences called boyutāt.¹²⁶

Mīrzā ‘Abdollāh’s arrangement of dastgāhs and āvāzs:
1. shur, 2. māhur, 3. homāyun, 4. segāh, 5. chahārgāh, 6. rāst-panjgāh, 7. navā and five āvāzs including 1. abu’atā, 2. bayāt-e tork, 3. afshārī, 4. dashti, and 5. bayāt-e eṣfahān.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khān was celebrated for his innovative style of santur playing and repertoire, which in his own time came to be known as the Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khāni revāyat (line of transmission). As the chief of court musicians in the late nineteenth century he was also exposed to and well acquainted with the entire court repertoire. While his maktab (school) showed more affinities with the early Qajar court tradition, his entire repertoire has not survived in the same manner as Mīrzā ‘Abdollāh’s repertoire is available today. Nonetheless, segments of his repertoire including his compositions and melody-types have come down to us through oral tradition and the early transcriptions made by Mehdi-Qoli Hedāyat (1863-1955).¹²⁷

In addition to the seven dastgāhs of shur, māhur, homāyun, segāh, chahārgāh, rāst-panjgāh, and navā that were commonly shared between Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khān and Mīrzā ‘Abdollāh, the former incorporated the four additional dastgāhs of rohāb, dōgāh, suz-o godāz and ṭarz-e tajnis into his repertoire. While the performance practice of the two dastgāhs of rohāb, and dōgāh can be traced back to the late eighteenth century, the other two, suz-o godāz and ṭarz-e tajnis may have been his own innovations. Furthermore, evidence suggests that he had arranged distinctive sequences of units that he referred to as boyutāt.

It is clear that Mīrzā ‘Abdollāh arranged his repertoire into seven dastgāhs and five āvāzs, but there is no evidence to help us determine whether this was his father’s classification, or
something developed by himself and his disciples. In fact, there are some discrepancies among surviving sources. First, there is some ambiguity as to why he eliminated dōgāh from the core of dastgāhs while many other contemporaneous sources attest to the prevalence of this dastgāh in the second half of the nineteenth century. Secondly, rohāb in Mirzā ‘Abdollāh’s surviving versions of the radif is represented as a sequence of units often affixed as a supplement to the end of the dastgāhs of segāh or navā. Again it is not clear whether the addition of rohāb to another dastgāh was Mirzā ‘Abdollāh’s own invention or something introduced by his disciples and subsequent musicians.128

Besides the five āvāzs of abu’atā, bayāt-e tork, afshāri, dashti, and bayāt-e esfahān there were other less extensive sequences of units such as bayāt-e kord, qaṭār, gerayli, and hejāz. Nonetheless, the five were granted the space to develop into independent āvāzs, most likely because of the desire to keep the total number of dastgāhs and āvāzs at twelve.129

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chahārgāh-e a’zam</th>
<th>Bahjat al-qolub</th>
<th>Davāzda Dastgāh MS. Neubauer</th>
<th>Āqā Bābā Makhmur</th>
<th>Moḥammad Şādeq Khan</th>
<th>Mirzā ‘Abdollāh</th>
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Table 3.8. Lists of dastgāhs in the nineteenth-century musical sources.
**Dastgāhs in the Nāseri Period**

The four large-scale modal schemes of *rāst-panjgāh*, *navā*, *homāyun*, and *chahārgāh* were characterized as the pure classical *dastgāhs* during the reign of Nāser-al-Din Shāh (r. 1848-1896), and, as described before, their formations could be traced back to the late eighteenth century, if not earlier.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, *rāst-panjgāh* was only performed by a small number of hereditary court instrumentalists who were predominantly performers on *tār* and *santur*. To the best of our knowledge, it was seldom performed by singers or by *kamāncheh* or *nay* players. In other words, there seems to have been no vocal counterpart to the instrumental version.\(^{130}\)

Likewise, it was not known to musicians in Isfahan, Shiraz, and other urban centers apart from Tehran. It was only in the middle of the twentieth century that ʿAbdollāh Davāmi organized a vocal sequence of *rāst-panjgāh*, mostly adopting the names and structure of melodic units and their progressions from the instrumental *radif*.\(^{131}\)

*Navā* as an extensive sequence of units was also performed exclusively by the court instrumentalists and only a loose and less extensive āvāz of *navā* was common among the court singers, though some of the components and characteristic phrases of the vocal version were conspicuously different from their instrumental counterparts.\(^{132}\) *Navā* does not appear to have been widely performed outside of the capital.\(^{133}\)

*Homāyun* and *chahārgāh* were common as āvāzs in most urban centers but the two *dastgāhs* of *homāyun* and *chahārgāh* that were developed and performed within the courtly musical setting included an assortment of āvāzs and units that were typically more elaborate and extensive.
No other dastgāhs or āvāzs in Persian music have been so abundantly rich in stereotypical phrases and phrase sequences as shur and segāh. While dastgāh-e shur was customarily rendered in the form of shur-shahnāz (shahnāz was known as the second shur commencing on the fourth above the tonic), two prominent versions of this dastgāh were developed by Moḥammad Šādeq Khān and Mirzā ʿAbdollāh respectively. Moḥammad Šādeq Khan’s version seems to have been marked as foregrounding a vocal idiom, and often incorporated more metric compositions of taṣnīf and reng, whereas Mirzā ʿAbdollāh’s version was instead based on an instrumental idiom with a complex plucking system. The titles of āvāzs and units were also sometimes different in the two versions. For instance, what was called shahnāz in Moḥammad Šādeq Khan’s shur was referred to as salmā in Mirzā ʿAbdollāh’s radīf, and this is an example of a divergence that resulted in confusion later on among the subsequent generation of musicians regarding the title of some āvāzs and their units.

While segāh was less sober and more popular than chahārgāh, they shared a number of āvāzs and followed more or less the same melodic progression throughout the dastgāh performance. However, certain stereotypical phrases were often exclusively rendered in segāh and were inadmissible in the sequence of chahārgāh.134

The scales of māhur and rāst-panjgāh were almost the same in the darāmad section, but the subsequent āvāzs and units in the two dastgāhs were significantly different. Rāst-panjgāh was soberer and contained stereotypical melodic phrases—such as parvāneh—that were considered as the hallmarks of this dastgāh. In māhur, melodic elaboration was more rhapsodic and, unlike with rāst-panjgāh, modulations to dramatically different āvāzs were restricted and in many cases inadmissible.135
A few sources such as Resāleh-ye davāzdah dastgāh also indicate that rohāb and dōgāh were arranged and performed as two dastgāhs by the court musicians, but, as mentioned earlier, they were surprisingly omitted from the classification of Mirzā ‘Abdollāh.¹³⁶

Before 1900, when māhur, shur, homāyun, segāh, chahārgāh, and navā were performed outside of courtly musical settings and especially when taking the form of less extensive sequences, they were referred to as āvāz. The only exception was rāst-panjgāh, which was only performed in the form of a large-scale modulatory scheme or dastgāh, and in practice its performance was mostly confined to the circle of solo specialists at the court.

Āvāzs
At the turn of the twentieth century, Mehdi-Qoli Hedāyat describes a dastgāh as an ordered structure consisting of a number of juxtaposed āvāzs based on the musical taste of talented musicians with no ‘theoretical necessity’ behind it.¹³⁷ He further specifies an āvāz as a sequence of modal entities comprised of a darāmad and a qesmat-e āvāzi (a free-rhythmic segment) followed by taṣnif and reng.

According to Hedāyat, āvāzs varied in their internal structures mainly with respect to musical context, being predominantly composed of either a free-rhythmic segment to the extent of having no metric composition (āvāz be ūraž-e naḡmeh) or containing a small segment of free-rhythmic pieces and interspaced with vocal and instrumental compositions (āvāz be ūraž-e taṣnif). However, the core of āvāz was free-rhythmic beginning with a darāmad and followed by a series of units each having specific characteristic motives that functioned as melodic elaboration.

The units through which an āvāz was unfolded and developed were known by proper names such as kereshmeh, zanguleh, naghmeh, basteh-negār, or mathnavi. Some short units that were not
performed with poems were also categorized as taḥrir (e.g. dotā-yeki, parastu, sārebānak, panjehmuyeh, basteh-negār etc.). Nonetheless, units had distinctive modal, melodic and sometimes rhythmic features and did not all fall into one category of modal entity, neither were they designated by a single and all-encompassing term. They were only referred to as gusheh later in the early twentieth century.

Hedāyat states that during the nineteenth century, the term gusheh was only used in reference to a contrasting melody-type that was interpolated in the sequence of a dastgāh mostly as a temporary modulation or to display the taste of a different āvāz. In other words, gusheh was nearly synonymous with the concept of namud in the shashmaqom music of Central Asia. For instance, right after the darāmad in dastgāh-e homāyun, a performer could play the gusheh-ye chahārgāh, or in the middle of dastgāh-e shur one could perform the gusheh-ye abuʿaṭā. Likewise, shekasteh and delkash in dastgāh-e māhur were both considered as gusheh with the provision in both cases that it was inadmissible for the artist to meander on to the new modes.

In the mid-twentieth century, āvāzs could be classified into two major categories. The first category consisted of short āvāzs that were the fundamental sequences of a dastgāh and the dastgāh itself was named after the first āvāz. The āvāzs in the seven dastgāhs could roughly be illustrated as follows:

1. dastgāh-e shur: darāmad, shahnāz (salmak), qaracheh, ražavi, and ḥosayni.
2. dastgāh-e māhur: darāmad, dād, khāvarān, fayli, ḥeṣār-e māhur, ‘erāq, and rāk.
3. dastgāh-e segāh: darāmad, zābol, muyeḥ, ḥeṣār, mokhālef, moʿarbad, and ḥodi.
4. dastgāh-e chahārgāh: darāmad, zābol, muyeḥ, ḥeṣār, mokhālef, and manšuri.
5. dastgāh-e homāyun: darāmad, chakāvak, bidād, shushtari, and bakhtiyāri.
7. dastgāh-e rāst-panjgāh: darāmad-e rāst, nayriz, panjgāh, qaracheh, shushtari, ‘erāq, and rāk.
The sequence of āvāzs in a dastgāh was distinct, mostly based on their scales, melodic characteristics, emphasis and contour. Sometimes two āvāzs shared the same scale and even a tonal center, but their characteristic phrases were conspicuously different. A typical āvāz usually commenced with an introductory section (a short darāmad or moqaddameh) representing major characteristic melodic or rhythmic phrases of the āvāz and was further elaborated through a kereshmeh, naghmeh, basteh-negār etc. Within an āvāz, characteristic phrases were also marked as tahrirs and brief contrasting melody-types to another āvāz were called gushehs. While forud referred to the ending phrases of the constituent units within an āvāz, the ending of each āvāz was called forud-e motammam (finalizing forud) through which the melody always returned to the first mode of the dastgāh or the mode of darāmad.\textsuperscript{140}

In the middle of the twentieth century, this type of āvāz gradually came to be called shāh-gusheh or gusheh-hā-ye asli (principal gushehs) and their constituent units including kereshmeh, zanguleh, naghmeh, basteh-negār, mathnavi and tahrirs were all indiscriminately referred to as gusheh. While in classical music the melodic elaboration of an āvāz was based on its constituent units and stereotypical phrases, in semi-classical music the elaboration was more subject to a far-flung and loose improvisation. In both practices, however, an āvāz in a higher register was commonly marked as owj in the sequence of āvāzs, which somehow corresponded with the concept of upper sho ‘beh in the Safavid maqām tradition. For instance, in segāh and chahārgāh, mokhālef was considered as owj. In shur, hosayni and in homāyun, bidād were owjs. ‘Erāq in māhur and rāst-panjgāh could be taken as owj, and in navā certainly nahoft played this role.

The second category of āvāzs had an independent and more extensive character and were seldom performed within the sequence of the aforementioned dastgāhs, neither they were called dastgāh in their own right. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, these āvāzs were recognized
as dastân-e ‘arab (abu’atâ), bayât-e tork, afshâri, dashti, and bayât-e esfahân. The origin and trajectory of these five āvâzs are not exactly clear in the nineteenth century. Most of them seem to have been vernacular and informal modes, predominantly performed in semi-classical musics and only came to be refined into a set of individual sequences of units with relatively distinctive scales and characters in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Abu’atâ is a relatively new name and what is known today as the sequence of abu’atâ was partially known as dastân-e ‘arab and partially sârnaj in Tehran, and its owj was called -hejâz-e baghdâdi. Abu’atâ seems to have been the alternative name of this āvâz in Isfahan. However, toward the end of the nineteenth century the Isfahani abu’atâ with fairly defined characteristics became more prevalent and gradually eclipsed the name of dastân-e ‘arab in Tehran. As Ruḥollâh Khâleqi states properly, abu’atâ was a light āvâz used in the composition of many popular songs or taṣnîfs in the late nineteenth century.

The titles of bayât-e tork and bayât-e kord can be traced back as early as the seventeenth century when they both appear as two gushehs in Bāqiyā Nā’ini’s Zamzameh-ye vaḥdat. Both are also mentioned in early nineteenth century texts as two āvâzs. Yet it seems that when the practice of dastgâh-e dōgâh gradually fell into decline, some of its āvâzs and units including āvâz-e dōgâh itself were already incorporated into a grouping labeled as bayât-e tork.

The names, use of motaghayyers (tones appearing in two slightly different pitches) as well as melodic character in afshâri and dashti all suggest that they have been folk-based, informal modes. Evidence also suggests that their sequences evolved into mature āvâzs in the last few decades of the nineteenth century. During the Naṣeri period, afshâri was a predominant mode in composition of religious vocal genres and its mathnavi was largely performed in Sufi lodges. The sequence of dashti was also formed as an aggregate of units derived from the folk āvâzs and genres
developed in southern Iran (hājiyānī, dashtestānī, bidegānī and chupānī) and on the southern coast of the Caspian Sea (gilaki, ghamangiz and amirī).

In general, modulation to distant modes or the nineteenth century concept of gusheh were not common in the sequences of dastān-e ‘arab (abu’ātā), bayāt-e tork, afshārī, and dashti. In other words, these āvāzs were not modulatory schemes in the same form as dastgāhs. At the same time, the sequences of these āvāzs were not clearly delineated and hence many units could be performed jointly in sequences of abu’ātā and dashti, or bayāt-e tork and afshārī.

**Radif**

Unlike Moḥammad Şādeq Khān, who was a master improviser mostly refusing to train students, Mirzā ‘Abdollāh was primarily a pedagogue and later achieved his prodigious influence largely through his disciples. In order to convey his knowledge and teach students systematically, he began to establish a fixed and unchanging version of his repertoire which came to be known as the radif. In fact, as mentioned in chapter two, radif as a musical concept was likely coined by Mirzā ‘Abdollāh as no references to this term appear to have been recorded before him. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Mirzā ‘Abdollāh’s radif was transmitted through his disciples and it was subsequently recorded and transcribed, thereby bringing a substantial degree of standardization and canonization to nineteenth century Persian music.

At the same time Mirzā ‘Abdollāh’s younger brother, Āqā Ḥosayn Qoli, while practicing his family repertoire, added his own creative input and made a slightly different version of the radif which was to some extent more elaborate and technically complex than that of his brother. The third and last version of the radif in the nineteenth century was compiled by Montaẓam-al-Ḥokamā’, a court physician and setār player who studied with both Moḥammad Şādeq and Mirzā
‘Abdollāh. His *radif* also represents an assortment of pieces he adopted from his two teachers. The *radif* of Montaẓam-al-Ḥokamā’ was later transcribed by Mehdi-Qoli Hedāyat and some of the melody-types were conspicuously marked as ‘Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khānī revāyat.’

*Radif* was originally an instrumental concept that evolved only as the repertoire and through the practice of *tār* and *setār*, the two musical instruments on which Mirzā ‘Abdollāh was a master. While adhering to a predominantly instrumental idiom throughout, the genius of Mirzā ‘Abdollāh’s *radif* was the incorporation of a hereditary, sophisticated and complex system of plucking that had been matured at the hands of his family (*khāndân*) over the course of successive generations. It is also safe to say that in the nineteenth century, the *radif* was only known among the Farāhānī family and their immediate disciples. It was neither practiced outside of the court or in any other urban centers. Likewise, the concept of a vocal *radif* or an extensive repertoire of units with specific names that later came to be employed for teaching purposes did not exist at that time. Classical singers performed āvāzs and their units, but probably not in such extensive sequences and more significantly, they never referred to their own repertoire as *radif*. It was around the 1940s that ‘Abdollāh Davāmī, a celebrated *tasnīf* singer of the late Qajar and Pahlavi periods, sought to construct a vocal *radif* version based mainly on the training he had received from a few master singers including Ḥosayn Ṭaherzādeh, and the overall groupings of āvāzs and *gushehs* he adopted from the current instrumental *radifs*. In some cases, he created new vocal units just by using instrumental units as a model and setting *tahrir* and words to them. Hence the vocal *radif* evolved as a product of, on the one hand, the repertoire and judicious use of phrases developed by prominent singers, and, on the other hand, the underlying structure of the instrumental *radif*. Davāmī trained a number of students, among them Maḥmud Karīmī, who later came up with
another version of the vocal radif, and hence they both attempted to standardize and canonize the vocal repertoire of Persian music as well.147

6 For the biography of Dowreh Beg Kerāmi see Šādeghi Ketābdār, Majmaʿ al-khavāss, ed. ‘Abd al-Rasul Khayyāmpur (Tabriz: Chāpkhāneh-ye Akhtar, 1948), 122-123; Resāleh-ye Kerāmiyeh was published first as “Maʿrefat-e ‘elm-e musiqi” in Nāmeh-ye minovi, ed. Ḥabīb Yaghmāʾi and Iraj Afshār (Tehran, 1971), pp. 189-198. Subsequently it was edited and translated into English by Mehrdad Fallahzadeh, Two Treatises–Two Streams (Bethesda: Ibex Publishers, 2009), 76-177. The most reliable and complete manuscript of Resāleh-ye Kerāmiyeh is Russian Academy of Sciences MS B1844. I sometimes refer to this manuscript as well.
7 Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad, “Resāleh-ye ‘elm-e musiqi,” 81-96.
8 Bāqiyā Nāʾi’i, Zamzameh-ye vaḥdat, Biruni Institute of Oriental Studies (Tashkent) MS 10226.
12 A complete edition of Bahjat al-qolub is not available yet, but the treatise is introduced in Bābak Khażra’i, “Sharhe chahār dastgāh va tašāvir-e chand sāz,” Māhur 59 (2013): 147-158.
14 Mehdi-Qoli Ḩedāyat, Majma’ al-advār, University of Tehran (Tehran) MS Ḥoquq 120.2.
20 Ādāb-e āvāzhā va dhekr-hā’i ke dar manāber va joz ān khvāndeh mishavad, Malek Library (Tehran) MS 2830.
26 Nāsīmī, Nasim-e tarab, 71-72.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid., 83-84.
personal communication I had with Eckhard Neubauer, he opined that “the author must have been in the cultural milieu of the Galata quarter in Istanbul where he was inspired by the famous flute manual Opera intitulata Fontegara by Sylvestro di Ganassi that had appeared in Venice in 1535. In that book, the notes are represented as ‘open’ or ‘closed’ finger holes of a recorder, nearly similar to the diagrams in Taqsim al-naghamāt.”

30 Ibid., 360. For Wright’s commentary on this issue see ibid., 37-44.
31 Ibid., 361-402. For further discussion see ibid., 48-83.
32 Ibid., 403-414.
33 Ibid. The concept of sayr was also used in the Timurid period. For instance, see Marāghi, Maqāṣed al-alhān, 108.
34 The other Safavid anonymous musical treatise that contains the melodic contours of some modes and can be compared with the Taqsim al-naghamāt, is Dar bayān-e paydā shodan-e ‘elm-e musīqi, Malik Library (Tehran) MS 4583, 100a-114a; Massoudieh, Manuscrits persans, 269-270.
35 Fallahzadeh, Two Treatises–Two Streams, 105-114.
36 Ibid., 110-111. I refer to the pages of the Persian text edited by Fallahzadeh (see note 6), but I use my own English translation.
38 Ibid., 87-88.
39 Ibid., 88.
40 Resāleh-ye Kerāmiyeh, Russian Academy of Sciences MS B1844, 27a.
41 Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad, “Resāleh-ye ‘elm-e musiqi,” 90.
42 Fallahzadeh, Two Treatises–Two Streams, 124; Moḥammad, “Resāleh-ye ‘elm-e musiqi,” 90.
43 Bāqiyā Nā’ini, Zamzameh-ye vahdat, 11-12.
45 Ibid., 257.
46 Ibid., 257-258.
47 During the thirteenth century, some music theorists including Moḥammad Nishāburi and ‘Alā’ ad-Din Bokhāri mention rāst as the ruler (shāh) or the mother (umm) of all modes, whereas both Nasimi and Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad mention ḥosayni as the most prominent maqām. Cf. Amir Hosein Pourjavady, “Resaleh-ye musiqi-ye Moḥammad b. Maḥmud b. Moḥammad Nayshāburi,” Ma’aref 34-35 (1995); Sajjād Nikfahm Khubravān and Saeid Kordmāfī, “Musiqi dar ashfār va

49 By ‘free-rhythmic’ I mean the section that is not typically accompanied by a percussion instrument, otherwise free-rhythmic is a problematic concept and can hardly be used in reference to the sections of a maqām. A number of sections may follow a rhythmic cycle or poetic meter for instance and should not be categorized as free-rhythmic.
50 This scheme is somewhat described in Amir Hosein Pourjavady, “Dar bayān ‘elm-e musīqi va dānestan-e shoʿab-e ou,” Māhur 15 (2003): 64-68.
51 Darāmad has been used as early as the mid-sixteenth century and Dowreh Beg Kerāmi is one of the first music theorists who employs this term. Cf. Fallahzadeh, Two Treatises-Two Streams, 119. Āghāz is mentioned in a few musical texts including H L. Rabino de Borgomale, ed., Bahjat al-ruh, (Tehran: Bonyād-e farhang, 1965), 54-56.
52 According to the Persian-English Dictionary of Steingass, mahrī is “the end of a period or sentence, a full-point; the place where people deposit their baggage when lighting off a journey; an anchorage for shipping.” The term forūd is frequently mentioned in the Taqsim al-naḥgamāt.
54 Ibid., 172-180.
56 For further discussion of this subject see Pourjavady, The Musical Codex of Amir Khān Gorji, 128-129.
57 Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad, “Resāleh-ye ‘elm-e musiqi,” 89.
60 Pourjavady, “Dar bayān-e ‘elm-e musīqi va dānestan-e shoʿab-e ou,” 64.
61 Ibid.
62 Fallahzadeh, Two Treatises–Two Streams, 113
63 Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad, “Resāleh-ye ‘elm-e musiqi,” 89.

Ibid.


Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad, “Resāleh-ye ‘elm-e musiqi,” 90.


Ibid., 64-68.


*Tahrir* as the obligatory initial section of an Iraqi *maqām* performance retains its meaning as "melodic configuration" as well.


Ibid., 192, 292.

Ibid., 199-215.


See Feldman, Music of the Ottoman Court, 223.

Ibid., 232.

Ibid., 227.

Marāghi, Maqāṣed al-alḥān, 119.

Bāqiyā Nā‘īni, Zamzameh-ye vahdat, 14. Also see de Borgomale, Bahjat al-ruḥ, 54-56.

Cf. Borgomale, Bahjat al-ruḥ, 54-56.


See Feldman, Music of the Ottoman Court, 232.

Resāleḥ-ye Kerāmiyeh, Russian Academy of Sciences MS B1844, 27a.

The number of tarkibs is mentioned forty-eight—corresponding with the twenty-four hours—in Seydi’s Book on Music, 129-133.

Bayāt was originally a typical singing style or vocal genre attributed to an ethnic group (e.g. bayāt-e tork, bayāt-e kord) or inhabitants of a particular urban center (e.g. bayāt-e esfahān, bayāt-e shirāz) (personal communication from Dāriush Ṣafvat).


Cf. Borgomale, Bahjat al-ruḥ, 93.

Bahjat al-qolub, Majles Library (Tehran) MS 2242, 56.


For further discussion of this subject see Sumits, The evolution of the maqām tradition in Central Asia, 115-136.


Marāghi, Jāme‘ al-alḥān: khātemeh, 205.

100 Tanburî Küçük Artin: *A Musical Treatise of the Eighteenth Century*, 131; for further discussion, see Feldman, *Music of the Ottoman Court*, 199.


103 See Pourjavady, “Negāhi be ḥayāt-e musiqā’i-ye dowreh-ye afshārī,” 36.


108 Ibid., 67.

109 Pourjavady, “Resāleh dar ‘elm-e musiqi,” 112-114. Among the music theorists of the Safavid period some refer to pardeh apparently as an extensive sequence of units for instance see Malek Library (Tehran) MS 893.


111 The term moqaddameh was used as the opening section of short sequences or units throughout the Qajar period. For instance, in the radif of dastgāh-e shur the two sequences of golriz and bozorg both commence with a moqaddameh. Moqaddameh was also interchangeably used with darāmad, cf. Musā Ma’rufi and Mehdi Barkechli, *Radif-e haft dastgāh-e musiqi-e Irānī/Les Systèmes de la musique traditionelle iranienne (radif)* (Tehran: Vezārat-e farhang va honar, 1962), alef, be, jim, dāl.


113 *Bahjat al-golub*, 60.

114 Ibid., 33-34.


116 Ibid., 338-339; 358-359.

117 Ādāb-e āvāzhā va dhekr-hā’i ke dar manāber va joz ān kh‘ándeh mishavad, Malek Library (Tehran), MS 2830/2, 2a-2b.

118 Ibid., 2b.
Ibid., 5a-5b.

For further discussion, see Pourjavady, “Negāhi be ḡayät-e musiqā’i-ye dowreh-ye afshāri,” 52-54.

Some āvāzs such as gilaki, abu’atā, and afshāri are not even mentioned in treatises predating 1800.

Moṣen Moḥammadi, “Resāleh-ye davāzdah dastgāh,” 142; Žia’ al-Din Yusef, Resāle-ye musiqi mowsum be kolliyāt-e Yusefi, 27.

The surviving text of Resāleh-ye davāzdah dastgāh is incomplete.


The case of Azerbaijan was rather different. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Tabriz came to be the second capital in the Qajar period and some court musicians were sent to this city to be in the service of the crown prince.


In the version of radif collected by Musā Maʿrufi, rohāb is affixed to the dastgāh-e navā whereas in Mirzā ‘Abdollāh’s radif it comes at the end of dastgāh-e segāh. For Mirzā ‘Abdollāh’s radif see Jean During, The Radif of Mirzā Abdollāh: A Canonic Repertoire of Persian Music (Tehran: Māhur, 2006), 116-119.

Grayli is also mentioned by Hedāyat as an independent āvāz. Cf. Hedāyat, Majmaʿ al-advār, (manuscript), 2:116.

The extensive sequence of rāst-panjgāh was never performed by singers. A few number of court singers, however, performed a brief version of rāst. For further discussion, see Sayyed Ḩosayn Maythami, “Āvāz-e rāst dar dowrân-e qājār,” Māhur 51-52 (2011): 127-141.

Personal communication from Moḥammad-Rezā Loṭfi, 7/2001.

In an early recording of dastgāh-e navā sung by Qoli Khān and accompanied by Ṣafdar Khān on kamāncēh, the units are darāmad, shekasteh-ye kuchak, ḥosayn, pahlavi-ō ḥosayn, layli majnun. Cf. Michael Kinnear, The Gramophone Company’s Persian Recordings 1899 to 1934, (Victoria: Bajakhana, 2000), 49-50; the recording is also reproduced in The Early Recording of Seven Dastgāhs, Māhur, M.CD-345, 2013.
Even for much of the twentieth century, navā was not performed in Isfahan, Shiraz or Tabriz. It was only toward the end of the twentieth century that musicians in other cities came to be influenced by the tradition of Tehran and began to perform navā as well.

Personal communication from Dāriush Ṣafvat.

Personal communication from Dāriush Ṣafvat.


Cf. *dastgāh-e homāyun* and *dastgāh-e shur* in Ma’rufi and Barkechli, *Radif-e haft dastgāh-e musiqi-e irāni*.

Forud-e motammam or motammam was a term frequently used by Dāriush Ṣafvat and Moḥammad Irāni Mojarrad while teaching and analyzing the *radif*. It is also mentioned by Hedāyat in *Radif-e haft dastgāh-e musiqi-e Irāni be revāyat-e Mehdi Šolhi (Montaẓam al-Ḥokamā’)* (Tehran: Māhur, 2014), 67-68.

The general belief among Iranian musicians was that the *abu’atā* performed by Isfahani musicians was more elaborate and rich in phrase sequences than the version performed typically in Tehran and other cities. An early nineteenth-century musical text also attributes *abu’atā* to Isfahan by referring to it as *abu’atā’i-yé esfāhān*. Cf. Neubauer, “Zwölfi Dastgāh,” 358.

Ruḥollāḥ Khāleqi, *Naẓari be musiqi*, 272.


Personal communications from Dāriush Ṣafvat, Moḥammad-Reżā Loṭfī and Dāriush Talā’i.

The plucking system that developed through the practice of Mirzā ‘Abdollāh’s *radif* in Tehran was unique and it was not common in the practice of instrumental repertoire of Isfahan, Shiraz or Tabriz. Likewise, outside the capital, the instrumental repertoire was not often defined as something independent of the vocal repertoire.

Personal communication from Moḥammad-Reżā Loṭfī, 7/2001. As Dāriush Ṣafvat informed me, Davāmi’s *radif* was first transcribed by Abol-Ḥasan Šabā in the 1950s and Farāmarz Pāyvar used Šabā’s transcription in his *Radif-e āvāzi va taṣnīf-hā-ye qadimi be revāyat-e ‘Abdollāh*.
Davāmi, (Tehran: Māhur, 1996). In 1970s Davāmi recorded his *radif* while some of its segments were accompanied by Moḥammad-Reżā Loṭfī on the *tār*.

147 Cf. Maḥmud Karimi and Moḥammad-Taghi Massoudieh, *Radif-e āvāzi-ye musiqi-ye sonnatī-ye Irān be revāyat-e Maḥmud Karimi/Radif vocal de la musique iranienne* (Tehran: Sorush, 1978). Karimi was also known for creating new vocal units by using instrumental units as a model and setting *tahrir* and words to them. Personal communication from Fāṭemeh Vā’ezī (Parisā), 1/2019.
CHAPTER FOUR
RHYTHM

The theoretical discussion on rhythmics and metrics in Arabic and Persian musical writings between the ninth and sixteenth centuries was usually presented and characterized as the ‘ilm al-īqā’ or the science of rhythm. In essence, it described the fundamentals of metrics as well as the rhythmic cycles that were backbones of vocal and instrumental compositions throughout this period.

While Systematist theorists continued to write in Arabic and Persian on rhythmic cycles as iqāʾāt, advār al-iqāʾ, advār-e iqāʾī up until the end of the Timurid period, their contemporaries among practicing musicians began to call the rhythmic cycles ḍusuls.1 Subsequently in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Safavid music theorists and practicing musicians, along with their Central Asian and Ottoman counterparts, all referred to rhythmic cycles as ḍusuls. These three musical cultures evidently shared a stack of common rhythmic cycles; nonetheless, the pattern of ḍusuls with the same name was sometimes different in these three traditions and likewise, each tradition often adopted a number of regional-folk rhythmic patterns.

Toward the second half of the eighteenth century, the term ḍusul continued to be used in Central Asian and Ottoman regions, whereas in Iran it became obsolete. At the same time, the concept of meter came to be identified only as żarb while some of the Safavid and eighteenth-century ḍusul names and structures were still prevalent among practicing musicians in the capital and other urban centers. It is fair to say that, the term żarb in the Qajar period and later in the twentieth century had multiple meanings, just as it had during the Safavid period. While it continued to convey the concepts of attack, beat, rhythm it also exhibited significant affinities to that of dowr or rhythmic cycle. Moreover, żarbs were far more complicated than later
conceptualizations that corresponded, under the western influence, to duple, triple or quadruple meters.

The Early Accounts of Rhythm in Arabic and Persian

In the early Islamic period, four major meters (iqā’), of ramal (3/2), thaqil al-avval (4/2), thaqil al-thānī (5/2) and hazaj (6/8) were known in urban centers, especially in Medina, Mecca, Damascus, and later in the capital of the Abbasid Caliphate, Baghdad. These meters were primarily rendered in two tempos, thaqil (heavy) and khafif (light). They were first articulated and taught by the court musician of Persian descent Esḥaq al-Mowṣeli (d. 850) and subsequently classified and explicated by the celebrated Iranian philosopher and music theorist, Abu Naṣr Fārābī (d. 950).

Later on, Ebn Sinā outlines the same meters in the music chapter of Ketāb al-shefā’ and his prominent student, Ebn Zayleh (d. 1048) attests that the above mentioned rhythmic system governed the entire repertoire of Arabic, Persian (fārsi) and Khorāsānī songs by the eleventh century.

The author of Qābus-nāme in the twelve century categorizes melodies largely in two types of meters, gerān (heavy) and sabok (light), and subsequently urges musicians to perform melodies set to heavy meters for the potentates, nobility, and elderly; melodies set to light meters for the youth; and finally melodies set to more delicate and lighter meters, in the form of tarāneh, for women and children. As Eckhard Neubauer aptly noted, these three types of meters could be correlated to Fārābī’s system of metrics in such a way that the first type can be compared to ‘heavy’ meters, the second to the ‘light’ version of heavy meters and the third to the meter hazaj.

In the period between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, the old metric system in Baghdad gradually underwent a substantial development. While the iqā’ mostly retained the same
titles, their patterns became elaborated and finally increased in length. In the second half of the thirteenth century, a set of six major rhythmic cycles (advār al-żorub) was introduced by Ṣafī al-Din Ormavi, which came to be the standard set of iqā’s, discussed in subsequent Systematist musical texts written in Tabriz, Shiraz, Isfahan, and Herat for almost two centuries.

In his Ketāb al-advār, Ormavi introduces four different lengths of notes through poetic feet: letter alif or syllable ta is called sari‘ or hazaj (=1), letter bā‘ or syllable tan is called sabab or khafif (= 2), letter jīm or syllables tanan are called vatad or khafīf al-thaql (= 3), and letter dāl or syllables tananan are called fāṣela or thaql (= 4). For each rhythmic cycle, he designates the number of beats (naqrāt), attacks and durations, and finally, structure of the cycles by means of atānin mnemonic devices (e.g. tan tanan tananan), while he adds that his description only represents the normative version of each cycle (żarb al-aṣl). Later in Resāleh al-Sharafiyeh, he uses the mnemonic patterns of the root fa‘ala known from prosody. Therefore, the basic form of thaql al-awwal, described in Ketāb al-advār as tanan (= 3), tanan (= 3), tananan (= 4), tan (= 2), tananan (=4), is transcribed in Resāleh al-Sharafiyeh as mafā‘elun (3 + 3), fā‘elun (4), mufta‘elun (2 + 4). The division and grouping of these six cycles can be demonstrated as follows:

1. thaql al-avval 3 + 3 + 4 + 2 + 4 = 16 naqrehs or beats
2. thaql al-thānī 3 + 3 + 2 = 8
3. khafīf al-thaql 2 + 1 + 1, or 1 + 1 + 2 = 4
4. thaql al-ramal 4 + 4 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 4 = 24 (Ketāb al-advār)
   4 + 2 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 2 = 24 (Resāleh al-Sharafiyeh)
5. ramal 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 = 12
6. hazaj 4 + 2 + 4 + 2 = 12
While Ormavi highlights that Persian melodies were predominantly composed in *mużāʾaf al-ramal* (=*thaqil al-ramal*), his successor, Qoṭb al-Din Shirāzi, claims that *thaqil al-ramal,* especially the version mentioned in *Ketāb al-advār,* was only common among Persians in earlier times.\(^8\) They both mention *fākhtī,* however, as a distinct rhythmic cycle favored by Persians.\(^9\)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{*fākhtī* (Ormavi)} & \quad 4 + 2 + 4 + 4 + 2 + 4 = 20 \\
\text{*fākhtī* (Qoṭb-al-Din)} & \quad 2 + 4 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 4 = 20 \\
\text{*fākhtī-ye zāʾed,* (an extended form)} & \quad 2 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 4 + 4 = 28
\end{align*}
\]

In addition to the above cycles, Qoṭb al-Din Shirāzi also refers to the following four rhythmic cycles prevalent among his contemporary practicing musicians.\(^10\)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{*mokhammas*} & \quad 2 + 2 + 4 = 8 \\
\text{*žarb-e rāst* or *žarb-e ašl*} & \quad 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 4 = 12 \\
\text{*chahār-žarb*} & \quad 8 + 4 + 4 + 4 = 24 \\
\text{*torki*} & \quad 3 + 3 + 4 + 4 + 3 + 3 = 20 \\
\text{(in theory)} & \quad 2 + 2 + 2 1/3 + 2 1/3 + 2 + 2 = 12 [2/3]^{11}
\end{align*}
\]

In the same period, some urban centers from Baghdad to Bukhara seem to have developed distinctive rhythmic configurations or to have just given different names to rhythmic cycles introduced in Systematist tradition. `Alā’ al-Din Bokhārī (d. c.1291), a prominent contemporary of Ormavi, was an astrologist and music theorist in Bukhara who mentions the term *osul* for the first time in reference to long and short rhythmic cycles. His typology for these cycles includes seven principal meters (*osul,* sing. *ašl*) and seven spin-offs (*forū’,* sing. *far’*), the latter being introduced only as the faster (*saboktar*) versions of the same *osuls.*\(^12\)

A century later, another music theorist of Persian descent, Ebn Korr (d. 1357), whose father moved from Baghdad to Cairo, introduces twelve rhythmic cycles and their variants, among which two rhythmic cycles of khorāsāni and khosrvāni were undoubtedly cultivated by Persian musicians.\(^{13}\)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{khorāsāni} & : 6 + 6 + 6 + 6 = 24 \\
\text{khosrvāni} & : 6 + 6 + 6 = 18
\end{align*}
\]

**The Timurid Period**

In the first half of the fifteenth century, ‘Abd al-Qāder Marāghi (d. 1435) treats the topic of rhythm in a more systematic way in all his treatises, dividing the chapter on *iqā‘* primarily into three sections: 1) the rhythmic cycles that were invented in the past by his predecessors, 2) the predominant rhythmic cycles established among his contemporaries, and 3) the rhythmic cycles that were invented by himself.\(^{14}\)

In the first section, he initially expounds upon the accounts by his predecessors especially Ḥāfiz and Ormavi on definitions of rhythm and meter, while he examines the six standard rhythmic cycles presented in *Ketāb al-advār*. In addition to *thaqil al-avval*, *thaqil al-thāni*, *khafif al-thaqil*, *thaqil al-ramal*, *ramal*, and *hazaj*, Marāghi mentions *varashān* as an alternative name for *thaqil al-avval* that was commonly used by Persian musicians.\(^{15}\) He refers to *chanbar* as a subset of *hazaj*, prevalent in Tabriz and predominantly played by *qavvālān* and *moghanniyyān* and also *fākhti* as specifically used by Persians, yet he adds that except for himself, other composers seldom wrote compositions in this last cycle.\(^{16}\)

In the second section, Marāghi introduces eight rhythmic cycles and their spin-offs that were practiced frequently in his own time in composition of *nowbats*, *basīts*, *‘amals*, *qowls* and
šoorts. He clearly indicates that some of the rhythmic cycles already introduced in the Systematist
tradition had been renamed by then:

1. *thaqil*: what was previously named *thaqil-e ramal*.
2. *khafif*: what was previously named *thaqil-e thāni*.

3. *chahār-žarb*\(^\text{17}\)
   
   - 24-beat version: \(4 \times 6 = 24\)
   - 48-beat version: \(4 \times 12 = 48\)

4. *torki-ye aşl*
   
   - Old *torki-ye aşl*: \(2 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 2 + 4 = 20\)
   - *torki-ye khaqif*: 12-beat cycle
   - *torki-ye sari*\(^\text{18}\)
   - *far′-e torki-ye aşl*: \(3 + 2 = 5\)

5. *mokhammas-e kabir*
   
   - *mokhammas-e owsaṭ*: \(3 + 3 = 6\)
   - *mokhammas-e şaghir*: \(2 + 2 = 4\)

6. *ramal*\(^\text{18}\)
   
   \(2 + 2 + 4 + 4 = 12\)

7. *hazaj*\(^\text{19}\)
   
   - (the old version): \(4 + 2 + 4 + 2 = 12\)
   - (in practice): \(4 + 2 = 6\)

8. *fākhtiy-e kabir*
   
   - *fākhtiy-e owsaṭ*: \(2 + 4 + 4 = 10\)
   - *fākhtiy-ye şaghir*: \(3 + 2 = 5\)

Finally, in the third section, he presents six rhythmic cycles that were invented by himself
during a long period while he was in the service of various rulers. The account of these rhythmic
cycles is more thoroughly and precisely presented in *Sharh-e advār* and can be summarized as
follows:

1. *žarb al-fath* (beats of conquest): \(3 + 3 + 4 + 4 + 3 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 4 = 49\)
He invented and wrote a composition in this rhythmic cycle when Ghiyāth al-Din Shahzādeh
conquered Baghdad in 1382.
2. dowr al-rabi’ (cycle of spring): \[4 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 4 = 24\]
He invented and wrote a composition in this rhythmic cycle in a courtly musical gathering held by Solṭān Hosayn Jalāyer (r. 1377-1382) in the garden of the dowlatkhāneh in Tabriz. Since it was in springtime, he named the cycle dowr al-rabi’.

3. dowr-e shāh-żarb (cycle of kingly beats): \[4 + 3 + 2 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 2 + 2 + 3 + 3 + 2 = 30\]
He invented and wrote a composition in this rhythmic cycle when he was in a boat in Baghdad with Solṭān Ahmad Jalāyer (r. 1382-1410). Marāghi arranged this rhythmic cycle in 30 beats so as to match the number of sailors who were in the boat.

4. me’atayn (cycle of 200 beats): \[4 \times 50 = 200\]
He invented and wrote a composition in this rhythmic cycle in a courtly musical gathering held by the prince Ghiyāth al-Din Mohammad in the garden of naqsh-e jahān in Samarqand.

5. dowr-e ‘adl (cycle of justice): \[2 + 2 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 3 + 3 + 2 + 4 = 28\]
He invented this rhythmic cycle in a courtly musical gathering of Shāhrokh (r. 1405-1447) in the garden of zāghān in Herat.

6. qomriyyeh \[4 + 4 = 8\]
He invented this rhythmic cycle based on the call of the qomri (European turtle dove) when he was in a courtly musical gathering at the service of Timur’s grandson, Khalil Solṭān (r. 1405-1411) in Khojand.²⁰

Marāghi continues with the discussion of “entering a rhythmic cycle from various beats” and in doing so, he refers to the duration of beats in terms of poetic feet. These poetic feet can be described as follows:

- **naqreh** short = 1 beat
- **sabab-e khafif** long = 2 beats
- **vatad-e majmu’** short-long = 3 beats
- **faṣeleh-ye ʂoghrā** short-short-long = 4 beats

As for entering rhythmic cycles, he writes:

Entering (dokhul) a taṣnif for instance in the cycle of thaqil-e thāni, which is called khafif by practicing musicians, in a sixteen-beat (naqreh) cycle, could be either from the first beat, second beat, third beat or any other beat up to the sixteenth.

Entering in the beginning of a taṣnif can be in three ways: together (ma’a), before (qabl) or after (ba’d). ‘Together’ is when performing the beats of the cycle, verse and vocal
melody all start at the same time. ‘Before’ is when performing the beats starts before verse and vocal melody. And ‘after’ is when performing the beats starts after verse and vocal melody.

In the cycle of *thaqil-e thānī* entering is possible in sixteen types (*ṣenf*). If one counts the first beat aloud (the duration of *a naqreh*), it is called entering from the second [beat] in such a way that one says *ta* and enters the *taṣnīf*. If one counts the first two beats aloud (the duration of a *sabab-e khafīf*) and then enters a *taṣnīf*, in such a way that one says *tan* and starts, it is called entering from the third beat. If one counts the first three beats aloud (the duration of a *vataad-e majmu’*) namely saying *tanan* and then starts, it is called entering from the fourth beat. If one counts the first four beats aloud (the duration of a *faṣeleh-ye ṣoghrā*) namely saying *tanan-tan* and start, it is called entering from the fifth beat and accordingly one can count fifteen beats and enter from the sixteenth beat in the *taṣnīf*. Therefore, in this cycle entering is possible in sixteen kinds (*qesm*). Entering a cycle is possible according to the number of its beats and a composer who makes a *taṣnīf* can mark the entrance based on his own predilection. The same analogy can be used in all rhythmic cycles.

The conclusion (*khoruj*) has to be on the same beat as the entering of a *taṣnīf*—for instance, both from the fifth beat—unless there would be a prolonged vowel (*madd*) at the end of the *taṣnīf*. The duration of the prolonged vowel should also match the right beat. When the prolonged vowel is rendered to divide and regulate *taṣnifs*, it may not extend two cycles.21

As Neubauer states, the stock of common meters described in the period between Ormavi and Marāghi reflects the practice of a strong and coherent urban tradition in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in Baghdad, Shiraz, Tabriz and Herat and its kernel was inherently Iranian.22

In the second half of the fifteenth century in Herat, ‘Alishāh b. Bukeh Owbah and ‘Ali b. Moḥammād Banā’i both classify the rhythmic cycles into three groups of *theqāl* (*thaqils*), *armāl* (*ramals*), and *favākht* (*fākhts*), and designate one cycle as the ‘reference’ (*marja’*) to each group.23 Owbah lists the rhythmic cycles in the following order:

1. *theqāl*
   
   1.1. *khafif al-thaqil* (*mokhammas-e ṣaghīr*)  
   1  2  2  4  [reference]
   
   1.2. *rāh-e ekhlātī* (called *ghurīyāneh* by Banā’i)  
   2  4  2  8
   
   1.3. *thaqil-e thānī* (*mokhammas-e owsat*)  
   3  3  2  8
   
   1.4. *mokhammas-e kabīr*  
   2  4  2  4  4  16
   
   1.5. *varashān*24  
   3  3  4  2  4  16
   
   1.6. *varashān-e zā’ed*  
   3  3  4  2  4  2  18
1.7. **khafif (mokhammas-e mozhā’af)** \[4 + 4 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 6 + 8 = 32\]

2. **armāl**

2.1. **owfar (rāh-e bālā)** \[3 + 3 = 6\] [reference]

2.2. **khafif al-ramal** \[2 + 4 = 6\]

2.3. **ramal (mokhammas-e ravān)** \[2 + 2 + 2 + 4 = 12\]

2.4. **hazaj-e chanbar (rāh-e samā’ or dowr)\textsuperscript{25}** \[4 + 2 + 4 + 2 = 12\]

2.5. **mozhā’af al-ramal (thaqīl al-ramal or shādiyāneh)** \[4 + 4 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 4 = 24\]

2.6. **nim-thaqil** \[4 + 4 + 2 + 6 + 8 = 24\]

2.7. **mozhā’af-e nim-thaqil** \[4 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 6 + 6 + 6 + 8 + 8 = 48\]

2.8. **chahār-żarb-e šaghir** \[4 + 2 + 6 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 4 = 24\]

2.9. **chahār-żarb-e owsat** \[4 (× 12) = 48\]

2.10. **chahār-żarb-e kabir** \[4 (× 24) = 96\]

3. **favākht**

3.1. **fākhti-e šaghir** \[3 + 2 = 5\]

3.2. **fākhti-e owsat** \[2 + 4 + 4 = 10\]

3.3. **fākhti-e kabir** \[2 + 8 + 10 = 20\]

3.4. **dowr-e shāhī (dowr-e bāzgūneh)** \[4 + 2 + 6 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 2 + 6 + 8 = 40\]

3.5. **nesf-e torki-ye sāri’** \[2 + 3 = 5\]

3.6. **torki-ye sāri’ (żarb-e far’)** \[2 + 3 + 2 + 3 = 10\] [reference]

3.7. **torki (żarb-e aṣl)** \[2 + 3 + 2 + 3 + 2 + 3 + 2 + 3 = 20\]

As early as the thirteenth century, a normative rhythmic cycle among practicing musicians and music theorists was recognized as żarb-e aṣl or aṣl (lit. original rhythm) and its variants, spin-offs, or faster versions were considered as żarb-e far’s (lit. derivative rhythms).\textsuperscript{26} At the outset, it is likely that only the żarb-e aṣls were called oṣul, and in fact the term oṣul, denoting rhythmic cycle(s), originated from the żarb-e aṣls, but gradually oṣul was used loosely by practicing musicians to refer to all individual rhythmic cycles regardless of being aṣl or far’.\textsuperscript{27}
During the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries, it also seems that those musicians who had a notably freer approach to theoretical structures or perhaps were not involved in courtly musical practices would have used a broad and less elaborate classification of meters. In a few Persian musical treatises, żorub are generalized as dō-żarb (dupe), se-żarb (triple), and even chahār-żarb (quadruple).28

Overview of Accounts of Rhythm in Safavid Sources

The author of Nasim-e ṭarab is the first music theorist in the sixteenth century who provides an inventory of the ọsul probably known in the provincial court of Gilan. While he does not provide a specific classification of rhythms, he enumerates about thirty-five rhythmic cycles and attributes the invention of some ọsul to specific individuals.29

1. fath (żarb al-fath) 2 + 2 + 6 (× 9) = 58
2. chahār-żarb 4 (× 12) = 48
3. thaqil 4 + 4 + 6 + 6 + 6 + 7 + 3 = 36
4. khafif 4 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 4 = 24
5. mokhammas 5 + 5 + 5 + 5 = 20
6. beshārat-e kabir 2 + 4 + 2 + 2 + 4 + 2 + 2 + 4 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 2 + 2 = 36
7. beshārat-e şaghir 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 4 = 22
8. khvājak (daqqāq) 2 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 3 + 3 + 2 + 4 + 2 = 26
9. owsat 4 + 4 + 2 + 2 + 4 + 2 = 18
10. varafshān 3 + 3 + 4 + 4 = 14
11. shāhnāmeh 4 + 4 + 4 + 2 = 14
12. torki 2 + 4 + 4 + 2 = 12
13. ramal 2 + 2 + 4 = 8
14. hazaj 2 + 4 + 4 = 10
15. dō-yek 4 + 4 = 8
16. owfar 2 + 4 = 6
17. *fākhteh-yə kabir*  
\[3 + 2 + 2 = 7\]

18. *fākhteh-yə şaghir*  
\[3 + 2 = 5\]

19. *mohajjal*  
\[4 + 5 + 3 + 3 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 3 = 26\]

20. *nim-thaqil*  
\[2 + 2 + 3 + 3 = 10\]

21. *ḥejāzi*  
\[2 + 2 + 4 + 3 + 3 = 14\]

22. *oşul-e 'amal*  
\[2 + 2 + 3 + 3 + 2 + 2 + 2 = 16\]

23. *ramal-e ṯavil*  
\[3 + 5 + 2 + 2 + 2 = 16\]

24. *samāʾi*  
\[2 + 3 + 4 = 9\]

25. *ḥarbi*  
\[3 + 3 + 2 + 2 = 10\]

26. *soltān*  
\[2 + 4 + 3 + 2 = 11\]

27. *orghushtak*  
\[2 + 4 = 6\]

28. *ravān-e kabir*  
\[2 + 2 + 2 + 2 = 8\]

29. *ravān-e şaghir*  
\[2 + 2 + 2 = 6\]

30. *faraḥ-e kabir*  
\[3 + 3 + 2 + 4 = 12\]

31. *faraḥ-e şaghir*  
\[3 + 2 + 2 + 4 = 11\]

32. *khafif-e şariḥ*  
\[2 + 2 + 2 + 3 + 3 = 14\]

33. *żarbi*  
\[2 + 4 + 4 + 2 = 12\]

The early sixteenth-century *Taqsim al-naghamāt* presents seventeen cycles of *oşuls* and divides them into three main groups. The first group is categorized as the old set of *oşuls* invented by the antecedent master musicians.

1. *hazaj*  
\[2 + 4 + 2 = 8\]

2. *owfar*  
\[2 + 4 = 6\]

3. *dō-yek*  
\[2 + 4 + 4 = 10\]

4. *torki-żarb*  
\[2 + 5 + 4 + 4 + 2 = 17\]

5. *mokhammas*  
\[5 + 5 + 5 + 5 = 20\]

6. *żarb al-qadim*  
*described as a pulse derived from the heartbeat*
The second group of ḍūls contains five cycles whose inventions are ascribed to Ṣafī al-Dīn Ormāvī and his disciples including ‘Alī Setā’ī, ‘Alī Robābī, Ostād Tanparvar, Ostād Ruḥparvar and Ḥasān ‘Udi. Nonetheless, in most cases, the cycles seem to have been fictitiously attributed to those individuals.

7. ṭhaqīl $4 \times 11 = 44$ (Ormāvī)
8. ḵafīf $4 + 4 + 5 + 3 + 5 + 3 + 4 = 28$ (‘Alī Setā’ī)
9. chahār-żarb $4 \times 12 = 48$ (‘Alī Robābī)
10. owsāt $4 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 2 = 18$ (Tanparvar)
11. varafšān $3 + 3 + 4 + 4 = 14$ (Ruḥparvar)
12. ramal $3 + 3 + 4 + 2 = 12$ (Ḥasān ‘Udi)

Finally, the last group of ḍūls is attributed to ‘Abd al-Qāder Marāghī.

13. ḵarb al-fāṭḥ $4 + 4 + 3 + 3 + 2 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 4 + 3 + 3 + 2 + 2 + 4 + 2 + 1$
$+ 1 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 2 = 78$
14. šāhnāmeh $4 + 4 + 4 + 2 = 14$
15. khvājāk $2 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 2 + 4 + 4 + 4 = 26$
16. fākhteh-ye kabīr $3 + 2 + 2 = 7$
17. me’atayn $2 \times 100 = 200$

Dowreh Beg Kerāmī’s account of rhythm in the second half of the sixteenth century, though similar to that of Taqsim al-naghmāt, is not as thorough as the latter. He introduces Nakisā, a pre-Islamic legendary musician, as the founder of metrics while opening the chapter on rhythm with a discussion of the perception and rendition of ḍūls by practicing musicians.

Know that, ḍūl is the plural of ašl. And ašl, in the terminology of the science of music, refers to the compatibility (movāfeq budan) of the diction (nотg), rhythm (żarb) and time ( zamān). Sensing the time that lays between two beats or discerning the duration (meqdār-e zamān) between beats and keeping their rules is a natural (dhāti) and innate (jabelli) sense, it is not acquired (kasbi). Master [musicians] have rendered musical performances (adā kardan-e musiqi) in three ways: before (qabl), together (ma’ahu) and after (ba’d). ‘Before’ is where they play the rhythm (żarb) first and then play the melody. ‘Together’ is
where they start playing rhythm and melody at the same time. And ‘after’ is where they play the melody first and then play the rhythm.\textsuperscript{32}

Kerāmi mentions the five oṣuls of hazaj, owfar, dō-yek, torki-żarb, and mokhammas, as the fundamental rhythmic cycles that had been used in core compositional genres (madār-e taṣnīf) for a long period of time and adds that later on, Şafī al-Din Ormavi, ‘Ali Ruḥparvar, Ḥasan ‘Udi, and ‘Abd al-Qāder Marāghī made significant contributions to the development of rhythms and establishment of the canonic seventeen cycles of oṣul. Nonetheless, he only refers to sixteen cycles and fails to indicate their structures:

1. hazaj, 2. owfar, 3. dō-yek, 4. chahār-żarb, 5. mokhammas, 6. barafshān, 7. chanbar, 8. ramal, 9. fākhte-żarb, 10. torki-żarb, 11. nim-thaqīl, 12. khāfīf, 13. thaqīl, 14. owsaf (also called far‘), 15. żarb al-faṭḥ, and 16. me’atayn.\textsuperscript{33}

He also specifies some rhythmic cycles that were invented by his contemporaries and himself that were not considered part of the canonic seventeen cycles as follows:

-Żarb al-moluk which was invented by recent [musicians].
-Żarb al-aṣl was invented by the unparalleled Ostād Soḥbān-Moḥammad Tanburi, who became a composer of many pishrows, using various forms and challenging techniques.
-Dowr is of many types: dowr-e qadim, dowr-e aṣl, dowr-e samā’i, dowr-e hendi and the nim-dowr, better known as pir-e jamālī.
-The ravān-owfar, known among the public as rāh-e bālā.
-Shādiyāneh-ye torki and shādiyāneh-ye khāfī.

I have also invented an oṣul called żarb al-’eshq and wrote two compositions based on that in [the form of] naqsh and [the mode] chahārgāh. May musicians (arbāb-e nagham) and benevolent folks (ašhab-e karam) decline to criticize [me] and instead seek to improve them.\textsuperscript{34}

Mir Şadr al-Din Moḥammad, the other late sixteenth century music theorist, opens the fifth chapter of his musical treatise with the subject of oṣuls. He first narrates a story attributed to Ebn Sinā to emphasize the significance that having a sharp acumen and perception of rhythm holds for musicians.\textsuperscript{35}

If a person lacks balanced humors (mizān-e ṭab‘), all his attempts and probing, no matter how hard they are and how long he spends time, will be in vain. Nobody is able to advance in this area without an inherent sense of rhythm. The best example was Shaykh Ra’is [Ebn
Sinā], a philosopher who was far more knowledgeable than any other Islamic philosophers and was peerless in all areas of philosophy from East to West, but lacked the taste (saliqeh) of music. The deeper he indulged in this science and managed to deal with the performance practice, the less he succeeded. A strange story related about him is as follows:

One night he left the court of the king of the time, heading to his house. Unusually, he was not carrying his lamp with him. In the middle of the way he saw a group of mendicants (qalandars), who were sitting in front of a shop and having a rhythmic dialogue through clapping of hands (oṣul-e dast). He decided to participate in their assembly. Thus, he left the horse with his servant and moved towards the shop. He stood there and counted a few cycles first so as to catch the down beat correctly. But, since he lacked the proper principle, his first clap fell out of beat. The mendicants suddenly realized that there was a stranger among them. They sought to catch his mantle and hold him. Nevertheless, the sheikh jumped out and left his shoes behind. Walking barefoot, he was able to jump on his horse and run away home.

The purpose of relating this story was to show that the sense of rhythm (vazn-e oṣul) cannot be acquired through practice and effort. It depends on who has been gifted from the Divine generosity. If a person overcomes his ego and avoids clapping hands and tapping feet while listening to music, provided that his avoidance is not associated with hypocrisy and pride, it is unquestionably worth a great deal. However, he needs not to be devoid of an inherent sense of rhythm (oṣul-e dhāti) altogether as this would be a distortion in his taste and a deficiency in his humors.36

While Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad goes on to enumerate the oṣuls and comment on their etymology, origin, and historical development, like Kerāmi, he doesn’t specify their number of beats and internal structures.

After this rudimentary explanation, we will talk about the principles of rhythmic cycles, as everything declared so far was not the main discussion. As is mentioned in most books on this art, the first rhythmic cycle that practicing musicians invented was aṣl-e varashān, which is known today among the multitude (ʻavāmm) as varafshān. The reason it is called varashān is because the rhythmic pattern (żarb) of this cycle resembles the call of a bird that is named khar-kabutar in Persian and warashān in Arabic. For a long time in which various rhythmic cycles had not still been invented, the [rhythmic] system (madār) of musicians was based only on this cycle. Eventually, innovative master musicians came into existence and created other rhythmic cycles.

Among rhythmic cycles, the first one was torki-żarb which in reality is one of the strange inventions and it can be said that, even at the most advanced level of performance practice, no one has made such an extraordinary invention as this. Ramal, which is known today as chanbar, was invented after torki-żarb and afterwards mokhammas was [invented].

Afterwards, it is not clear in what chronological order, other rhythmic cycles, which will be mentioned henceforth, came into being. Nevertheless, it is clear enough that some of the following rhythmic cycles were discovered based on other cycles. As for instance,
châhâr-żarb was derived from mokhammas. Samâ‘i, which is known in Khorasan as dowr-e shâhî, was adopted out of torki-żarb. Ošul-e hâvi is clearly the same as ızâr al-fâth except for the fact that they eliminated six consecutive beats from żâr al-fâth and named it hâvi. Two other rhythmic cycles are sarandâz and żâr al-moluk. The former arose from mokhammas or it can be said that it is mokhammas itself. Its inventor was Mollâ Shams Rumi, who would have been better off not making such an invention. The latter arose from fâkhteh-ye kabîr to the extent that, from beginning to the end, it is identical with fâkhteh-ye kabîr and even there is no difference between their metric structures (vazn). The two rhythmic cycles of thaqîl and khafîf are both distant cycles having no color (rang) of any other cycles. The name of the rhythmic cycle of nim-thaqîl indicates itself where it comes from.

Fâkhteh ızâr is the same as fâkhteh-ye şaghîr and is more distinguished than the majority of rhythmic cycles, but it is not well-matched with any. Even though fâkhteh-ye kabîr is equal in length with some rhythmic cycles, its rhythmic pattern (bahâr) and meter (vazn) are distinct from them, and it seems apparently to be older. The [two versions] of şaghîr and kabîr were found from the dove call (āvâz-e fâkhteh). The dove singing in both versions was heard [and tested] repeatedly at this time. The difference between its şaghîr (short) and kabîr (long) [versions] is only two beats (żárbs).

Among the prominent rhythmic cycles is ošul-e ‘amâl of which the multitude knows nothing more than its name. To catch its rhythm properly in a cycle is fairly complicated. There is also the rhythmic cycle of dowr-e shâhî which is called samâ‘i-ye gerân in Khorasan. This is a rhythmic cycle different from samâ‘i; nevertheless, it is close to samâ‘i and is an accepted rhythmic cycle. It is also close and related to dowr-e âsl. Likewise, the rhythmic cycle mojammar is a lesser known cycle and its pattern is not similar to that of any other rhythmic cycles. To catch its rhythm properly in a cycle is extremely complicated. These two rhythmic cycles together with ızâr al-fâth and me’atayn—that is the longest rhythmic cycle—are all among the inventions of the exceptional taste of Khwâja ‘Abd al-Qâder.

Dô-yek is also among the old rhythmic cycles. It is well-matched with the majority of cycles for its ratio with most of them is nothing but 1:3, 1:4, 1:5 and so on. The majority of prominent pishrows were composed in this rhythmic cycle. Verily, pishrow has a particular compatibility with this cycle that [every time it is composed] in other rhythmic cycles, employing even advanced techniques, it doesn’t sound euphonious.

Owfar, which is better known as râh-e bâlâ, seems to be less respected (ḥaqîrtar) in relation to other cycles, but it is one of the uniquely pleasant and charming rhythmic cycles to the extent that it is highly popular and celebrated all over the world.

Other famous rhythmic cycles such as dowr-e ravân, pir-e jamâli and samâ‘i-ye ravân all arose from the above-mentioned cycles, as the name samâ‘i-ye ravân indicates that itself.37

Mir Şadr al-Dîn Moḥammad further makes a distinction between the rhythmic cycles employed in the art music and those of the naqqâreh-khâneh.

Several rhythmic cycles are also played in the naqqâreh-khâneh (house of kettledrum) and they are only specific to that instrument. Some of the rhythmic cycles are identical and
equal in length with the above-mentioned rhythmic cycles. Some lack established structures and they can hardly be subject to compositions. It is only sufficient to mention their names as follows:

1. jalili, 2. shirāzi, 3. qalandari, 4. khvārazmi and 5. ḫarbi.

All the rhythmic cycles that have been mentioned so far, except for the torki żarb, can match with hazaj in a stunning fashion. [This is done] in the way that if someone keeps one of these rhythmic cycles and someone else adjacent to him plays hazaj, the sounds of two rhythms combine so perfectly as if they are [playing] one rhythm. The concept of hazaj contains certain number of successive beats that the intervals between them are equal throughout the cycle in such a way that there is no difference among the rests (mohlat) befallen between beats. In addition to this hazaj, there used to be another rhythmic cycle called hazaj in the past, which is unknown to everyone at the present time. Some maintain that it was the rhythmic cycle ḏō-yek which is renamed today as hazaj; nevertheless, the truth is not clear.³⁸

From the seventeenth century, Safavid musicians adhered to a system of representing the oṣuls that introduced each cycle by the pattern and number of attacks. In this system, which seems to have been adopted from Ottoman music culture, while characteristic patterns of various attacks are exhibited, their durations are not indicated, and hence the rhythmic values of the cycles cannot be identified.

An anonymous musical treatise in the codex of Amir Khān Gorji is probably the earliest text that gives the structure of seven cycles based on this system.

1. mokhammas: dakkā, dakkā, dik, dakkā, dakkā, dik, dakkā, dik, dakkā, dik, dakkā, dik, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā, dakkā.³⁹
The author further introduces twenty-one cycles of ḍoṣuls while he also mentions the number of beats or probably attacks (ẓarbs) in each cycle.


Āqā Moʿmen Moṣannefʿs account of rhythm is very brief and he only names the seventeen cycles as follows:

1. ẓarb al-ḥaṭḥ, 2. ṭhaqil, 3. nim-ṭhaqil, 4. dowr, 5. nim-dowr, 6. ṭork-ẓarb, 7. samāʿi, 8. mokhammas, 9. chanbar, 10. ṭhaṣif, 11. farʿ, 12. ṣaraṣhān, 13. ṭaḥṭḥ-ẓarb, 14. ẓarb al-moluk, 15. chahār-ẓarb, 16. owfar and ravānī are the same, but one is light and the other one is heavy, 17. ḏo-bar-yek, which also has light and heavy versions.⁴¹

Amir Khān Gorji also reiterates that the canonic set of ḍoṣuls consisted of seventeenth cycles; nonetheless, he mentions that among the singers (ḥoffāz) of his time, nineteen cycles were in common use.


He further introduces the stroke patterns of eighteen cycles and while he overlooks the patterns of samāʿi and farʿ from the above-mentioned ḍoṣuls, he adds nim-ṭhaqil as a new cycle to the list:

1. ẓufiyānāh (3 ẓarbs) dik daka.
2. ravānī (5 ẓarbs) dik daka dik daka.
3. ḥarbi (5 ẓarbs) dik daka dik daka.
4. ḏo-bar-yek (5 ẓarbs) dik daka dik daka dik daka.
5. ṭaḥṭḥ ẓarb (9 ẓarbs) dik daka dik daka daka daka daka.
6. dowr (13 ẓarbs) dik daka dik daka daka daka daka.
7. nim-dowr (10 ẓarbs) dik daka dik daka daka daka daka.
8. chanbar (12 żarbs) dik daka dik dik dak daka daka daka.
9. barafshān (10 żarbs) dik dak dik dak daka daka daka daka.
10. owfar (8 żarbs) dik daka daka daka daka.
11. ramal-e kabir (28 żarbs) dik dak dik dak daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka.
12. ramal-e šaghir (12 żarbs) dik daka daka daka daka daka daka.
13. torki-žarb (13 żarbs) dik daka daka daka daka daka daka.
14. mokhammas (20 żarbs) dik daka dik daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka.
15. nim-thaqil (17 żarbs) dik daka dik daka daka daka daka daka daka.
16. khafif (25 żarbs) dik daka dik daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka.
17. thaqil (36 żarbs) dik daka dik daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka.
18. žarb al-fath (59 żarbs) dik daka dik daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka daka.

Amir Khān offers four possible attacks for the rhythmic patterns: dik (1 żarb/attack), dak (1 żarb/attack), daka (2 żarbs/attacks) and dikak (3 żarbs/attacks). Dik was obviously the low center and dak, was the high rim strokes—two onomatopics that later appeared in the nineteenth-century Persian music as dom and bak.42

The Bahjat al-ruḥ is another notable musical treatise of the seventeenth century that classifies the rhythmic cycles into two groups of twenty-seven oṣul of court music and seven oṣul of military and ceremonial bands (practiced by naqqārehchis). He presents the first group of oṣul in two lists. In the first list, he gives the number of attacks (žarabāt, sing. žarbeh) for each rhythmic cycle, and in the second list, he identifies their internal structure by using a rhythmic notation called tahajji al-advār (articulation of cycles), that resembles in most part the non-textual syllables.
(nagarāt) used in some sections of Safavid vocal compositions. The combination of these two lists can be displayed as follows:

1. fākhteh-žarb (7 žarbs) tan tan tananah dar nā tananah
2. tork-žarb (10 žarbs) tan tan tananah dar dar tan
3. barajfshān (7 žarbs) tananah tananah dar nā
4. mokhhammas (10 žarbs) tananah dar tananah
5. chanbar (8 žarbs) dar tan tan dar tananah tananah
tan
6. thaql (12 žarbs) tananah tananah dar tananah dar dar tan darna
7. khafīf (11 žarbs) tananah tananah tananah dar nā
8. owsat (7 žarbs) tananah tananah tananah
tan
9. me’atayn (200 žarbs) contains two hundred beats.
10. dowr (12 žarbs) tananah dar tan tā dar tan tananah dar tan tā dar tan
tan
11. nim-thaql (14 žarbs) tananah tananah dar tananah dar tananah
tan tananah tananah
tan
12. hazaj (4 žarbs) tan tan tananah
tan
13. owsat (7 žarbs) tananah dar tananah
tan
14. ramal (19 žarbs) tananah tananah tananah tananah tananah
tan tananah
tan
15. dō-o-yek (9 žarbs) -
16. chahār-žarb (4 žarbs) -
17. panj-žarb (5 žarbs) -
18. moqaddam (11 žarbs) -
19. žarb al-fath (24 žarbs) -
20. shāhnāmeh (18 žarbs) -
21. ākel (9 žarbs) tananah dar tan darah dim tananah tananah
tan dar nā
22. far’ (6 žarbs) tan darah dim tananah
tan
tan
23. dowr-e ravān (9 žarbs) tananah tananah dar dar tananah
tan dar tananah
tan
tan
tan
24. samā’i (14 žarbs) tananah tananah tananah
tan
tan
tan
25. nim-dowr (17 žarbs) tananah tananah
tan
tan
tan
26. žarb al-qadim (8 žarbs) tananah
tan dar darah dim
tan dar nā dar tan dar nā
tan
tan
tan
tan
tan
tan
tan
tan
The Development of Rhythmic Cycles in the Safavid Persia

It is evident that the Safavid music theorists were not as systematic in classifying the rhythmic cycles as their Timurid predecessors. In the Safavid musical treatises, along with the twelve maqāms, six āvāzehs, and twenty-four sho’behs, seventeen cycles of oṣuls are often mentioned as the canonic rhythmic cycles. Yet, unlike the modal entities, neither the list of rhythmic cycles nor the number of beats is conventional and consistent among the various sources. This inconsistency might derive from various possible factors. First, in most cases, there is no reliable manuscript or scrupulous critical edition of these musical treatises, hence the outline of rhythmic cycles in these texts could contain some omissions. Secondly, musicians of various regions may have practiced their own versions of the cycles. And thirdly, one should consider the possibility that musicians might have had differing perceptions as to how the beats should be counted, or the attacks and structure of a given rhythmic cycle should be discerned. The lack of an accurate system of articulating rhythmic patterns and the duration of attacks and rests also adds further complications to these problems.

From the second half of the sixteenth century, however, Safavid music theorists clearly introduce oṣuls in two categories of art and naqqāreh-khāneh music and this classification further allows us to identify the naqqāreh-khāneh cycles in the preceding periods as well.

Rhythmic Cycles of the Art Music

At the end of the Timurid period, Owbahi divides the oṣuls in three categories of theqāl, armāl, and favākht. These three groups seem to have been correlated with the three broad groups of dō-żarb, se-żarb and lang/aksāk (Persian and Turkish terms meaning limping) meters that were mentioned alternatively in some other musical treatises.45 While theqāl or dō-żarb consisted of
cycles of simple duple and quadruple meters including 4, 8, 16, and 32 beats, *armāl* or *se-żarb* consisted of cycles of compound duple meters including 6, 12, 24, 48 and 96 beats, and finally *favākht*, correlated with the *lang* or the cycles of complex meters including mostly 5, 10, and 20 beats. After the fifteenth century, the terms *thegāl*, *armāl*, and *favākht* do not appear in musical sources, but the tripartite classification of *dō-żarb*, *se-żarb* and *lang* continued to be the foundation of rhythmic system in Iran until the twentieth century or even up to this date.

It is evident from the Safavid sources that the quantitative *atānin* mnemonic devices (i.e., *tan tanan*, *tananan*) practiced by the Systematist and early sixteenth century music theorists were no longer employed in the second half of the sixteenth century. During the seventeenth century practicing musicians gradually adopted the *dik dak* syllables denoting qualitative drum strokes, which nevertheless failed to indicate the duration of strokes and, subsequently, the number of beats in the cycles.

A prominent *oṣul* in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries among the public (*ʿavām*) was *rāh-e bālā*. Owbahi, Kerāmi and Mir Šadr al-Din Moḥammad all equate it with *owfar*. While Owbahi refers to it as the main rhythmic cycle in the category of ramals with the \(3 + 3 = 6\) pattern, Mir Šadr al-Din Moḥammad also describes it as a fairly simple, but uniquely pleasant, charming, and highly popular *oṣul*. Nonetheless, all descriptions may indicate that by *rāh-e bālā* they were referring to the brisk and energetic 6/8 meter which has long been the cornerstone of many dance tunes in Persia and is still recognized to this date in the *shashmaqom* music of Central Asia as *żarb-e owfar*.47
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taqsim al-naghamāt</th>
<th>Nasimi</th>
<th>Kerāmi</th>
<th>Mir Ṣadr al-Din</th>
<th>Āqā Mo’men</th>
<th>Amir Khān Gorji</th>
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Table 4. 1. The rhythmic cycles mentioned by Safavid music theorists throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taqsim al-naghāmāt</th>
<th>Anonymous Treatise</th>
<th>Bahjat al-ruḥ</th>
<th>Amir Khān Gorji</th>
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Table 4. 2. The rhythmic cycles mentioned in the Anonymous Treatise and the *Bahjat al-ruḥ* and comparing them with the accounts of the first and last Safavid musical treatises.
**Rhythmic Cycles of the Naqqāreh-khāneh**

The account of Safavid musical treatises clearly indicates that some rhythmic cycles that were mentioned earlier in Timurid musical texts developed primarily in the context of *naqqāreh-khāneh*. Nevertheless, no music theorist prior to sixteenth century includes a section specifically on this subject or even refers directly to *naqqāreh-khāneh* rhythms.

Toward the end of the sixteenth century, Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad mentions *jalili, shirāzi, qalandari, khᵛārazmi, and ḥarbi* as the five rhythmic cycles of *naqqāreh-khāneh* and further declares that while they were identical and equal in length with some other *oṣuls*, they were just simple meters not complete enough to constitute recognizable patterns and thus hardly viable as the basis for compositions. The anonymous treatise in the musical codex of Amir Khān Gorji also gives the names of *shirāzi, ekhlāti, qalandari, žarb al-qadim, razmiyāneh, khᵛārazmi, and samāʿi*, though it fails to provide their rhythmic structures. And finally, the author of *Bahjat al-ruḥ* mentions seven cycles of *qalandari* (29 žarb), *shirāzi* (19 žarb), *ekhlāti* (18 žarb), *žarb* (15 žarb), *ḥarbi* (5 žarb) and subsequently ascribes their invention to one of the servants of the Saljuq potentate, Malek Shāh b. Ālp Arslān (r. 1072-1092). The last author also declares that the rhythmic cycles of *naqqāreh-khāneh* tended to be sober, unlike the *oṣuls* of art music which were more intoxicating.

Evidently the most prominent *naqqāreh-khāneh* rhythmic cycle played at the time of conquest, celebration and festivity was *shādiyāneh* (lit. rejoicing) that can be traced back to the fourteenth century if not earlier. Owbahī introduces it as a variant of *thaqil al-ramal* and outlines its structure as follow:

\[ shādiyāneh \quad 4 + 4 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 4 = 24 \]
Later in the sixteenth century, Kerāmi mentions shādiyāneh in two forms of torki and khafi. Darvish-‘ali Changi also refers to it together with baluchi, ekhlāṭi, nayrizi, oṣul-e ravān, and alusi as one of the oṣuls favored by naqqārehchis. However, none of the Safavid musical texts describes its structure. It appears that shādiyāneh continued to be the most prevailing naqqāreh-khāneh rhythmic pattern throughout the eighteenth century as the two post-Safavid chroniclers, Mirzā Mehdi Astarābādi and Moḥammad Moḥsen Mostowfi still frequently mention it in their historical accounts.

Another naqqāreh-khāneh rhythmic cycle, rāh-e ekhlāṭi is also outlined by Owbahī through mnemonic devices which are referred to by Banā‘i as ghuriyāneh:

\[ rāh-e ekhlāṭi \quad 2 + 4 + 2 = 8 \]

Ekhlāṭi was also mentioned in many Safavid musical treatises and likewise according to Ā’in-e Akbari, along with ebtedā‘i, shirāzi, and qalandari, it was a prominent rhythmic cycle in the performance of nowbat at the court of the Mughal emperor, Akbar (r. 1556-1605). Evidence suggests that the oṣuls of naqqāreh-khāneh, aside from having individual characters and functions, were also performed in the form of a sequence on various instruments. This sequence is coherently documented in Ā’in-e Akbari by Abu al-Fażl ‘Allāmi:

Of the musical instruments used in the naqqāreh-khāneh, I may mention, the kurgah, commonly called damāmeh; there are eighteenth pair of them or less; and they give a deep sound.

- The naqqāreh, twenty pair more or less.
- The dohol, of which four are used.
- The karnā is made of gold, silver, brass and other metals and they never blow fewer than four.
- The sornā of the Persian or Indian kinds; they blow nine together.
- The nafir of the Persian, European and Indian kinds; they blow some of each kind.
- The sing is of brass, in the form of a cow’s horn; they blow two together.
- The senj, or cymbal, of which three pair are used.

Formerly the band played four gharis (ghari: twenty-four minutes) before the commencement of the night, and likewise four gharis before daybreak; now they play first
at midnight, when the sun commences his ascent, and the second time at dawn. One gharis before sunrise, the musicians commence to blow the sornā, and wake up those that are asleep; and one gharis after sun rise, they play a short prelude, when they beat the kurgah a little, whereupon they blow the karnā and the nafir, and the other instruments, without, however, making use of the naqqāreh; after a little pause the sornās are blown again, the rhythm (oṣul) is being indicated by the nafirs. One hour later the naqqārehs commence when all musicians raise “the auspicious stain.” After this they go through the following seven sections:

1. Morsali; they play morsali and that is a conspicuous oṣul; and afterwards the bardāsh, which consists likewise of certain oṣul, played by the whole band. This is followed by a pianissimo, and a tendency to move from the acuity to gravity.

2. The performing of four oṣuls, called ekhlāṭi, ebedāʿi, shirāzi, and qalandari, also known as negar qatreh or nokhod qatreh which occupies an hour.

3. The playing of the old and new khᵛārazmis. Of these his Majesty has composed more than two hundred, which are the delight of young and old, especially jalāl-e shāhi, mahāmir, karkut, and nowruzī.

4. The swelling play of the šādiyāneh.

5. The passing into the middle of the sequence.

6. The playing of the rhythmic cycle of owfar which is called rāh-e bālā, after which move gradually to lower-pitched notes (zir konnad).

7. The playing of morsal-e khᵛārazmi followed by morsali.

At the conclusion they play the forugozāsh and commence the blessings on his Majesty, when the whole band strikes up a pianissimo. Then follows the reciting of beautiful sentences and poems. This also lasts for an hour. Afterwards the sornā-players perform for another hour, when the whole comes to a proper conclusion.

His Majesty has such a knowledge of the science of music as master musicians do not possess; and he is likewise an excellent hand in performing, especially on the naqqāreh.54

The question of how the Central Asian Mughal emperors in India adopted the institution and performance of nowbat from the Persian royal court cannot be answered with ease. Nonetheless, there seems to have been a common practice and shared terminology of some sort among the Safavid and Mughal courts. The nowbat (lit. sequence), as described by Abu al-Fażl, was a sequence of melodic and rhythmic sections opening with a morsali55 and bardāsh and concluding with a morsali and forugozāsh (or forudāsh), a structure that can be traced back in Iran as early as the twelfth century.56 These sections had specific rhythmic characters and functions. Some sections only consisted of playing a series of oṣuls, such as ekhlāṭi, ebedāʿi, shirāzi, and qalandari whereas some other sections were most likely rhythmic compositions such as khᵛārazmis, new
versions of which could be composed and played alternatively in various performances of the
nowbat.\textsuperscript{57} Likewise, some of the rhythmic cycles were played by specific instruments and some
were rendered through compositions by the entire ensemble.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owbahi and Banā’i</th>
<th>Kerāmi</th>
<th>Mir Šadr al-Din Moḥammad</th>
<th>Anonymous Treatise</th>
<th>Bahjat al-ruḥ</th>
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Table 4.3. The rhythmic cycles or patterns of naqqāreh-khāneh between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries.
The Qajar Period

With the decline of compositional genres in the second half of the eighteenth century, the practice of specific rhythmic cycles designated as oṣuls also fell into decline. It appears that by the beginning of the nineteenth century, long rhythmic cycles were no longer recognized among Persian composers and court musicians. Neither does the term oṣul seem to have been in the vocabulary used by musicians throughout the nineteenth century. Yet the memory of oṣuls did not disappear altogether, as a reng with a complex cyclic structure called reng-e oṣul was still performed as a highly respected instrumental composition in the gatherings of elites throughout the Qajar period. ⁵⁸

Recordings and transcriptions of nineteenth-century taṣnifs reveal that vocal compositions were mostly composed and performed by professional taṣrif-singers and dombak-players in the six and four-beat cycles (known as se-żarb and dō-żarb respectively) in both slow and fast tempos (sangin and tond respectively). In fact, a collection of nineteenth-century compositions has been passed down through ‘Abdollāh Davāmi which contains more than 180 taṣnifs. While only about 16 taṣnifs are in the four-beat cycles, 164 are in the six-beat cycles. ⁵⁹ The verse of each taṣrif starts on a particular beat of the cycle and sometimes throughout a taṣrif it may shift from one beat to another. Likewise, a composition with two different texts and two poetic meters may start from two different beats of the cycle. The coordination of the quantitative poetic meter and the number of syllables in a verse with the accented and unaccented beats of the rhythmic cycle tends to be the most intricate technique on the part of taṣrif-singers. ⁶⁰

In the late Qajar period, various meters were recognized among practicing musicians—and more specifically taṣrif-singers—as follows:

1. dō-żarb (four-beat cycle)
2. se-żarb (six-beat cycle)
3. *chahār-żarb* (eight-beat cycle)
4. *żarb-e rengi* (6/8)
5. *żarb-e lang* (lit. limping).\(^{61}\)

After the introduction of the European military band, Iranian musicians adopted the western terminology and began to refer to meters as 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 6/8, 6/16, 5/8 and 7/8. Subsequently, the transcription of vocal and instrumental compositions based on the stress patterns of western meters severely affected the rhythmic structure and accent of Persian compositions that then came to be adopted to western duple, triple, and quadruple meters.

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1. This is also confirmed by Marāghi in *Jāme’ al-alhān: khātemeh*, 198.
11. This is apparently the earliest known reference to a meter that later came to be referred to as limping (Turkish *aksāk* and Persian *lang*). Cf. Eckhard Neubauer, “Music History II. ca. 650 to 1370 CE.” A survey on the Arabic and Persian *oṣul* from the early Islamic period to the beginning
of the Timurid period is given by Eckhard Neubauer in “Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī (d. 1311) on musical meters (īqā’),” 357-371.


15 ‘Abd al-Qāder Marāghi, Sharh-e advār, 259.

16 ‘Abd al-Qāder Marāghi, Jāme’ al-alḥān, 221.

17 Marāghi ascribes the invention of chahār-zarb to Moḥammad-shāh Robābi, see Sharh-e advār, 266.

18 Marāghi ascribes the invention of the group of ramals to Moḥammad Tuni, see ibid., 252.

19 Marāghi mentions that the inhabitants of Azerbaijan and more specifically Tabriz called this cycle with a minor variation chanbar and their dances (dastafshān) were mostly in this cycle, see ibid., 263-264.

20 Ibid., 374-379.

21 Ibid., 379-380.

22 See Eckhard Neubauer, “Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī (d. 1311) on musical meters (īqā’),” 365.

23 Owbahī, Moqaddamat al-oṣul, 153-172; Banā’i, Resāleh dar musiqi, 102-121.

24 Banā’i states that varashān was called ṭaquīl by Arabs, Resaleh dar musiqi, 113.

25 Banā’i states that the cycle was called hazaj-e chanbar by the inhabitance of ‘Irāq and rāh-e samā‘ by the inhabitance of Khorasan, Resaleh dar musiqi, 113.


27 This connotation of oṣul is clearly suggested by ‘Alā’ al-Din Bokhārī when he calls the seven primary rhythmic cycles oṣuls and their seven spin-offs far*s. For a further account see Nikfahm Khubravān and Kordmāfi, “Musiqi dar ashjār va athmār-e ‘Alā’ al-Din Bokhārī,” 77.

28 See the following Persian musical treatises in Majles-e Senā Library (Tehran) MS 13682, 76a; Köprülü Library (Istanbul) MS 1613, 71a.
30 Ibid., xxi-xxii.
33 Ibid., 115.
34 Ibid., 115-116.
35 An older Turkish version of Ebn Sinā’s story is mentioned in *Seydī’s Book on Music*, 125-126 and the note 383.
37 Ibid., 91-92.
38 Ibid., 92.
40 Ibid., 187.
41 Ibid., 198.
45 Eckhard Neubauer states that *aksak* meters were originally associated with the Central Asian Turkic people, but these meters later prevailed all over the Near East and the Mediterranean. See Neubauer, “Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī (d. 1311) on musical meters (īqā‘),” 363. Persian practicing musicians also seem to have been familiar with the concept of limping and called it *lang* probably as early as the fifteenth century. A clear example is *semai-i lenk* (10-beat cycle) which was known to Demetrius Cantemir presumably through Persian musicians. See O. Wright, translated and annotated, *Demetrius Cantemir: The Collection of Notations*, part 1, text (London: SOAS, 1992), 536-547.


Cf. ‘Shādiyāneh,’ *Loghatnāmeh-yeye Dehkhodā*.


Ibid., 46-47. I used primarily the English translation made by Blochmann, yet I changed it according to the Persian text in certain instances where it was inaccurate. For the original translation see Abul Fażl ’Allami, *The Āín-i-Akbari*, translated from the original Persian by H. Blochmann, 2 vols. (Calcutta: G. H. Rouse at the Baptist Mission Press, 1873), 1: 50-51.

Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ormāvī in *Kitāb al-advār*, 301 mentions that mozāʾaf al-ramāl in the thirteenth century was also known as *morsal*.

*Bardāsh* and *forudāsh* are mentioned in the poetry of Khāqānī (d. 1190) and Neẓāmī Ganjavi (d. 1209). For further information, see Mehdi Setāyeshgar, *Vāzheh-nāmeh-yeye musiqi-yeye Irān*, 3 vols. (Tehran: Enteshārāt-e etṭelāʻat, 2002), 1: 145-156.

Darvish-‘Ali Changi mentions a certain Soḥān Maṣūr who composed 360 *khvārazmis* in derivative *osuls* that were performed by master *naqqāreḥchis* in their *nowbats*. For further account see *Toḥfat al-sorur*, 25a.


For the *taṣnifs* that are in the four-beat cycles see Farāmarz Pāyvar, *Radif-e āvāzi va taṣnīfā-yeye qadimi be revāyat-e ’Abdollāh Davāmi* (Tehran: Māhūr, 1999), 172, 188, 197, 230, 248, 253, 265, 266, 279, 281, 290, 335, 359, 379, 389, 411.

Davāmi, *Qajar Tasnifs* [M.CD-112], liner notes by Amir Hosein Pourjavady, 11-12.

CHAPTER FIVE
MUSICAL GENRES

Musical genres performed in the Safavid and Afsharid periods were direct descendants of those urban genres that had been cultivated in the course of thirteenth to fifteenth centuries in Baghdad, Herat, Tabriz, and Shiraz as well as some folk genres that were fostered among the qizilbāš Turkish musicians. A detailed description of genres is not included in pre-Timurid or post-Safavid musical texts; it only appears in musical treatises that were written in the period between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries. The descriptions seem to have been written in the context of literary tradition in which verbal accounts were copied freely from text to text, either word by word or paraphrased; therefore, it is not surprising to see that a substantial amount of information in all treatises is similar. Yet some texts are unique in alluding to certain characteristic features of the genres that are not being addressed in other sources. Music theorists mostly define the genres in reference to their forms, and in some cases they mention certain obligations, prohibitions and options attached to them. Nonetheless, each genre could also be differentiated from the others based on its lyrics, poetic meters, rhythmic cycles, techniques of variation, and the renditions of verse and non-textual syllables. Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the Safavid terminology regarding the name and internal structure of genres was no longer in use. During the nineteenth century, while the distinction among the genres was less emphasized by composers and practicing musicians, vocal compositions could be still categorized in various forms and they exhibited significant affinities to their seventeenth-century precursors.

The Early History of Musical Genres in Persia

Including a complete chapter on genres and outlining their formal and melodic structures in Persian musical treatises is a convention that first arises with ‘Abd al-Qāder Marāghi and later continues
with some of the prominent Timurid and Saʿāvid music theorists. Before Marāghi, neither the followers of the Systematist school nor the non-Systematist music theorists describe musical genres directly in their own treatises, hence the prehistory of medieval genres in Iran remains nearly obscure. Sporadic references to some vocal genres, however, can be found in both literary and musical texts of the eleventh to fourteenth centuries.

Marāghi examines musical genres in his three major treatises, but in Sharḥ-e advār he provides a more detailed account of their types and techniques of composition or rendition.1 In chapter fifteen he writes:

Musicians in the past (qodamā’) set the vocal compositions only to Arabic verse. Before these types of composition, there was only nashid-e ‘arab, and after that basā’et [sing. basīt], aqwāl [sing. gowl] and navābet [sing. nowbat] emerged. The names and types of vocal composition (aṣnāf-e tašānif) are: nashid-e ‘arab, basīt, nowbat-e morattab (qowl, ghazal, tarāneh, forudūsht, mostazād), koll al-žorub, koll al-nagham, koll al-žorub va al-nagham, žarbayn, ‘amal, naqsh, sowt, havā’i, pishrow, zakhmeh, moraṣṣa’.2

Marāghi’s statement that classical compositions were previously set to Arabic text is of particular importance and clearly indicates that the introduction of urban genres set to classical Persian in the fourteenth century was a recent development and for much of the period between the ninth and twelve centuries in Iran, stylish court sung poetry was mainly composed in Arabic. Marāghi further goes on to describe the structure of both Arabic and Persian genres and in doing so, he uses a terminology for the internal divisions of compositions that needs to be elucidated first. These terms are:

1. ʾtariqeh-ye jadval (later called sarkhāneh-ye avval): the first section of a composition in which the first melodic line is introduced. It contained a melody of sufficient interest and attractiveness to bear frequent repetition throughout the composition.
2. ʾtariqeh-ye maṭla‘ (also called jadval-e thānī or sarkhāneh-ye dovom): a repetition or variation of the ʾtariqeh-ye jadval set to a different text.
3. sowt al-vasaṭ (also called miyānkhāneh): the second section of a composition in which a new theme or contrasting melodic line, often in a different mode, was introduced. The sowt al-vasaṭ was always followed by the eʾādeh-ye ʾtariqeh.
4. eʾādeh-ye ʾtariqeh: a modulatory phrase moving back to the melody of the ʾtariqeh-ye jadval.
5. bāzgasht or tashyi’eh (later called bāzguy): the third section of a composition.
6. naqš-e molsaqeh: decorating passages containing non-textual syllables connecting the miyānkhāneh and e’ādeh-ye ṭariqeh.
7. alfāz-e naqarāt: vocables or non-textual syllables in taṣnifs.

Arabic Genres

The first Arabic vocal genre mentioned by Marāghi is nashid-e ʿarab. Nashid was in fact the principal style of singing or chanting a qaṣideh in an improvisatory manner in which the rhythm of the melody depended largely on a quantitative poetic meter. From the eighth or ninth century, it was the predominant urban vocal genre performed by a solo vocalist in various melodic modes. Abu Naṣr Fārābi (d. 950) refers to nashid as a lengthy free-rhythmic vocal introduction of a composition (lahn), and Abu al-Faraj Eṣfahāni (d. 971) indicates that it often consisted of two couplets of qaṣideh rendered in free-rhythmic style and mainly followed by a basit, another two couplets of qaṣideh sung in conjunction with rhythmic cycles.3

Between the tenth and fifteenth centuries, nashid is frequently mentioned in divāns of many Persian poets including Manuchehri Dāmghāni (d. 1040), Owhād al-Dīn Anvari (d. 1189), Khāqāni (d. 1190), Farīd al-Dīn Aṭṭār (d. 1221), and Jalāl al-Dīn Moḥammad Rumi (d. 1273).4 Marāghi presents an explicit description of the genre as follows:

Musicians in the past set nashid to Arabic verses in such a way that the first two couplets rendered in nathr-e naghmāt are followed by another two couplets rendered in naẓm-e naghmāt. Nathr-e naghmāt is when melodizing (talḥīn) is not to a rhythmic cycle or it has no iqā’ whereas naẓm-e naghmāt is when it is to a rhythmic cycle.5

Marāghi further states that his contemporaries had just adopted nashid and begun to perform Persian ghazal in the same format. He specifies that an entire Arabic qaṣideh or Persian ghazal could have been performed in the style of nashid, and depending on the text, it could be either called nashid-e ʿarab or nashid-e ʿajam.6 In Jāme’ al-alḥān, he also refers to a typical professional
maqām singer as nāshed and offers him sample verses as being most appropriate to be set to maqāms and their sub-modes so that they would have the utmost impact on listeners.7

Besides nashid, as early as the tenth or eleventh centuries, qowl achieved unprecedented prominence as the most popular and vital urban vocal genre, performed in various musical contexts including Sufi samā‘ assemblies, private mahfels and courts.8 The efflorescence of qowl is much better documented in literary and Sufi texts than in musical treatises. The earliest reference to qowl is apparently in the Tārikh-e Bayhaqi in which ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Qavvāl, a celebrated performer of qowl, is introduced as being in the service of the son of the Ghaznavid ruler Maḥmud (r. 998-1030).9 In the eleventh century, Abu al-Karim al-Qoshayri Nayshāburi (d. 1074) relates the story of an infant prince whose intelligence and acumen was assessed by his reaction to a qowl performed by a professional qavvāl.10 Likewise, in his monumental book, Eḥyā’ ʿolum al-din (Revival of the religious sciences), Abu Ḥāmed Ghazālī (d. 1111) frequently refers to qowl mostly in reference to the assembly of samā‘.11 The structure of the incipient qowl, however, is not delineated in these earlier sources. It only appears that it was a metric composition set to two to four couplets of Arabic qaṣideh.12

Qowl was performed by a male or female singer who was called qavvāl.13 Moreover, qavvāl in a broad sense referred to a category of singer who performed measured songs and probably accompanied oneself on the daf (frame drum), as opposed to nāshed who was the performer of free-rhythmic nashid. Later on, when a qowl was set to a text combining both Arabic and Persian verses, it was known as qowl-e morāšṣa‘,14 and when composed entirely in Persian, it was called gofteh or, probably in some practices, pārsī.15 Nonetheless, gofteh could have been used to refer to any Persian measured song before the fourteenth century. Likewise, the performer of qowl or gofteh was referred to as guyandeh, which was the exact Persian equivalent of qavvāl. In
the eleventh century, Ghazâlî mentions both guyandeh and gavvâl as the performer of qowl.16 Yet as mentioned in the first chapter, in the sixteenth century the term gavvâl merely referred to a female performer of taṣnîf in a sentimental style who served as a courtesan in courts and public arenas, while guyandeh was primarily reserved for a professional male performer of taṣnîf.

A qowl attributed to Šâfi-al-Din Ormavi is transcribed by Qoṭb al-Din Shirāzi in the music section of Dorrat al-tâj (Pearl of the crown).17 Even though Shirāzi does not provide a description of qowl or any further information about the genre, it is conceivable that qowl was by far the most popular form of composition in Iran up until the mid-fourteenth century. Nearly a century after Shirāzi, Marāghi outlines the structure of qowl as follows:

Qowl is set to Arabic verse and it could begin from any beat of the rhythmic cycle. Qowl has to have two sections (tariqehs): tariqeh-ye jadval and tariqeh-ye maṭla`. The tariqeh-ye maṭla` can be set to either a hemistich or a couplet (bayt). The inclusion of a sowt or bayt al-vasat is at the discretion of the composer; he can choose to add that in the composition or not. If he sets the tariqeh-ye jadval to a hemistich, he is required to set the miyānkhanēh to a couplet; in that case the first hemistich [of miyānkhanēh] serves to introduce a contrasting theme and the second hemistich serves to return to the first theme. Likewise, if the tariqeh is set to a couplet, the sowt has to be set to two couplets; the first couplet to introduce a contrasting theme (āhang-e motaghayyereh) and the second couplet to return to the first theme (e`ādeh-ye tariqeh). The e`ādeh-ye tariqeh, whether it is a couplet or hemistich, should be exactly similar to tariqeh-ye jadval both in quality and quantity. If a composer desires to add decorating passages (noqush) it is acceptable, and if he refuses to do so, it is not defective. The passage that comes between the sowt and e`ādeh[-ye tariqeh] is called naqsh-e molsaqeh. It should be noted that the miyānkhanēh and the first section can begin from the same or different beats of the rhythmic cycle.18

During the thirteenth century, a sequence of four qowls performed in a court musical gathering was called nowbat-e morattab. In this sequence, the first qowl was set to an Arabic qaṣideh, and the second qowl was set to a Persian ghazal; the third one, called tarâneh, was set to a quatrain; and finally, the fourth qowl, called forudāsht, was again set to an Arabic qaṣideh. While nowbat was initially a performance format, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries a number of court musicians began to write compositions specifically in that form. Before Marāghi, documentation
of *nowbat* is very limited. Only the texts of a few *nowbats* ascribed to Ṣafī-al-Din Ormavi and his disciples were recorded in the tenth volume of the *Masāleq al-abṣār fi mamālek al-amşār* (Paths of perspicacity in sovereignty of kingdoms) by Ebn Fażlollāh al-‘Omari (d. 1349). A number of *nowbats* attributed to Marāghi have been documented in both Persian and Ottoman song-text collections. Moreover, Marāghi added a fifth section to the *nowbat-e morattab* and called it *mostazād*, but this seemingly did not receive much acceptance among his contemporaries or the subsequent generation of musicians.

Another Arabic vocal genre, *basiṭ*, was more respected, and it could be traced back as early as the ninth or tenth century through Arabic sources, more specifically the *Ketāb al- aghānī* (Book of songs). References to *basiṭ* can be seen in the fourteenth-century Persian treatise, *Kanz al-toḥaf* as well, where *basā’et, aqvāl, abyāt, and havā’is* are mentioned as the major vocal genres composed in various rhythmic cycles. Yet the account in *Kanz al-toḥaf* somehow conflicts with those of Marāghi. While the author of *Kanz al-toḥaf* specifies that *qowl* was exclusively composed in the two cycles of *thaqil-e avval* and *thaqil-e thānī* and instead *basiṭ* was in the five rhythmic cycles of *khafīf-e thaqil-e avval, khafīf-e thaqil-e thānī, ramal, khafīf-e ramal* and *hazaj*, Marāghi indicates that *basiṭ* was typically composed to the three rhythmic cycles of *thaqil-e avval, thaqil-e thānī* and *ramal*. According to Marāghi, the formal structure of *basiṭ* was similar to *qowl*. After the two *ṭariqehs* it could either include a *miyānkhāneh* or not, but it invariably concluded with a *bāzgasht* and this last section could be set either to non-textual syllables or words.

**Persian Genres**

While between the ninth and thirteenth centuries *nashid, qowl*, and finally *basiṭ* were the Arabic vocal genres performed in urban centers, a few sources still refer to Persian quatrains known as
fahlaviyāt in vernacular or regional dialects of western, central, and northern Persia that were sung as owrāmanān, sharveh and bāhār. The author of Maḥasen Esfahān, an eleventh-century text, mentions a number of song types such as qomiband, tājiband, ʿarusi, rusharmiyāt, shabestāniyāt, kākoliyāt, and nayruzīyāt that were performed in dialects of their associated regions. Evidently the poetic meters of fahlaviyāt were largely based on the principles of Middle Iranian prosody. Yet with the adoption of the Arabic prosody for Persian poetry, and under the influence of the latter, fahlaviyāt were gradually adapted to the rules of quantitative meters, among which the most popular meter was hazaj. Singing fahlaviyāt seems to have been widespread in Persia as late as the fifteenth century, for Marāghi in Jāmeʿ al-alḥān also presents a few examples in different vernacular dialects.

From the eleventh and twelve centuries, literary Persian gradually became the dominant court language for official matters as well as poetry, and in parallel with nashid, singing the ghazal and the classical quatrain also became prevalent. Many Persian poets such as Ferdowsi (d.1020), Manuchehri Dāmghāni, Farrokhi Sistānī (d. 1037), Anvari (d. 1189), and Saʿdi (d. 1291) refer to singing ghazals in their divāns. ‘Onṣor al-Maʿāli, the author of Qābus-nāneh, also mentions Transoxanian quatrains (dōbaytī-hāye mavarāʿ al-nahrī) and ghazals as appropriate forms of poetry for singing while he urges singers to follow the poetic meters very closely.

When Marāghi refers to performers of vocal genres that were rendered in an improvisatory manner where the rhythm depended mostly on a quantitative poetic meter rather than on rhythmic cycles, he mentions nāshedān-e ʿarab (Arab performers of nashid) as counterparts to motaghazzelān-e ʿajam (Persian singers of ghazal). Nevertheless, he identifies nashid as being the precursor to singing ghazal and specifies that singing the Persian ghazal—as a poetic form—was something modeled after the performance of the Arabic nashid.
In *Sharḥ-e advār*, Marāghi also names ‘*amal*, naqsh, ṣowt, and finally havāʿi as the types of Persian *tašnif* composed and performed in rhythmic cycles. Yet these types of *tašnif* were not just various forms of composition. While music theorists often tend to differentiate them mostly on the basis of their formal divisions, it is conceivable that they were likely cultivated and developed in various social contexts and likewise by different categories of musician. They may have had specific vocal idioms and were customarily composed in particular rhythmic cycles, yet Marāghi does not always emphasize these characteristic features of *tašnifs*, tending instead to claim that most vocal genres could be composed in various rhythmic cycles provided the composer was adept and skillful enough.

From the fourteenth century, ‘*amal* emerged as the most austere Persian vocal genre, presumably composed by court musicians. An ‘*amal* in its complete and perfect structure consisted of four sections of *ṭariqeh-yə jadval, ṭariqeh-yə maṭla*, miyānkhâneh and bāzgasht. Miyānkhâneh could be eliminated or even doubled and the bāzgasht could be set either to non-textual syllables or verse.³² However, the formal structure of ‘*amal* as described in Persian treatises and reflected in song-text collections does not differ substantially from *qowl* or *basiṭ*. In other words, ‘*amal* was essentially a *qowl* or *basiṭ* set to a Persian text. According to Marāghi, ‘*amal* was predominantly composed in short rhythmic cycles such as *ramal, mokhammas*, and *hazaj*.³³

Between the seventh to tenth centuries in Damascus and later in Baghdad, ṣowt was the most popular urban genre often set to two to four couplets of Arabic *qašideh*. In fact, the monumental *Ketāb al-aghānī* written by Abu al-Faraj Eşfahāni (d. 967) documents a great deal of information about *sowts* composed in the tenth century and earlier.³⁴ In the early Timurid period (1370-1507), however, Marāghi categorizes ṣowt among the Persian genres. He declares that ṣowt
lacked non-textual syllables and when it was composed, the verse, rhythmic cycle and melodic phrase fit perfectly together, and they all commenced and ended at the same point.35

The first extant reference to naqsh is apparently in the divān of Sa‘di (d. 1291) in the thirteenth century.36 Naqsh in this period appears to have been a vocal phrase of sufficient attractiveness, lacking the refined rhythmic and formal structure that it was later to incorporate. At the turn of the fifteenth century, naqsh was a short composition set to verse and non-textual syllables. Marāghi states that it was simply analogous to the tariqeh-ye maţla‘ of an ‘amal, stressing the fact that there was no melodic or rhythmic modulation in naqsh. He indicates that in naqsh, only a single melodic phrase or theme was introduced, regardless of the text having multiple lines.37

Havā‘i was a light, sentimental composition that was also called mardomzād (lit. offspring of people) and could be traced back to the eleventh century.38 During the fourteenth century, havā‘i was a genre on its own, but gradually naqsh and şowt fell into the category of havā‘i especially when people performed them according to their own predilection.39

Whether şowt and naqsh were two established and self-contained vocal genres in the fourteenth century is not evident from the surviving documents. Marāghi does not categorize them specifically among the types of tašnif in his first two books, Jāme‘ al-alhān and Maqāṣed al-alhān.40 The author of the fourteenth-century Kanz al-toḥaf also refers to havā‘i, but does not mention şowt or naqsh among the prevailing genres.41

Another enigmatic genre that seems to have emerged in the late thirteenth or fourteenth century was pishrow. Ebn Faţlollāh ‘Omari ascribes the invention of pishrow to Kamāl Towrizi, a celebrated musician at the court of the Ilkhanid ruler, Abu Sa‘īd Bahādor Khān (r. 1316-1335).42 Certainly Kamāl Towrizi was a seminal figure in the fresh infusion and development of the genre,
but references to *pishrow* in early fourteenth-century sources such as *Dorrat al-tāj* of Qoṭb al-dīn Shirāzi and Mobārakshāh’s commentary on *Ketāb al-advār* (Book of cycles) suggest that it may have originated at least a few decades earlier. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries *pishrow* was characterized mostly as a vocal genre set to non-textual syllables. However, Marāghi makes it clear that *pishrow* had both vocal and instrumental versions. He states that a *pishrow* could include up to fifteen sections (*bayts* or *khānehs*) and a segment of the first *khāneh* was often selected as the *eʿādeh-ye ṭariqeh* that also served as a ritornello at the end of subsequent *khānehs*. In the vocal version this ritornello was known as *tarjiʿband*, whereas in the instrumental version it was called *sarband*. Marāghi also declares that *pishrow* has always been composed in the two rhythmic cycles of *ramal* and *mokhammas*.

In addition to these vocal genres listed and described in his three treatises, Marāghi also wrote compositions in the forms of *qeṭʿeh* (set to Arabic verse) and *zakhmeh* (set to Persian verse). Samples of composition in these two forms have survived in a short song-text collection that he wrote toward the end of his life.

Evidently, not all the items in Marāghi’s list should be considered as vocal or instrumental genres or forms of composition. Some of the items such as *koll al-żorub*, *koll al-nagham*, *koll al-żorub va al-nagham*, *žarbayn* and *moraṣṣa* were in fact ‘compositional devices’ that could be employed and applied in composition of classical forms such as *qowl*, *basiṭ*, and ‘*amal*. While these compositional devices are not distinctly separated from genres, they were described by Marāghi as follows:

1. *koll al-żorub*: using all the rhythms in a composition.
2. *koll al-nagham*: using all the melodic modes in a composition.
5. *moraṣṣa* (lit. bejeweled): using Arabic, Persian and even Turkish texts in a composition.
The Late Timurid Period

Toward the end of the fifteenth century, ‘Alishāh b. Bukeh Owbaḥi and his disciple, ‘Ali b. Moḥammad Banā’i, also describe the vocal genres in their treatises. The accounts of these two late Timurid writers are not significantly different from that of Marāghī, but in a few cases they employ different terminology that seems to have flourished and become more prevalent in the late fifteenth century in Herat during the reign of Sultan Ḥosayn Bāyqarā (r. 1469-1506). At times, they also tend to use Persian terms that were more common among the practicing musicians than those complex Arabic terms employed by Systematist music theorists. For instance, instead of referring to the first two sections of a composition as ťariqeh-ye jadval and ťariqeh-ye maṭla’, they simply mention sarkhāneh-ye avval and sarkhāneh-ye dovom, two terms that came to be widely used by subsequent practicing musicians as well as music theorists in the Safavid period. Owbaḥi opens the last chapter of Moqaddamat al-oṣul with the following paragraph:

First, as confirmed before, if a melody (laḥn) is not constrained by a rhythmic cycle, it is called ghayr-e mowzun (non-metric) or navākht—just like āvāzs that can be heard on musical instruments without reference to [rhythmic] cycles. But when it is constrained, it is called mowzun (metric).50

Owbaḥi and later Banā’i both state that the free exposition of modes or āvāzs played on musical instruments was called navākht and what came to be outside of the category of navākht, primarily the parts constrained by rhythmic cycles, was categorized as taṣnif.51 They both mention musical genres and compositional devices as ‘the current types of taṣnif’ as follows:

*pishrow, /owl, naqsh, ‘amal, basīt, qowl, ghazal, qowl-e moraṣṣa’, koll al-nagham, koll al-zorub, kolliyāt, nowbat, tarāneh, forudāsht, mostazād, rikhteḥ, nashid-e ‘arab.*52

Banā’i introduces qowl as a bipartite vocal composition consisting of two sarkhānehs and one bāzunguy set to Arabic verse. Owbaḥi also specifies that qowl was typically composed in a bipartite format, yet he mentions that sarkhānehs were followed by a bāzunguy, or a miyānkāneh. He further
states that in a more general sense a qowl may consist of all the three sections of sarkhān̄eh, miyānkhan̄eh and bāzguy, a broad description that was mentioned earlier in Marāghi’s treatises as well.⁵³

An important musical term that seems to have emerged in the late Timurid period is kār. Banā’i employs kār (“work”) to designate different sections of nowbat. In other words, qowl, ghazal, tarāneh, and forudāsht in a broad sense were all kārs.⁵⁴ In his memoir, Bābur uses ish (the Turkish equivalent of kār) in almost the same meaning, referring to various compositional genres such as naqsh and sōwt.⁵⁵ Therefore, it seems, despite the fact that kār later became a specific vocal genre, any compositional genre could also be referred to as kār and this remained the case even after the Timurid period as well.⁵⁶

Another musical development in the fifteenth century is perhaps the emergence of kolliyāt. A kolliyāt was an advanced compositional piece in which the composer employed all sets of modes and rhythmic cycles and through which he displayed the summit of his musical knowledge and workmanship. A kolliyāt further served as a reference guideline for musicians to study the modal and rhythmic systems while also using it for didactic purposes. Owbahi refers to the notable kolliyāt composed by Marāghi that represented koll al-żorub (all meters and rhythmic cycles) and koll al-nagham (all melodic modes).⁵⁷ The kolliyāt attributed to Marāghi was venerated among music theorists up until the end of the Safavid period and its text was occasionally documented in song-text collections and musical treatises.⁵⁸

It is in the late fifteenth-century Herat that we find early references to fasl (lit. segment, chapter) as a musical concept. Zayn al-Din Vāṣefi, a renowned chronicler of the period who documented a lively culture of musical performance in Herat and particularly at the court of Sultan Ḥosayn Bāyqarā, at one point refers to fasl presumably as a set of pieces rendered on an
instrument.\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Faşl} later became a significant concept in the Ottoman court music, typically referring to a sequence of \textit{taqsims} and compositions.\textsuperscript{60}

**Description of Musical Genres in Safavid Treatises**

The description of genres was mostly ignored by early Safavid music theorists who tended to be more interested in the hoary modal system and rhythmic cycles than in contemporary classical and regional genres. From the second half of the sixteenth century, however, music theorists began to describe the genres based on their formal structures again. The terminology referring to the internal division of compositions in the Safavid period can be recapitulated and interpreted as follows:

1. \textit{sarkhāneh-ye avval}: the first section of a composition in which the first melodic theme is introduced and set to a few verses of a poem whose length usually does not exceed two couplets.
2. \textit{sarkhāneh-ye dovom}: a repetition or variation of the \textit{sarkhāneh-ye avval} set to subsequent verses of the poem.
3. \textit{miyānkhāneh}: the second section of a composition in which a new theme or contrasting melodic line often in a different mode was introduced.
4. \textit{bāzguy}: the third section of a composition, often with a contrasting poetic meter or rhythmic structure.
5. \textit{dhayl}: a vocal ritornello containing verse and the syllables of \textit{hay hay hā hā}.
6. \textit{lāzemeh}: ritornello in both vocal and instrumental genres.
7. \textit{naqarāt}: non-textual syllables of \textit{dar tanā dar tanā}.
8. \textit{tarannom}: non-textual syllables of \textit{ya la lā}.

Around 1580, almost a century after Owbah and Banā’i in Herat, Dowreh Beg Kerāmi, a poet-composer in the same city, outlines the compositional genres (\textit{taşnifs}) as follows:

\textit{Naqsh} is the one whose \textit{bayti} (verse section) and \textit{naqarāt} (non-textual syllables) are the same. \textit{Naqshayn} is the one whose verse and non-textual syllables are different. Non-textual syllables in both [i.e. \textit{naqsh} and \textit{naqshayn}] are \textit{ya la lā}; they don’t contain \textit{tan tan}.

\textit{Ṣowt} contains one section including \textit{sarkhāneh}, \textit{miyānkhāneh} and a \textit{bāzguy} performed in the form of wailing (\textit{nāleḥ}).

\textit{‘Amal} contains two \textit{sarkhānehs} in the same style (\textit{tarz}), a \textit{miyānkhāneh} and a \textit{bāzguy}. Both \textit{sarkhānehs} begin with verses. Its non-textual syllables are \textit{tan tan} and do not include \textit{ya la lā}.

\textit{Kār} contains a sequence of unlimited parts (\textit{bahri nā-motenāhi}). The \textit{sarkhāneh} begins
with non-textual syllables followed by delivery of verses (bayt kh‘ānī) and returning to non-textual syllables again. Kār contains two sarkhāneh s in the above style, a miyānkhāneh and a bāzguy.

Qowl contains two sarkhāneh s in the same style and a bāzguy. It does not have the miyānkhāneh. Its text could be either in Arabic or Persian and it is acceptable to begin either with verse or non-textual syllables. However, the majority of qowls begin with non-textual syllables.

Sarghazal is a section of verse including a sarkhāneh, a miyānkhāneh and a bāzguy.

Tarāneh contains three parts (gushehs), each set to a different [poetic] style (tarz). The first one is a section of verse, the second one is a praise or blame (madḥ ya dhamm) and the last one [the syllables] of ya la lā and ta la lā; likewise mosajja‘.

Rikhteh is in the rhythmic cycle of owfar with a section of verse. Its non-textual syllables could be either tan tan or ya la lā.

Pishrow and sarband are the arts of instrumentalists.

Pishrow contains a sarkhāneh, a miyānkhāneh and a bāzguy. Every section has a lāzemeh (ritornello) or a taqrīb-e lāzemeh (modified or short version of ritornello) in the same style.

Sarband is arranged in the same rhythmic cycles as rikhteh [i.e., light oṣul such as owfar] and its melodic elaboration is based on improvisation (badiheh). Whenever master musicians come together for a musical contest, they begin [their performance] by playing a sarband so that the ability of each can be displayed. 61

At roughly the same time, Mir Šadr al-Din Moḥammad Qazvini, a court calligrapher and music connoisseur in Qazvin and Isfahan, gives a detailed description of musical genres at the end of his musical treatise. Following in the footsteps of his Timurid predecessors, he divides vocal genres into two main categories of (1) khosh-kh‘ānī be nathr or nathr-kh‘ānī, and (2) khosh-kh‘ānī be naẓm.

Nathr-kh‘ānī does not fall into the category of talhīn, for using the meters (mozun budan) or singing based on oṣul (rhythmic cycles) is the main concept of the latter. ... Kh‘ānandegi is of two types: Arabic and Persian. Singing to Arabic verse is called nashid, but singing to Persian verse is known by different names: dōbayt-kh‘ānī, ghazal-kh‘ānī and kh‘ānandegi. This type of singing used to be called khsravānī in the past.

Khosh-kh‘ānī be naẓm is singing melodies that are conjoined with specific rhythmic cycles and these are of different types:

1. The one that lacks verse, but contains sarkhāneh, miyānkhāneh and bāzguy is called pishrow. If it only contains a sarkhāneh without miyānkhāneh and bāzguy, is called bi-baytī and sarband which is also the same.

2. The taṣnīfs that are set to verse are of various types as follows:
Mir Şadr al-Din Moḥammad subsequently states that practicing musicians use different criteria to distinguish among the genres and there is no consensus among them. In some cases, he first mentions the prevailing opinion about the genres and subsequently gives his own verdict.

Some have said that, if a composition contains two sarkāneh, a miyānkāneh and a bāzguy and it is in any rhythmic cycles of žarb al-fath, chāhār žarb, thaqil, and khafif, that composition is kār. And what has been composed in the rhythmic cycle of torki žarb, is called ‘amal. And what lacks a miyānkāneh is qowl. However, this explanation is refuted for various reasons and at this time there is no tolerance for it.

The true difference between kār and ‘amal, which each contain three sections of sarkāneh, miyānkāneh and bāzguy, is that in kār, the composition begins with non-textual syllables i.e. tan dar tan and other syllables, but in ‘amal, the beginning is from verses. In qowl, the beginning is often from non-textual syllables and it happens sometimes that the beginning is from verses too.

The difference between qowl and kār, when the beginning of the composition is from non-textual syllables, is that qowl lacks a miyānkāneh, whereas kār contains it. Likewise, the difference between qowl and ‘amal, when qowl starts with verses, is that the former lacks the miyānkāneh, whereas ‘amal contains it.

As for the distinction between qowl and ghazal, whatever is composed on an Arabic verse without a miyānkāneh is qowl, and likewise, whatever is completed on a Persian verse without a miyānkāneh is ghazal.

Tarāneh is precisely the same as qowl and ghazal, but for the most part, its verse is nothing but robā‘is.

Nowbat consists of these four: ‘amal, qowl, tarāneh and kār, in the manner that: instead of the first sarkāneh of kār, there is an ‘amal in nowbat-e morattab. Instead of the second sarkāneh of kār, which is akin to the first sarkāneh as far as the melody is concerned, there is a qowl—without a recurrence of melodies (naghamat-e ghayr-e mokarrar)–in it. Instead of a miyānkāneh there is a tarāneh and instead of a bāzguy a kār. Every one of these pieces (qaṭ‘ehs) included in nowbat should be rendered without a recurrence of verses and non-textual syllables. There is no composition more complicated than this in the performance practice of music.

…

Rikhteh, in reality, is a form of ‘amal that is completed in light and delightful rhythmic cycles, especially dowr-e ravān and owfar. Sometimes the sarkāneh and the bāzguy are connected with one another in such a way that they sound from the beginning to the end as a single section. And this type of composition, namely rikhteh, is extremely charming and pleasant. This composition could only be accomplished by Khājeh ‘Abd al-Qāder.

Ṣowt is the one that begins with verse (she‘r) and from verse moves to non-textual syllables and comes to the second hemistich and finally a dhayl including hay hay hā hā is added to
that. Sometimes ya lā lā ya lā are also heard in the dhayl of sōwt which are hideous. Sōwt is indeed the sarkhāne of an ‘amal that is lacking the miyānkhāneh and the bāzguy. Sōwt is not composed in long rhythmic cycles such as khaʃif and thqil; its verses include conventional and established types of poem and no more than couplets are to be sung in it, except by repetition.

Naqsh is also reminiscent of sōwt, except for the fact that any verse that is fitting to the rhythm ( vazn) of its melody is sung in naqsh; it doesn’t have to be set to specific types of poem. What is articulated in the bāyti section of naqsh is ya la lā, but in sōwt it is tan dar tan. Just like sōwt, it does not return to the second hemistich of the poem. Similar to sōwt, naqsh is also a composition on light and pleasant rhythmic cycles. Strangely enough, experience has shown that by comparison a naqsh composed on the rhythm cycle of mokhammas is more pleasant than a sōwt [on the same rhythm cycle] and the reason is not known.

At times kār and ‘amal are composed on two rhythmic cycles and this form is called żarbayn. Sometimes more than two, even up to ten or twenty, rhythmic cycles are used and this doesn’t have a separate name, unless all the rhythmic cycles are combined together at once and in that case rhythmic cycles are stated throughout the composition (āhang) one by one and this [form] is called koll al-żorub.

Another form of composition (kār), analogous to nowbat-e morattab, is kolliyāt in that the entire set of modes and melodies (āhangs), including maqāms, ṣāvāzehs and sho’behs, is explored in such a way that it becomes a manual for practicing musicians. In the past, Khājeh ‘Abd al-Qāder has compiled numerous compositions in that form and after him Ḥāfez Advār Qazvini also composed the “Kolliyāt-e Nād’ali”, but his kolliyāt contains shameful mistakes in assimilating [various] modes (āhangs) and rhythmic cycles. If I felt in a pleasant mood and had sufficient time, I would have composed a new kolliyāt to make up for this deficiency. However, the ruthless aggression of time was so cruel to me that I can barely converse. Were it not for the King’s order, my failing senses and several distractions might certainly have kept me from writing so much as a word of this treatise.⁶³

As mentioned previously, Bāqiya Nā’ini usually discusses Persian and Indian music as two separate topics. In the case of musical genres, he follows the same pattern, although here and there he makes comparisons or underlines genres commonly practiced in both traditions. In the Fourth Murmur of his musical treatise, Zamzameh-ye vaḥdat, he introduces the Persian genres as follows:

It should be stated that a melody (naghmeh) which is sung without oṣul is called in Iran dōbayti and in India ālāpchārī. What is with oṣul is of two types; either the melody is arranged without a text or it contains a text, and the text could be either in Persian, Arabic or Turkish.

As for the one without a text, if it contains sarkhāneh, miyānkhāneh and bāzguy, it is called peshrow. If it only contains a sarkhāneh without miyānkhāneh and bāzguy, then it is called bi-bayti.
The melody which is set to verses is of twelve types: kār, ‘amal, qowl, ghazal, tarāneh, nowbat-e morattah, rikhte, šowt, naqsh, naqshayn and varsāqi.

Kār contains two sarkhānehs, a miyānkhāneh, and a bāzguy. It is composed in long rhythmic cycles such as chāhārẓarb, zarb al-fath, thaqil and khafif. The opening section of this composition contains non-textual syllables, that is to say, dar tanā dar tanā.

‘Amal’s specifications are also the same as what was mentioned [for kār], except for the fact that it begins with verses, not non-textual syllables. Nonetheless, there is a difference of opinion on this issue.

Qowl is the one that contains two sarkhānehs and a bāzguy, but it lacks the miyānkhāneh. It is set to Arabic verses just like the qowl of “Aḥsan Suqan”, composed by Khājah ‘Abd al-Qāder. Amir Khosrow also composed many qowls in the same category. [Qowl] begins sometimes with verses and sometimes with non-textual syllables.

Ghazal is also in the style of qowl. However, the difference between qowl and ghazal is that qowl is set to Arabic verses whereas ghazal is set to Persian verses.

Tarāneh is also in the style of qowl and ghazal. However, the verses of tarāneh are nothing but quatrains, either in Persian or Arabic.

Nowbat is a compound (morakkab) form consisting of kār, ‘amal, qowl and tarāneh. At the present time nobody recalls nowbat or has heard its types. Only its name appears in books and treatises.

Rikhte is so-called a [type of] ‘amal composed in light rhythmic cycles such as owfar and so on. Sometimes Arabic, Turkish or Hindi words creep into Persian lines and in that case they connect the sarkhānehs, miyānkhānehs and bāzguys of rikhte together. By doing so, it sounds like one piece (qaṭ’eh) from the beginning to the end and this type of composition is very delightful and pleasing.

Ṣowt is the one that begins with verses and after that two hemistiches of non-textual syllables in the category of dar tanā dar tanā are arranged. A dhayl such as hay hay hay or ḥā ḥā hay is added to that after the mentioned non-textual syllables. Its verses are not more than three couplets, unless they are repeated.

Naqsh is the one that can be arranged with any type of verse and with various poetic meters. Its non-textual syllables are ya la lā and ta ra lā and it is mostly composed in light rhythmic cycles.

Naqshayn is the one that begins with verse and after each hemistich (meṣra’) a small unit of non-textual syllables such as “ya la lā” or “ta ra lā” is added and sung. It could be either one couplet (bayt) or more than that.

Varsāqi is the one set to a Turkish text. More often than not, they perform three hemistiches of this composition and after singing three hemistiches they return to the same hemistich as they sang in the beginning. Subsequently, they sing three more hemistiches and then return to the hemistich that they sang in the first sarkhāneh and sing the same hemistich in the first manner. Varsāqi is completed either in one sarkhāneh containing three hemistiches or more, God knows the best.⁶⁴
e fārsi and tarāna as two vocal genres that were cultivated by Amir Khosrow.

Qowl-e fārsi and tarāna that are composed and sung at the present time are all styles and manners of the most accomplished of pearl-seekers of the spiritual ocean, Amir Khosrow Dehli. In this epoch, the Indian system of musical composition and singing is based on khiyāl, dhrupad, vishnupad, qowl-e fārsi and tarāna.\(^{65}\)

In the first half of the seventeenth century, Āqā Mo’men Moṣannef, the most prominent court composer and chālchi-bāshi of Isfahan, also wrote a section on musical genres that was probably based on his own practical knowledge and experience. Āqā Mo’men was a prolific composer who wrote more than fifty-five compositions during his career at the court, and except in two or three cases, he labels all his compositions as taṣnif. Nonetheless, in his theoretical tract, he declares:

In the dominion of composers, a person who has composed one or two taṣnifs cannot be considered a moṣannef (composer). A full-fledged composer should be knowledgeable of the entire melodic system and genres of composition. He is obliged to know the difference between kār, qowl, sōwt, ‘amal, nakhsh, nakhshayn, and tarāneh, so that once he is commissioned to write a particular composition, he knows how to compose it. Most of the composers whom I, Mo’men Moṣannef, have met and had discussions with on these principles, were unable to converse about this issue. What I have discovered so far are the following principles:

Kār is the one that begins with naqarāt followed by verse. Verses are followed by naqarāt again that also include a dhayl section (ritornello). The second sarkhāneh is sung to the same specifications. Two sarkhāneh are followed by a miyānkhāneh, and is up to the composer to begin and end the miyānkhāneh with verse or naqarāt. Finally, the miyānkhāneh is followed by a bāzgu.

Qowl is composed in the same style as kār, but it lacks the bāzgu. The difference between kār and qowl is just that.

Sōwt is entirely in the form of sarkhāneh. Every sarkhāneh includes both verse and naqarāt. The dhayl section lacks naqarāt and always remains the same.

‘Amal is composed based on the same specifications as kār; that is to say, it includes two sarkhāneh, a miyānkhāneh and a bāzgu. However, the difference between kār and ‘amal is that kār begins with naqarāt whereas ‘amal begins with verse.

Nakhsh is the one that begins with verse and after that a tarannom, which includes ya la lā, is sung. No matter how many sarkhāneh are sung, the tarannom remains the same throughout.

Nakhshayn is composed in the same style as nakhsh, but every hemistich is followed by a tarannom and at last it concludes with a tarannom. Since the tarannom appears in two
sections, it is called *nakhshayn*.

*Tarāneh* is characterized as the one that can begin with either verse, or *naqarāt* or *tarannom*. Being set to suitable verse, it can end with any types of non-textual syllables including both *naqarāt* or *tarannom*.66

Unlike Āqā Mo’men Moṣannef who was a Persian composer and always set his compositions to Persian text, Amir Khān Gorji had a Georgian background and wrote his compositions in both Persian and Turkish. Throughout his short musical treatise and song-text collection, Amir Khān demonstrates that the Safavid court in the seventeenth century was bilingual and supported composition of both Persian and Turkish songs.67 Following an outline of rhythmic cycles, he first lists the classical Persian genres and subsequently gives the description of Turkish vernacular genres that were practiced presumably among the *Qizilbāsh* and Caucasian musicians:

Now we begin with the types of vocal composition. One has to know that *dōbayt-khvāndan* is without *oṣul*. *Taṣnīf* is singing with *oṣul* and each type has a name and structure. They are distinguished from one another according to their names and structures in the following order: *kār*, *‘amal*, *qowl*, *ṣowt*, *naqsh*, *naqshayn*, *tarāneh*, *taṣnīf*, *varsāqi* and *pishrow*.

In Turkish, *dōbayt* is called *ma‘ni* and other types have also specific names through which they can be known. For instance, *ma‘ni* is *dōbayt*, *varsāqi* is *taṣnīf*, *torki* is a praise song with *oṣul*, *soy* is a song in praise of dynasties, *boy* is a prose style in praise of kings and their deeds, and finally *arasbārī* is the *pishrow* (instrumental composition) of Turks.68

Amir Khān Gorji further specifies the structure of classical genres in the second part of his theoretical treatise known as *Resāleh-ye mowzun*, which is entirely in verse.69

In addition to these Safavid sources one can find further details about the genres in two other Persian musical texts written by Transoxanian theorists, Najm al-Din Kowkabi and Darvish-‘Ali Changi.70

**The Genres and Their Structures in the Safavid Period**

Musical sources evidently reveal numerous facts about the development of vocal genres in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Treatises give description of the internal divisions and
rhythmic structure of the genres, and likewise song-text collections mention the composers, and provide details of the text setting and literary aspects of the compositions. Yet what remains more perplexing is the socio-cultural context in which these vocal genres were cultivated and performed. One may appropriately ask who were the composers of ‘amal, kār, qowl, ṣowt, and naqsh—professional court composers or amateur poet-musicians? Who were their major exponents—female musicians and dancers or professional male singers and entertainers? Who were their patrons and in what musical contexts were these genres mostly performed? And finally, what were the distinctive functions of the genres in a musical performance?

As noted above, Marāghi divides the styles of singing into nathr-e naghamāt and naẓm-e naghamāt. He and his two successor music theorists, Owbahi and Banā’i, also employ the term navākht for solo instrumental melodies not constrained by rhythmic cycles, like the later Turko-Arabian concept of taqsim.\footnote{71}

At the turn of the sixteenth century, Mir Şadr al-Din Moḥammad mentions that the two terms of nathr-e naghamāt and naẓm-e naghamāt were still used in the Safavid period, when he categorizes singing into two main styles of nathr-khᵛānī and khosh-khᵛānī be naẓm. He further specifies that nathr-khᵛānī was better known as khᵛānandegi that could be rendered in both Arabic and Persian. Khᵛānandegi in Arabic was confined to nashid, whereas in Persian it could be in two genres of dōbayt-khᵛānī (singing quatrains), and ghazal-khᵛānī (singing ghazals), styles of singing that were formerly referred to as khosravānī.\footnote{72} Evidence shows that in this period the term guyandegi is still employed referring to singing taṣnifs or metric vocal genres. In the beginning of the seventeenth century, Eskandar Monshi, the prominent chronicler of the Safavid court, alludes to these two styles of singing in introducing court singers:

Hāfez Ahmad Qazvini, while he excelled in guyandegi, he was also celebrated in town for his vocal phrasing and nuances of khᵛānandegi.
Ḥāfeẓ Jalājel combined both khvānandegi and guyandegi in the best possible way, and verily surpassed everyone else in the field. He was appointed chālchi-bāshi under Shāh Esmā‘īl II.

It is a conventional belief that khvānandegi is the specialty of singers from Khorāsān (northeastern Persia), and guyandegi is the specialty of singers from ‘Irāq-e ‘ajam (western Persia). While Ḥāfeẓ Możaffar Qomi was from ‘Irāq-e ‘ajam, he was verily unique in ‘Irāq for performing in the style of Khorāsān [i.e. khvānandegi].73

Therefore, singing maqāms and their sub-sets was the responsibility of khvānandehs, who were largely male vocalists and mostly performed in the two genres of dōbāt-khvānī and ghazal-khvānī, whereas singing taşnīfs was executed by the male taşnīf singers called guyandehs and the female taşnīf singers known as qavvāls. The title of Ḥāfeẓ was also employed widely in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for ‘an esteemed male singer’ who could perform both khvānandegi and guyandegi. Other titles such as sharveh-guy, bāghāti-khvānī, and sāqi-khvānī were used to designate the singing of specific styles or sub-genres, but unfortunately there are not many descriptions of them.74 Another honorific title, morassa‘-khvān, was also mentioned in some texts and most likely referred to a khvānande who sang verses adorned with refined and fast passages of taḥrīr.75

The main genres that were constrained by the rhythmic cycles or oṣuls in the Safavid period were kār, ‘amal, gowl, sōwt, naqsh, naqshayn, tarāneh, rikhteh, varsāqi, pishrow and arasbāri.

Kār and ‘Amal

In the late fifteenth century, nowbat-e morattab was still considered the most respected form of vocal composition, but it was gradually yielding in popularity to the large-scale forms of kār and ‘amal. The decline of the pompous and tradition-oriented Timurid court and the rise of smaller provincial courts during the sixteenth century also seem to have furthered the acceptance of kār and ‘amal, which were more virtuosic and entirely set to Persian texts.
Kār was the superordinate form of composition consisting three parts: two sarkhānehs, a miyānkhanēh and a bāzguy. The two sarkhānehs were in the same mode and both commenced with non-textual syllables of tan dar tan followed by a few lines of a ghazal. Sarkhānehs preceded the miyānkhanēh, that continued with subsequent lines of the opening ghazal while modulating to a different mode. The miyānkhanēh could begin and end with verse or non-textual syllables, but at its conclusion, it modulated back to the initial mode or theme of the composition. The last part, bāzguy, could also be set to non-textual syllables, verse or both, but it was apparently composed in a conspicuously different rhythmic structure, mostly set to a different verse with a distinctive poetic meter or a different ōsul, and it was probably rendered in a faster tempo than sarkhānehs and miyānkhanēhs. While by convention a melodic modulation was to take place in the miyānkhanēh and a rhythmic modulation in the bāzguy, in some cases the miyānkhanēh was composed to a different rhythmic cycle or the bāzguy could be set to a different mode.\(^{76}\) A ritornello section called dhayl was also appended to each part of kār. Nevertheless, the dhayl was a distinct entity and usually began with syllables hay hay hā hā. Finally, as the same author states, syllable material in kār was predominantly in the vein of dar tanā dar tanā, but in some cases, it included ya la lā which were not considered genuine.

The difference between kār and ʿamal is somewhat ambiguous in the Safavid period. Musical texts tend to claim that they both had the same formal division and were only distinguished in that kār commenced with non-textual syllables and ʿamal with verse. While Marāghi specifies that ʿamal was composed in short rhythmic cycles, we know that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, kār came to be composed in long ōsuls including žarb al-faṭḥ, thaqil, and khafīf.\(^ {77}\) This may suggest that kār appeared in the sixteenth century as a more serious and sober genre than its fifteenth-century precursor, ʿamal. After the Timurid period, ʿamal likely evolved
under the influence of kār, yet it still lacked that prolixity and austerity of the latter. Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad further states that to some musicians ‘amal was still to be composed in shorter rhythmic cycles, more specifically the torkī zarb, although he himself rejected this idea.

The respected repertoire of the Safavid court music in the second half of the seventeenth-century consisted of kārs and ‘amals that were partly attributed to ‘Abd al-Qāder Marāghī and partly composed by some of the most celebrated court composers including Amir Khān Gorji himself, Ṣāber Shirāzi, Mir Ṣowti, Kāzem Chālzibāshi, and Morteżā-Qoli Beg Sarkār Khāşsh. Amir Khān Gorji documents more than 22 kārs and ‘amals in his song-text collection that represent the bulk of this material.78

Qowl

From the mid-fifteenth century, qowl was known as the bipartite vocal genre, containing two sarkhānehs and a bāzguy. Qowl largely began with non-textual syllables and it could be set to Arabic or Persian texts. By the seventeenth century, qowl was no longer composed in Arabic.

During the fourteenth and probably early fifteenth century, when a qowl was set to a Persian text in the context of nowbat-e morattab, it was referred to by its poetic form, namely ghazal. Yet no type of taṣnīf under the rubric of ghazal ever developed as an independent genre in Iran. It seems that when a bipartite vocal composition was set to a Persian text, it was first known as qowl-e fārsi and later only as qowl. As mentioned above, Bāqiyā Nā’ini, a long-term resident of India, refers to qowl-e fārsi and tarāneh as the two vocal genres that were cultivated among the Muslim musicians in India and attributes their invention to Amir Khosrow. He also mentions a kind of ghazal that was probably synonymous to qowl-e fārsi in Indian musical culture of the sixteenth century.
Āqā Mo’men and Amir Khān Gorji describe qowl as a kār, which lacked only the bāzguy section. Their descriptions may further indicate that what was primarily known as qowl in the Safavid period was a bipartite form, either containing two sarkhānehs and a bāzguy, or two sarkhānehs and a miyānkhāneh. Among the taṣnifs composed by Āqā Mo’men there is only one composition marked as qowl and that consists of two sarkhānehs and a miyānkhāneh while every part is followed by a dhayl.79 Safavid sources do not mention anything about the rhythmic structure of qowl, but Darvish-‘Ali Changi states that the major difference between qowl and kār was that qowl was largely in short rhythmic cycles (khafīf), as opposed to kār that was always composed in long rhythmic cycles (thaqīl).80

As mentioned previously, female musicians and courtesans who were known as qavvāls and male musicians who were linked to the same milieu seem to have been the major exponents of qowl in the Safavid period and earlier. The association of qowl with courtesan culture prevented it from being considered as a respected genre and therefore included in Safavid song-text collections.

Șowt

Late Timurid music theorists define šowt as a genre containing only one part (khāneh or sarkhāneh) that was repeated in a strophic style. Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad states that šowt was similar to the sarkhāneh of an ‘amal, and hence the composition characteristically lacked the miyānkhāneh and bāzguy. It usually contained three couplets in a khāneh, and every line was followed by non-textual syllables in the vein of dar tanā dar tanā. Şowt was usually composed in short cycles of oṣul and each khāneh concluded with a dhayl ritornello beginning with hay hay hā hā. Inclusion of non-textual syllables in šowt was presumably a later development that happened
in the Safavid period, for at the turn of the fifteenth century Marāghi clearly states that Šōwt was devoid of naqarāt.

Naqsh

Naqsh was always a novel melodic phrase or a short composition of sufficient attractiveness set to verse and non-textual syllables. Mir Ṣadr al-Dīn Moḥammad mentions that naqsh lacked the miyānkhāneh and bāzguy, but unlike Šōwt, any verse that fitted the rhythm of its melody could be performed in it. Bāqiyyā Nā’ini also indicates that naqsh could be arranged with any verse and with various poetic meters. This in fact suggests that, while Šōwt was invariably set to couplets containing two full hemistiches, naqsh could be set to verses of multiple meters or asymmetrical hemistiches. Song-text collections also confirm this distinguishing feature of Šōwt and naqsh. In the only example of naqsh documented in Amir Khān Gorji’s collection, a section of the composition is marked as saj’ (lit. rhymed prose) which clearly displays this particular characteristic of the genre. Āqā Mo’men also includes a Šōwt among his compositions that consists of three couplets, and he further adds that the Šōwt itself contained a naqsh that was performed as an additional section to it. The Iranian musicologist Sāsān Fāṭemi argues that Šōwt was perhaps distinguished from naqsh by syllabic declamation as well, since according to Marāghi the number of syllables in the verse fitted the length of melodic phrase. Therefore, in Šōwt the text was usually pronounced more distinctly and intelligibly than in naqsh where the words could have been broken or rendered melismatically.

A more conspicuous distinguishing feature between Šōwt and naqsh, however, concerned their syllable materials. Safavid music theorists commonly declare that the non-textual syllables in naqsh were tarannom (ya la lā), whereas in Šōwt they were naqarāt (tan dar tan). These
specific characteristics of sowt and naqsh can be verified from the compositions in the seventeenth-century Ottoman song text-collection of Ḥāfeẓ Post as well. Şowt and naqsh were both composed in light rhythmic cycles. According to Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad and Darvish-ʿAli Changi mokhammas was a rhythmic cycle par excellence for naqsh and a naqsh composed in mokhammas was more admired and pleasant than a sowt composed in the same rhythmic cycle. Finally, Banāʾi declares that naqsh was less rigid than sowt, and its text was more sentimental and romantic.

In general, kār, ʿamal, qowl, sowt and naqsh were the predominant Persian vocal genres in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. There were also three less prominent genres of naqshayn, tarāneh, and rikhteh, two instrumental genres of pishrow and sarband, and finally the two Turkish-Caucasian genres of varsāqi and arasbārī that were widely performed throughout the Safavid period.

Naqshayn

Naqshayn was a modified version of naqsh that likely emerged in the beginning of the Safavid period. While in naqsh the non-textual syllables were rendered at the end of each couplet (bayt), in naqshayn every single hemistich (meṣrāʾ) was followed by non-textual syllables. Dowreh Beg Kerāmi further states that in naqsh the melodic structure was similar in the verse section and the non-textual syllables, whereas in naqshayn they were different. Music theorists commonly declare that the non-textual syllables in both naqsh and naqshayn were ya la lā and they did not contain tan tan.

Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad does not mention naqshayn among the taṣnifs and this may simply indicate that to some music theorists the difference between the two forms was not significant enough to justify classifying them as two distinct genres.
Tarāneh

Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad and Bāqiyā Nā’ini introduce tarāneh as a form of qowl (two sarkhānehs and a bāzguymiyānkhāneh) set particularly to quatrains. Dowreh Beg Kerāmi describes tarāneh as having three parts, each set to a different poetic style. The first part, he states, was a section of verse, the second part was praise or blame (madḥya zammm) and the last part was non-textual syllables. Āqā Mo’men instead provides a very broad description of the genre stating that it could begin with either verse, or non-textual syllables, but it always concluded with non-textual syllables and could be set to any suitable verse.

In the BnF copy of Amir Khān Gorji’s song-text collection two tarānehs are documented as part of the seventeenth century court repertoire. While the first one, attributed to Amir Khosrow, consists of three sarkhānehs each beginning with tarannom, the second tarāneh consists of two sarkhānehs each followed by a miyānkhāneh; neither text is a quatrain. Tarāneh could have also been the North Indian tarāna that was brought to Isfahan by Indian musicians.

Rikhteh

The emergence of rikhteh as a vocal genre was closely related to the rekhta language that was the precursor of Urdu, containing elements of both Persian and Hindi. Rikhteh seems to have flourished in Herat probably in the first half of the fifteenth century. Banā’i describes rikhteh as a form of vocal pishrow set to prose, and further declares that it could also be set to verses filled with humor and ridicule. Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad and Bāqiyā Nā’ini both introduce rikhteh as a form of ‘amal in which sarkhāneh, miyānkhāneh and bāzguymiyānkhāneh were smoothly and effortlessly connected, and it was composed in light rhythmic cycles such as dowr-e ravān and owfar. The latter confirms that the text of rikhteh was primarily in Persian but at the same time might contain
Dowreh Beg Kerāmi specifically mentions owfar as the rhythmic cycle of rikhteh and indicates that its non-textual syllables could be anything including tan tan and ya la lā.

While rikhteh is not mentioned in the treatises of Marāghi, both Mir Șadr al-Din Moḥammad and Darvish-ʿAli Changi attribute the composition of highly amiable rikhtehs to Khājah ʿAbd al-Qāder.\(^91\)

**Pishrow**

Dowreh Beg Kerāmī is the first music theorist who directly refers to pishrow as an instrumental genre in the Safavid period. He describes pishrow as containing a sarkhâneh, a miyânkhâneh, and a bazguy, while each part was followed by a ritornello (lāzemeh) or a slightly modified version of the ritornello (taqrib-e lāzemeh). Mir Șadr al-Din Moḥammad, whose account of genres only includes taṣnifs and overlooks the description of pishrow, at one point states that pishrows were typically composed in the rhythmic cycle of dō-yek and those that were not composed in that osul did not sound euphonious.\(^92\)

**Sarband**

In the first half of the fifteenth century, Marāghi refers to sarband as the ritornello of pishrow. Yet almost a century later, Dowreh Beg Kerāmī describes sarband as an improvisatory (badiheh) instrumental genre in light osuls that was played by master musicians in an interactive jam session to challenge each other’s techniques. It seems that in the performance of this genre, musicians took turn playing an improvisatory section to display their own musical ideas and technical prowess, and as a point of reference they all reiterated a ritornello (sarband) after each individual section.
Varsāqi

The most prominent Turkish vocal genre in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Iran and especially in the Safavid court was varsāqi. Evidence suggests that varsāqi was originally a genre of folk sung poetry attributed to the Varsāq Turkmen clans. In the early sixteenth century, varsāqi was performed by qizilbāsh Turkish musicians known as ozāns at the court of Shāh Esmā‘il I (r. 1501-24) in Tabriz. Shāh Esmā‘il I, who was a poet-musician himself, wrote a number of varsāqis that remain to this date the earliest examples of the genre. Bāqiyā Nā’ini describes varsāqi as three hemistiches sung strophically to a single melody. In other words, the same melody was repeated throughout the performance each time with a new set of lines.

By the second half of the seventeenth century, varsāqi appears to have acquired some classical features, becoming the typical composition with a Turkish verse in the Safavid court. In the BnF copy of Amir Khān Gorji’s song-text collection, two varsāqis are documented, though neither of them is attributed to any specific composer. The first varsāqi consists of four sarkhānehhs, and the last hemistich of the first sarkhāneh is repeated as a refrain in the subsequent sarkhānehhs. The second varsāqi consists of three sarkhānehhs each followed by a miyānkhāneh. In the second example the last hemistich of the first sarkhāneh also functions as a refrain, but it is only repeated in the miyānkhānehhs. The two varsāqis are composed in the oşuls of dowr, and nim-dowr respectively, and this may indicate that varsāqis were typically sung to short rhythmic cycles.

Arashāri

The instrumental counterpart of varsāqi is usually introduced as arashāri in the Safavid texts and it seems to have been a folk genre performed by ozāns on the long-necked Caucasian lute, chogur.
An early reference to *arasbāri* appears in the Chagatai *divān* of Mir ‘Alishir Navā’i (1441-1501) which indicates that the genre was known in the second half of the fifteenth century at the court of Timurids in Herat. Amīr Khān Gorji identifies *arasbāri* as the *pishrow* of Turks, and the author of *Dar bayān-e ʿelm-e musīqi va dānestan-e shoʿabāt-e ou* refers to it and *varsāqi* as the two Turkish genres that were mostly associated with a *gusheh* called *qaracheqā-ye rumi*. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Nasimi mentions *arasbāri* as a modal entity similar to *bayāti* (*a shoʿeh of busalik*), but this confusion presumably derives from the association of the genre with the distinctive modes in which it was performed.

Chronicles and historical texts indicate that while *kār*, ‘*amal*, *qowl*, and *pishrow* were frequently composed by professional musicians, instrumentalists and court composers, *šowt* and *naqsh* were often written by amateur singers, poet-composers, calligrapher-musicians, music connoisseurs and theoreticians. The author of *Golestān-e honar*, for instance, refers to Solṭān Ebrāhim Mirzā (prince, amateur musician and instrument maker) as well as Mir Ṣadr al-Dīn Moḥammad (music theorist, amateur singer and calligrapher) as the composers of *šowt* and *naqsh*, but mentions Mowlāna Qāsem (prominent *qānum* player) among the celebrated composers of *qowl*, *pishrow* and ‘*amal*. Nonetheless, *šowt* and *naqsh* could be composed equally by professional instrumentalists and court composers as well.

**The Eighteenth Century**

After the Safavid period, the predominant vocal genres, namely *kār*, ‘*amal*, *qowl*, *šowt*, and *naqsh*, did not disappear altogether. By the middle of the eighteenth century, *šowt* and *naqsh* were still distinguished as two separate genres. It also seems that some specific compositions in the forms of *šowt*, *naqsh*, *kār* and ‘*amal* came to be part of the classic repertoire in this period, but there is
no evidence to indicate that qowl was still performed under the same name. In the anonymous treatise Resāleh dar 'elm-e musiqi, which contains early references to dastgāh, a few sowts and naqshs are documented as the essential pieces for musicians to learn and perform in certain maqāms. Toward the end of the eighteenth century, single-part compositions of naqsh and sowt ceased to be recognized as two separate genres, and likewise kār and 'amal merged into one form, which gradually became known as kār-e'amal.

**Vocal Genres in the Qajar Period**

In the course of the nineteenth century, vocal music was classified into two major categories of āvāz and taṣnif. While āvāz was almost synonymous with the Timurid concept of nathr naghamāt, taṣnif fell into the category of žarbi, a musical term referring to compositions that were accompanied by percussion instruments.

**Āvāz**

In Chapter Three, we argued that modal categories that were closer to the ‘scale’ end of the scale-tune continuum came to be referred to as āvāz in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Yet when vocal music was set to verses with flexible melodies in which the rhythm depended on the meter of the poetry (what is frequently referred to as a free-rhythmic section), it was commonly called āvāz as well. Therefore, āvāz as a technical term has carried two separate meanings in the past few centuries. In this second meaning, an āvāz was categorized based on the poetic form to which it was set and accordingly classified as various vocal genres including ghazal, dōbayti, mathnavi, and sāqi-nāmeh. A performance of āvāz therefore consisted of either one genre or a sequence of two or three genres.
Ghazal was the most prominent āvāz genre, largely performed in urban musical contexts including private mahfels and courts. As a poetic form, ghazal consists of an indeterminate number of rhymed couplets in the scheme aa ba ca da, etc. In the performance of the genre, three to five couplets of a ghazal were usually selected and each was set to a different melodic or modal type. The majority of ghazals performed in the Qajar period were written by Sa‘di, Ḥāfez, and some nineteenth-century poets such as Qā‘āni Shirāzi (d. 1854) and Forughī Bastāmi (d. 1857).102

Ghazal was primarily a male vocal genre. When performed by female singers, the rendition contained a smaller number of couplets and shorter passages of taḥrir. A number of schools of ghazal-singing associated with different urban centers, including Isfahan, Tabriz, Qazvin, Kashān, Mashhad, and Tehran, were cultivated in the nineteenth century such that each developed its own vocal characteristics.103 In the beginning of the twentieth century some sub-genres of ghazal also emerged in a few urban centers, among which one can mention kucheh-bāghi in Tehran and bayāt-e darvish-Ḥasan in eṣfahan. The melodic variation in these sub-genres was stereotypically limited, and each was usually associated with a distinctive mode.104

Another āvāz genre was dōbayti (lit. singing quatrains). Classical quatrains, mostly written by Bābā Tāher Hamedāni (c. 11th century), and folk-regional quatrains composed by poets like Fāyez Dashtestāni were largely sung as dōbayti or dōbayti-khānī in regional and folk-derived modes such as dastestāni, hājiāni, gilaki, shushtari, and bakhtiyāri.

Two unaccompanied male semi-classical genres, mathnavi and sāqi-nāmeh, were mainly sung by both roaming and sedentary dervishes and maddāhs in Sufi samā‘ assemblies and Shiʿite devotional contexts such as maddāhi and rowżeh-khānī. As poetic forms, mathnavi and sāqi-nāmeh both followed meters of eleven syllables and consisted of indeterminate numbers of rhymed couplets in the scheme aa bb cc dd, etc. While the rhythmic structure of mathnavi was merely
based on the mathnavi poetic meter, the sāqi-nāmeh was more melismatic and beyond the poetic meter, it was governed by a loose meter of 4/4 or 7/8. It is evident that mathnavi was originally rendered in vernacular and informal modes such as afshāri, dashti, mokhālef, and esfahān, whereas sāqi-nāmeh-khānī was only associated with māhur and esfahān.

Following the establishment of the radif in the beginning of the twentieth century, all the vocal genres gradually conformed to its format and subsequently dōbayti, mathnavi, and sāqi-nāmeh came to be identified by the exponents of radif as gushehs with the same titles.

Taṣnīf

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Tehran, as the large and prosperous capital of the Qajars, became the most prominent center of court music and entertainment. A large number of courtesans and their associated male musicians moved to the new capital and became preeminent exponents of taṣnīfs, and the instrumental dance tunes known as rengs. Alexander Chodżko, who came to Iran in the reign of Fath-‘Ali Shāh (r.1797-1834) and collected a number of taṣnīfs, writes about his informants as follows:

All the following songs with few exceptions, came to me from the inmates of the harem of the Fateh Aly Shah. I was favoured with them, at different epochs, by Chalanchi Khan, the director of the shah’s orchestra; by Molla Karim, his first singer; and by Rejeb Aly Khan, his first violin and dancing master to the Bayaderes of the Teheran court;–names of high repute in the annals of the beau monde of Teheran.105

Besides urban courtesans, a group of male singers were also adept in performing taṣnīf in this period. As mentioned previously, this group of singers consisted of musicians who largely accompanied themselves on the dāyereh or dombak. Some of them were also active as żarbāris associated with prominent instrumentalists. While the repertoires of courtesans and male singer-żarbāris were slightly different, for these male and female performers, the scrupulous exposition
and elaboration of the dastgāhs-āvāzs was secondary to the seductive function of taṣnīf and reng.

As mentioned in the first chapter, during the nineteenth century the term qavvāl referring to a female performer, who was active as a public courtesan and received government protection, was still employed in some urban centers. Likewise, evidence shows that the term guyandeh was still used to address a professional male taṣnīf-singer in this period.106

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, among the male taṣnīf-singers, there were also some master performers who supported themselves partially or entirely through teaching female musicians who themselves stood to earn more as concubines trained in performing arts than comparable male artists could solely as performers. Ḩabibollāh Samā’-Ḥożur and Reżā-Qoli Nowruzi stand out as the two most prominent master taṣnīf-singers who instructed female singers and regularly accompanied them in this period. The latter recorded a section of his repertoire of taṣnifs in London in 1909.107

Taṣnīf in the Qajar period was a term that came to encompass all types of metric vocal compositions, regardless of their forms, internal divisions, rhythmic structures, and modes of articulation. Nonetheless, vocal compositions of this period render themselves into single-part, bipartite, and complex forms, and they bear some stylistic and historical resemblances to their seventeenth-century precursors.

1. The Single-part Form

The single-part vocal compositions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries usually fell into the categories of ʂowt and naqsh, the two genres that would continue to be performed into the early development of the dastgāh-āvāz system in the eighteenth century. As mentioned earlier, ʂowt was set to couplets and its text was mainly pronounced as intact syllables, whereas naqsh was set to
verses of multiple meters, and its words could be broken or rendered melismatically.

The collection of nineteenth-century taṣnīfs transmitted through ‘Abdollāh Davāmi contains more than 180 compositions and it is fair to say that these compositions can be divided into two general categories.

The first category of taṣnīfs includes those that are set to between two to four couplets of a classical ghazal or robā’i. Compositions in this group usually have loose melodic structures, but their texts are mostly rendered distinctly and intelligibly. Each taṣnīf could be performed with two or three typical texts—sometimes of varying poetic meters—and the renditions of various texts often differ from one another only in minor melodic details. The second category of taṣnīfs are set to classical poems interspersed with external words or verses of multiple meters and they could be performed either according to a syllabic, easily intelligible phrasing or in a broken and melismatic fashion. Master musicians generally believed that originality and uniqueness was an essential factor in this category of taṣnīfs and a composition was considered mediocre if it bore resemblance to a conventional or long-familiar model. The distinctions between the two categories are obviously mitigated by numerous exceptions and a number of vocal compositions can be characterized as falling within the spectrum between these two poles of taṣnīf convention.

2. The Bipartite Form

The bipartite taṣnīf was a common vocal genre in the nineteenth century whose major exponents were predominantly the female musicians of the harem and courtesans who were active in urban centers. A bipartite taṣnīf was composed or performed in the form of a leisurely paced section followed by a lively contrasting finale in fast tempo called bargardān.108 Regardless of the rhythmic structure of the first section, the bargardān was often set to a fast duple meter and it
usually emphasized variations in poetic meter, rhythmic structure, and tempo rather than pitch and timber.

The bargardān as a finale or interlude was composed either as an integral part of the composition, or it could be attached to a simple taṣnif in the course of a performance, where it was reiterated once or twice throughout the composition. Some bargardāns were just hallmarks of one particular mode, for instance segāh or shur, hence they were sometimes attached to more than one taṣnif within the same dastgāh or āvāz.

The taṣnifs rendered by female performers usually had seductive functions and contained characteristics that made them inherently appealing to listeners not steeped in the classical tradition. In such taṣnifs, the bargardān seemingly served to provide a bridge structure which could be used to lead to dance finales. ‘Ali-Akbar Shaydā (d. 1906) and ‘Āref Qazvini (d. 1934) were the two Qajar composers who wrote bipartite taṣnifs and most of their compositions were presumably intended to be performed primarily by female singers. The fact that ‘Āref’s compositions were recorded for the first time by three renowned female singers, Amjad, Eftekār and Zari would tend to support this hypothesis.  

3. The Modulatory Form or Kār-e ‘amal

After the Safavid period, the two austere genres of kār and ‘amal seem to have merged into one form, commonly referred to as kār-e ‘amal. In two eighteenth-century musical treatises, Resālehe dar bayān-e chahār dastgāh-e a’zam and Bahjat al-qolub, the performance of each dastgāh is mentioned, concluding with pertinent kār-o-‘amals as well as fast and slow taṣnifs. However, none of these texts has the formal structure of the genre.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth century, kār-e ‘amal was known to both music
theorists and court male singers in Tehran. Among the music theorists, Mehdi-Qoli Hedāyat introduces kār-e'āmal as a complex and modulatory form of composition and describes its structure through some medieval terminology.

One can state that kār-e'āmal is the most complete and perfect (kāmel) composition (ta'rif) in its own right. I transcribe one new and one old kār-e'āmal that were composed based on [such techniques as] repetitions (tekrār), modulations from the main mode (taghyir-e zamīneh), and modulations back to the main mode (e‘ādeh) while I also give some explanation and analysis for them.¹¹¹

He further mentions that kār-e’āmal, as the most complete form of composition, contained tekrār, e‘ādeh, and bargardān, a definition that closely conforms to the Safavid description of the genre.¹¹²

‘Abdollāh Mostowfi, another historian and music connoisseur of the same period, also refers to kār-e’āmal as a metric modulatory scheme as follows:

Taṣnifs are commonly composed within [the melodic confines of] a single āvāz (mode). Yet some taṣnifs composed by master musicians are primarily in one āvāz while they modulate to all of or the major gushehs of that particular āvāz. This form of all-encompassing taṣnif was referred to as kār-‘āmal by master musicians of the past. They even executed the form of kār-‘āmal in rengs (instrumental compositions). Nowadays one can recognize the pishdarāmad to be composed in the form of kār-‘āmal as well.¹¹³

A few prominent male singers including ‘Ali Khān-e Nāyeb al-Saltaneh, Qorbān Khān, and Sayyed Aḥmad Khān recorded several compositions with the title of kār-e’āmal in Tehran during the recording sessions of the Gramophone and Typewriter, Ltd. in 1906.¹¹⁴ These recordings are very short and it is hard to find common elements among them. Nonetheless, in one longer recording in which the kār-e’āmal is rendered instrumentally on the santur, the performer modulates to two more gushehs in addition to the darāmad.¹¹⁵
Composers of Taṣnifs in the Late Qajar Period

The majority of taṣnifs that have survived from the Qajar period are either anonymous compositions or were written by some male composers ranging from poet-musicians to professional instrumentalists and master taṣnif-singers who were primarily based in Tehran. A few taṣnifs are ascribed to the female singers of the court and a half dozen taṣnifs are also attributed to the Afghan musicians who came to Tehran from Herat and Kabul.¹¹⁶

Three outstanding poet-musicians ‘Ali-Akbar Shaydā, Shurideh Shirāzi (d. 1926) and ‘Āref Qazvini wrote a substantial number of taṣnifs in the second half of the nineteenth century. None of these composers was directly affiliated with the Qajar court, but they were patronized by the nobility and aristocrats of Tehran. Other composers such as Darvish Khān and Gholām-Reżā Sālār-Mo‘azzaz were celebrated instrumentalists associated somehow with the court. Since they were not poets, they usually composed only the melodies of taṣnifs and subsequently set them to classical poems or otherwise asked some contemporary poets to write words for their compositions. Finally, some master taṣnif-singers such as Ḥabibollāh Samā’-Ḥožur, who were often žarbginś for prominent instrumentalists, also developed and composed a small number of taṣnifs.¹¹⁷

In general, one can state that the taṣnifs written by poet-musicians, while mostly composed in the vernacular and informal modes such as afshāri, dashti, esfahān and shur, are more idiomatic, in a sense that they are perfectly suited to the rhythms, accents and phrasing of the poetry. Professional musicians and instrumentalists, on the contrary, often used craftier and more complex techniques and wrote their compositions in both classical and informal modes.
Instrumental Genres in the Qajar Period

Unlike Ottoman sources that extensively document the instrumental repertoire of the seventeenth century, Safavid musical texts do not include much information about the instrumental music of this period. Nor do seventeenth and eighteenth-century treatises indicate the extent to which *pishrow* and *sarband* were prevalent among the instrumentalists or mention the difference between instrumental and vocal repertoires in general. Yet it is conceivable that Persian instrumentalists rendered much of the existing vocal repertoire on their instruments, and also that some vocal compositions especially in the forms of *kār* and ‘*amal*, when played instrumentally, were just referred to as *pishrow*. This was probably the case with many Ottoman *peşrevs* as well.\(^{118}\) In fact, a few instrumental compositions that were attributed in Cantemir’s collection to Āqā Mo’men and Shāhmorād (the two outstanding Safavid court composers) seem to have been initially vocal compositions in the Safavid court, for these two composers were primarily celebrated as *taṣnif* writers. Likewise, a few *varsāqīs* are documented in Cantemir’s collection that were apparently rendered instrumentally in the Ottoman court.\(^{119}\) Hence it seems to have been common for Ottoman and Safavid musicians to turn *taṣnifs* into *pishrows* or vice versa.\(^{120}\)

By the second half of the eighteenth century, as the performance of long rhythmic cycles fell into decline, *pishrow*, as an instrumental genre in its own right, was no longer composed in Iran. During the nineteenth century, metric instrumental compositions especially dance tunes came to be referred to as *reng*.

*Reṅg*

Throughout the nineteenth century, instrumental metric compositions accompanied by a drum were commonly known as *reṅgs*. However, *reṅg* was more specifically a dance tune of either urban
or rural origin and its name often indicated an ethnic or geographical association such as *reng-e afshār, reng-e qafqāzi, reng-e lori, reng-e kāboli, reng-e baghdādi* and *reng-e armani*.\(^{121}\) Nineteenth-century *rengs* that have survived to this date are all anonymous, but most of them have titles. Some that were known to Mirzā ‘Abdollāh came to be incorporated into his *radif* and were later transcribed or recorded. Classical *rengs* that were dance tunes such as *lezgi, reng-e hashtari* and *shahrāshub* were usually in compound duple meter or \(\text{žarb}-e \text{rengi}\), but those that were not dance tunes such as *nastār, reng-e farah, reng-e ḥarbi*, and *reng-e oṣul* were in \(\text{se-żarb}\) (six-beat cycle) or \(\text{dō-żarb}\) (four-beat cycle).

**Shahrāshub**

A sub-genre of *reng* was known as *shahrāshub*, that was primarily an assortment of dance tunes in a *dastgāh*. Almost every *dastgāh* had a *shahrāshub*, which was in compound duple meter (6/8) throughout and its component units were separated with short and long ritornellos called *parvāneh-ye ṣaḡhir* and *parvāneh-ye kabir*.\(^{122}\) Each unit (*qesmat*) or dance tune had a proper title named usually after a corresponding dance form such as *raqs-e golrizān* (flower scattering dance), *raqs-e māt* (stop dance), and *pā armani* (Armenian dance step).\(^{123}\) In some *dastgāhs* such as *chahārgāh*, the constituent units formed a modulatory scheme in that each *qesmat* was composed in one particular āvāz e.g. *darāmad, muyeh, ḥešār, mokhālef* and *maṇṣuri*. Intimately associated with the courtesan tradition, *shahrāshub* was ostensibly cultivated in the beginning of the nineteenth century in the *dastgāh-e bāzigar-khāneh* as there is no reference to it in the eighteenth-century musical sources.
**Chahārmeżrāb**

Another instrumental genre, *chahārmeżrāb* (lit. four-plucked pattern) marked with an ostinato plucking pattern (*pāyeh*) was predominantly played on the *tār*, setār and *santur*, the three stringed instruments. The term *chahārmeżrāb* first appears in *Resāleh-ye davāzdah dastgāh* written around 1840 which suggests that the genre was prevalent as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, if not earlier. The *chahārmeżrābs* rendered on the *tār* were typically short, sober, unaccompanied and they were usually preceded by a *darāmad* in the opening section of a *dastgāh* or a new āvāz within a *dastgāh*. A performer usually played a *chahārmeżrāb* to display his virtuosic ability and to further establish the mood of āvāz or *dastgāh* for the singer to open with a vocal *darāmad*. The *chahārmeżrābs* developed on the *santur* and later setār were mostly associated with Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khān and his disciples. While these *chahārmeżrābs* were typically longer, in 3/8 or 6/16 meters, accompanied by *dombak*, and sometimes incorporated modulations to related āvāzs or gushehs, they also contained a ritornello section called *parvāneh*. These *chahārmeżrābs* were independent compositions, hence they were no longer associated with a *darāmad* and could be played at any point throughout the performance.

In general, *chahārmeżrāb* may have resembled *reng* in many respects, but the technique employed in *chahārmeżrāb* was to stress a rhythmic complexity and intensity rather than the melodic and seductive expression that was sought in *reng*.

**Pishdarāmad**

One other important instrumental metric genre that emerged in the beginning of the twentieth century was *pishdarāmad*. The genre was mostly in duple meter, slow tempo and contained modulations to major āvāzs of a *dastgāh*. It was rendered by the entire ensemble as an opening
piece to a musical concert, hence the genre was referred to as *pishdarāmad* (lit. preceding the *darāmad*). While a few compositions with similar rhythmic structure and tempo were first cultivated and performed in the second half of the nineteenth century by Moḥammad Ṣādeq Khān and Āqā Hosayn-Qoli, they were simply regarded as the instrumental rendition of some *tasnifs*.127 The *pishdarāmad* is said to have been invented by Rokn al-Din Mokhtārī (d. 1971) who first composed some overture-like compositions to be performed as ensemble pieces in public performances, and it was further developed by Darvish Khān who composed pieces in the same style in various āvāzs and taught them to his own disciples.128 As Mehdi-Qoli Hedāyat states, the idea of *pishdarāmad* was similar to the concept of *bardāsht*, a free-rhythmic instrumental modulatory scheme played at the beginning of a performance while alluding to major āvāzs of a *dastgāh*.129 He further mentions that a *pishdarāmad* as a metric composition with multiple modulations bore stylistic resemblance to *kār-eʿamal* as well.130

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st section</th>
<th>Timurid</th>
<th>Safavid</th>
<th>Qajar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repetition of the 1st section</td>
<td>ʿtariqeh-ye jadval</td>
<td>sarkhāneh-ye avval</td>
<td>band-e avval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd section</td>
<td>ʿtariqeh-ye maṭlaʿ</td>
<td>sarkhāneh-ye dovom</td>
<td>band-e dovom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd section</td>
<td>ṣowt al-vasat</td>
<td>miyānkhāneh</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrain</td>
<td>tashyīʿeh or bāzgash</td>
<td>bāzguy</td>
<td>bargardān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental Ritornello</td>
<td>sarband</td>
<td>lāzemeh/sarband</td>
<td>parvānāeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-textual syllables</td>
<td>alfāż-e naqarāt</td>
<td>naqarāt/tarannom</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1. The names of various sections of vocal and instrumental compositions between the fifteenth and twentieth centuries.

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4 Cf. ‘*Nashid,*’ *Loghatnāmeh-ye Dehkhodā*.
7 Ibid., 232.
8 Early sources indicate that *qowl* emerged most likely in Khorāsān.
11 Abu Ḥāmed Ghazālī, “Vajd va samāʿ,” in *Andar ghazal-e khish nahān khvāham gashtan*, 99, 130, 142, 155, 158.
12 For examples of four-couplet and two-couplet *qowls* see ibid., 142, 155.
19 Cf. Eckhard Neubauer, “Music History II. ca. 650 to 1370 CE.” The eminent Iranian poet Khāju Kermānī (d.1352) also refers to the four parts of *nowbat-e morattab* including *qowl, ghazal, tarāneh, and forudāsht*, see Khāju Kermānī, *Divān*, ed. Aḥmad Sohayli Khvānsāri (Tehran: Pāzang, 1990), 268.

The *mostazād* usually summarized all the lines and techniques of composition already introduced in other sections of *nowbat*. For further discussion of *mostazād* see Wright, *Words without Songs*, 52-59.


Cf. Āḥmad Tafaţzoli, “Fahlavīyāt.”


Ibid.


He writes in one of his poems: *hameh binand na in ṣon‘ ke man mibinam/hameh khvānand na in naqsh ke man mikhvānam* (everyone sees, but not the same creation that I see/everyone sings, but not the same *naqsh* that I sing).

Aḥmad Jām Zhen-dehpil (1048-1141) refers to the practice of composing and listening to a form of love song as *samā‘-e havā‘i*. For further information, see “Samā‘ chist,” in *Andar ghazal-e khish nahān khvāham gashtan*, 190.


He only mentions *sowt al-vasaṭ* as an alternative name for *miyānkhāneh* and calls the connecting passages between some parts of tasnifs, *naqsh-e molṣagheh*.


Ibid., 252.

Marāghi also specifies *zakhmeh* as a short instrumental composition that could be analogous to a *khāneh* of *pishrow*. See *Jāme‘ al-alḥān*, 251.

‘Abd al-Qāder Marāghi, [Song-text Collection,] Rijksuniversiteit (Universiteits Bibliothek), Leiden MS Cod. 271 Warn., 64a-66a.

Owbahi states that these devices could not be applied to the two simple genres of *sowt* and *naqsh*. For further information, see *Moqaddamat al-osul*, 189. See also Sāsān Fātemi, “Form va musiqi-ye Irānī,” *Māhur* 39(2008): 117.


Ibid., 128.


Owbahi, Moqaddamat al-osūl, 189.

See for instance Malek Library, Tehran MS 1665, 48-51.

Zayn al-Din Vāsefī mentions that the audience of a majles requested Ostād Ḥosayni Kuchak to play a faṣl-e nay. See Bādāye’ al-vaqāye’, 1: 22-23.

For further discussion, see Feldman, Music of the Ottoman Court, 69-71.

Resāle-ye Kerāmiyyeh, Russian Academy of Sciences MS B1844, 31a.

Mir Ṣadr al-Din Moḥammad, “Resāle-ye ‘elm-e musiqi,” 92-93.

Ibid., 93-94.


Ibid., 23.


In addition to Persian songs, a number of Turkish varsāqis are listed in the BnF copy of Amir Khān’s song-text collection.

Ibid., 257.

Ibid., 257-260.

See “Resāle-ye musiqi-ye Najm al-Din Kowkabi Bokhārā’i,” 60-63; Darvish-‘ali Changi, Toḥfat al-sorur, Institute of Written Heritage (Dushanbe) MS 264, 30a-34a.

For the application of navākht in Marāḡi’s work see Sharḥ-e advār, 342. Navākht was also used as early as the thirteenth century by Mobarakshāh. For further accounts see ʿAbdollāh Anvār, Tarjomeh-ye sharḥ-e Mobārakshāh Bokhārī, 504.

Khosravānī, as a sub-genre of khānandegi, was most likely a reference to singing fahlaviyāt that were in the form of quatrains in vernacular or regional dialects.

Eskandar Beg Turkamān, Tārikh-е ‘ālamārā’ ‘Abbāsi, 190.


These characteristic features of miyānhāneh and bāzguy are attested in the song-text collection of Amir Khān Gorji.
The kārs documented in Amir Khān Gorji’s song-text collection are mostly in long oṣuls of žarb al-fath, thaqil, and khafīf.


Ibid., 210.

Darvish-'ali Changi, Tohfat al-sorur, 31a.

For instance, see specimens of ṣowt and naqsh in the song-text collection of Ḥāfez Post, Gūfte mecmuasi, Topkapı R. (Istanbul) MS 1724, 18b, 31b, 41b.


Ibid., p. 209.


The division of non-textual syllables into two groups of ya la lā and tan dar tan is made by almost all Safavid music theorists but Āqā Mo’men specifically refers to “ya la lā” as tarannom and to “tan dar tan” as naqārat.

Cf. Ḥāfez Post, Gūfte mecmuasi, 18b, 31b, 41b.

See Darvish-'ali Changi, Tohfat al-sorur, 32b.

Mir Şadr al-Din Moḥammad, “Resāleh-ye ‘elm-e musiqi,” 126.

Amir Khān Gorji, Resāleh, Bibliothèque Nationale MS Suppl. persan 1087, 13a.

Banā’i, Resāleh dar musiqi, 128.

Mir Şadr al-Din Moḥammad, “Resāleh-ye ‘elm-e musiqi,” 94; Darvish-'ali Changi, Tohfat al-sorur, 33a.

Mir Şadr al-Din Moḥammad, “Resāleh-ye ‘elm-e musiqi,” 92.


Tārikh-e jahāngoshā-ye khāqān, 222.


Amir Khān Gorji, Resāleh, Bibliothèque Nationale MS Suppl. persan 1087, 27b-28a.


Nasimi, *Nasim-e ṭarab*, 75.


Pourjavady, “Resāleh dar ‘elm-e musiqi,” 112.

This can also be attested from the collection of verses in Forṣat al-Dowleh Shirāzī’s *Boḥur al-ālḥān*.


Typically, *kucheh-bāghi* was performed in *dashti* and *bayāt-e darvish-hasan* was performed in *esfahān*. For further information, see Masḥūn, *Tārikh-e musiqi-ye Irān*, 368-369, 411, 675.


On the label of a record (G.C.-4-12026) made by the Gramophone Company in 1906 in Tehran, the *taṣnif*-singer, Qorbān Khān Shāhi, is introduced as *guyandeh*. See Michael Kinnear, *The Gramophone Company’s Persian Recordings*, 43.

Ibid., 55-76.


For a list of recordings of Amjad, Eftekār and Zari see Michael Kinnear, *The Gramophone Company’s Persian Recordings 1899 to1934*, 77-83.

Ibid., 2:144, 2:157.


For the taṣnifs ascribed to the female singers see Pāyvar, Radif-e āvāzi va taṣnifhā-ye qadimi be revāyat-e ʿAbdollāh Davāmī, 179, 183, 314, 452; for the taṣnifs attributed to the Afghan musicians who came from Herat and Kabul see 250, 283; Mashḥun, Tārīkh-e musiqi-ye Irān, 459.

For the taṣnifs composed by Ḥabibollāh Samāʿ-Ḥozūr, see Pāyvar, Radif-e āvāzi va taṣnifhā-ye qadimi be revāyat-e ʿAbdollāh Davāmī, 198, 272, 290, 293.

More examples of Persian vocal compositions transformed into Turkish pishrows are mentioned in Neubauer, “Zur Bedeutung der Begriffe Komponist und Komposition,” 346.


Another example is a taṣnif documented in Amir Khān Gorji’s song-text collection that according to the author was initially a pishrow that later was turned into a kār. See Pourjavady, The Musical Codex of Amir Khān Gorji, 285.

Mirzā Shafīʿ, The Treatise on the Seven Dastgah of Iranian Music, 18, 23, 29, 34, 36.

Personal communication from Dāriush Şafvat.


These early chahārmezrābs were performed within the melodic confines of the darāmad in an āvāz. See for instance chahārmezrābs in dastgāhs of māhur, homāyun, chahārgāh and navā transcribed in Maʿrufi and Barkechli, Radif-e haft dastgāh-e musiqi-ye Irānī/Les Systèmes de la musique traditionnelle iranienne (radif).

Personal communication from Dāriush Şafvat.

Personal communication from Dāriush Şafvat.

Personal communication from Moḥammad-Rezā Loṭfī.


Hedāyat, Majmaʿ al-advār (lithograph), 3:21, 82-83. For further discussion, see Hooman Asadi, “Negāhi be mafhum va sayr-e takvin-e pishdarāmad dar musiqi-ye Irānī,” Māhur 33 (2006): 149.

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INDEX

Genres, Forms and Compositions
ālāpchāri 231
‘amal 188, 217, 223-226, 228, 230-241, 243, 245, 246, 251, 254
arasbāri 234, 236, 241, 244, 245
āvāz (as a free-rhythmic genre) 76-77, 241, 246, 252
bāhār 222
bardāsht 209, 257
basiq 188, 217, 221, 223, 225, 226
bayāt-e darvish-Ḥasan 247
boyut 221
chahārmērzāb 256
dōbayti 76, 222, 231, 234, 235, 246, 247
dōbayt-khānī 236
faṣl 227
forudāsht 209, 217, 220, 226, 227
forugozāsht 209
ghazal 76, 217, 220, 226, 227, 230, 232, 238
gobōt-khānī 236
gofteh 219
guyandegi 235, 236
havā‘i 217, 223, 224
ish 227
kaholiyāt 222
kār 227, 228, 230, 231, 234-239, 241, 245, 246, 251, 254
kār-e ‘amal/kār-o-‘amal 152-157, 251, 252, 257
khānandegi 229, 235, 236
khīyāl 233
koll al-żorub 217, 225-227, 231
koll al-nagham 217, 225-227
koll al-żorub va al-nagham 217, 225
koliyāt 226, 227, 231
kucheh-bāghi 247
lezgi 255
maddāhi 247
mardomzād 224
mathnawi 50, 95, 168, 171
morāṣṣa‘ 217, 225
mostazād 217, 221, 226
naqsh 151, 196, 217, 220, 223, 224, 226-228, 230-236, 240, 241, 245, 246, 249
naqshayn 228, 232-234, 236, 241
nashid 218, 221, 222, 235
nashid-e ‘ajam 218
nashid-e ‘arab 217, 218, 220, 226
navākht 226, 235, 261
nayrūziyāt 222
nowbat (in naqqāreh-khāneh) 209, 210
nowbat/nowbat-e morattab 188, 217, 220, 221, 226, 227, 230-232, 236, 238
owrāmanān 222
pārsī 219
pishdarāmad 252, 256, 257
pishrow 196, 198, 217, 224-226, 229, 231, 234, 236, 241-245, 254
qet‘eh 225
qomiband 222
qowl 13, 14, 188, 217, 219-242
qowl-e farsi 232, 233, 238
qowl-e morasssa‘ 219, 226
reng 88, 167, 211
reng-e afghani 94
reng-e afshar 255
reng-e armaki 255
reng-e baghdadi 255
reng-e farah 60, 255
reng-e harbi 255
reng-e hashtari 222
reng-e kabol 94, 255
reng-e lori 255
reng-e qafqazi 255
reng-e osul 211, 255
rikhteh 226, 229, 230, 232, 236, 242, 243
rowzeh-khâni 247
rusharmiyát 222
sâqi-khâni 236
sâqi-nâmeh 95, 246, 247, 248
sarghasal 229
sarband 225, 229, 241, 243, 254
shabestâniyát 222
shahrâshub 255
sharveh 222
šowt 151, 189, 217, 220, 223, 224, 226, 227, 228, 230-236, 239-241, 245, 246, 249
tâjiband 222
taqsim 228, 235
tarâna 233, 242
tarâneh 220, 226, 227, 230, 232, 233, 234, 236, 242
tasnif 59, 60, 61, 62, 66, 76, 77, 81, 88, 93, 94, 102, 167, 173, 190, 191, 211
torki 234
varsâqi 232, 234, 236, 241, 244, 254
vishnupad 233
zakhmeh 217, 225
žarbayn 225, 231

Modes
a) maqām system
avâzehs
gardâniyeh 119, 125, 134-137
gavesht 119, 125, 135-137
mā’e 119, 126, 130, 135-137
nowruz 119, 126, 135-137
salmak 119, 125, 134-137
shahnâz 119, 126, 130, 134-137

maqâms
bozorg 117, 118, 126, 131, 136, 155
busalik 117, 118, 126, 131, 132, 136
‘erāq 117, 118, 126, 131, 132, 136, 151
esfahān 117, 118, 125, 130, 134, 136
hejâz 117, 118, 126, 131, 134, 136, 151
hosayni 117, 118, 126, 127, 131, 132, 136, 151, 155
kuchak 117, 118, 126, 131, 136, 151
navâ 117, 118, 125, 131, 136
nehâvand 118
‘oshshāq 118, 123, 125, 131, 136, 151
rahâvi 117, 126, 131, 136
râst 117, 118, 125, 127, 130, 132, 134, 136, 137
zanguleh 117, 118, 125, 131, 136

sho‘behs
arabsâri 117
‘ashirân 117-121, 126, 131, 132
bayâti 117-121, 126, 131, 151
chahârgâh 118-121, 125, 130-132, 151
dâgâh 117-121, 126, 130-132, 151, 155
homâyun 117-121, 126, 131
hešâr 117-120, 126, 131
ikiyâr 117, 120
jowzi 120
māhur 117-121, 125, 131, 134
maghlub 117-121, 126, 131, 132
mobarqa’ 117-121, 125, 130, 132, 134, 137, 155
mohayyer 117-121, 126, 131, 132
mokhālef 120-122, 126, 151
mo’tadel 117
nahost 117-121, 126, 131
nayriz 119-121, 125, 130, 134, 151
negārīn 117
neshāburak 117-121, 125, 131, 132, 134, 151
nowruz-e ‘ajam 117, 120, 121, 123, 126, 131
nowruz-e ‘arab 119-121, 126, 131
nowruz-e khārā 119-121, 125, 131
nowruz-e šabā 119-121, 131
panjgāh 117-121, 125, 130, 132, 134, 151, 155
owj 119-121, 125, 131, 132
‘ozzāl 117-121, 125, 131
rakb 117-121, 126, 131, 132
ruy-e ‘erāq 130, 131, 132
šabā 120, 126
segāh 117-120, 126, 130, 131, 132, 151
sepehri 117, 120
zāvoli/zābol 119-121, 123, 125, 130, 131, 132

b) dastgāh system

āvāzs
abu’ātā 164, 165, 171, 172
afshāri 149, 161, 164, 171, 172
‘ajam 160
amiri 172
bakhtiyāri 149, 161
bayāt-e esfahān 164, 165, 171
bayāt-e kord 165, 171
bayāt-e rāje’ 169
bayāt-e tork 164, 165, 171, 172
bidād 169, 161, 170
bidegāni 172
chakāvak 169
chupānī 172
dād 169
dashtestānī 149, 172
dashti 149, 161, 164, 165, 171, 172
dastān-e ‘arab 149, 171, 172
‘erāq 169, 170
fayli 169, 161
ghamangiz 172
gerayl 165
gilaki 161, 172
hājiāni 149, 161, 172
hejāz-e baghdādī 149, 171
hešār 169
hešār-e māhur 169
hodi 169
hosaynī 169, 170
khāvarān 169
mansurī 149
mo’arbad 169
mobarqa’ 160
mokhālef 169, 170
muyeh 169
nahost 169, 170
nayriz 169
nowruz-e aşl 160
‘oshshāq 169
‘ozzāl 160
panjgāh 169
qaracheh 161, 169
rāk 152, 155, 169
rāst 169
ražavi 169
rohāb 149
salmak 167
sāranj 171
shahnāz 167
shul 161
shur 149
shushtari 149, 161
zābol 169

dastgāhs
‘ashirān 158, 162, 165
bayāt-e ‘ajam 158, 165
chahārgāh 100, 152, 158, 164-170
chahārgāh-mokhālef 156, 162, 165
dōgāh 162, 164, 165, 168, 171
dōgāh-denāsori 158, 165
homāyun 63, 100, 158, 162, 164, 165, 166, 168, 170
homāyun-dōgāh 156, 165, 169
hosayni-segāh 156, 165
māhur 100, 152, 158, 162, 165, 166, 170
nowruz-e ‘adl 158, 165
rāst 152, 153, 154, 158, 165
rāst-panjgāh 100, 156, 162, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 170
rāvand 158, 165
rohāb 158, 162, 164, 165, 168
rohāb-e dāvudi 152, 153, 164, 165
segāh 94, 100, 158, 164, 165, 168, 170
shul-shahnāz 162, 165, 167
shur 100, 164, 165, 167, 168, 169, 170
suz-o godāz 164, 165
tārz-e tajnis 164, 165
zābol 162, 165

Rhythmic Cycles
ākel 202
aksak 203
alusi 208
‘amud 187
arbā’ 187
armāl 191, 203, 204
baluchi 208
barafshān 196, 199-202
beshārat-e kabir 193
chahār-zarb 189, 193, 195, 196, 198, 200, 202, 212
chahār-zarb-e kabir 192
chahār-zarb-e owsat 192
chahār-zarb-e ṣaghīr 192
chanbar 188, 196, 197, 199-202
daqqāq 193
dowr 192, 196, 200, 202
dow-e ‘adl 190
dow-e ašl 196
dow-e bazguneh 192
dow-e hendi 196
dow-e qadim 196
dow-e ravān 198, 200, 242
dow-e samā‘i 196
dow-e šāh-zarb 190
dow-e šāhi 192, 197, 198
dow al-rabi‘ 190
dō-yek/dō-yeki/dō-bar-yek 187, 193, 194, 196, 198, 199, 200, 202, 243
far‘ 196, 200, 202
far‘-e torki ye ašl 189
farah-e kabir 194
farah-e ṣaghīr 194
favākht 191, 203, 204
ghuriyāneh 191
ḥarbi 194, 199, 200
ḥāvi 198
hazaj 185, 186, 188, 193, 194, 196, 199, 202, 221, 222, 223
hazaj-e chanbar 192
hejazi 194
jalal-e shahi 209
jalili 199
karkut 209
khafig 187, 189, 190, 192, 193, 195, 196, 199-202
khajf al-ramal/khafig-e ramal 192, 221
khajf al-thaqil/khafig-e thaqil 186, 191, 221
khajf-e sarih 194
khajak 193, 195
khvarezmi 199, 207
khorasani 188
khosravani 188
lang 203, 212
mahamir 209
me‘atayn 190, 195, 196, 198, 200, 202
mohajal 194
mojammar 198
mokhammas 187, 193, 194, 196-202, 223, 241
mokhammas-e kabir 189, 191
mokhammas-e moza‘af 192
mokhammas-e owsat 189
mokhammas-e ravam 192
mokhammas-e saghir 189
muqaddam 202
morsali 209
moza‘af al-ramal 192
moza‘af-e nim-thaqil 192
nayrizi 298
negar qatreh 209
nesf-e torki-ye sari’ 192
nim-dowr 196, 199, 200, 202
nim-thaqil 192, 194, 196, 199, 200-202
nokhod qatreh 209
nowruz 209
orghushtak 194
osul-e ‘amal 194, 198
osul-e ravan 208
owfar 192, 193, 194, 196, 198, 200-202, 204, 242, 243
owsat 193, 195, 196, 202
panj-zarb 202
pir-e jamali 196, 197
qalandari 199, 207, 209
qomriyeh 190
rāh-e bālā 192, 196, 198, 204
rāh-e samā’ 192
ramal 185, 186, 188, 192, 193, 195-197, 202, 221, 223
ramal-e kabir 194, 201
ramal-e sahghir 201
ramal-e tavil 194
ravān-e kabir 194, 201
ravān-e sahghir 194
ravān-owfar 196
ravani 200
razmiyāneh 207
samā’i 194, 198, 200, 202
samā’i-ye gerān 198
samā’i-ye ravān 198
sarandāz 198
se-zarb 193, 203, 204, 211, 255
shādiyāneh 192, 207, 208, 209
shādiyāneh-ye khafi 196
shādiyāneh-ye torki 196
shāhnāmeh 193, 195, 202
shirāzi 199, 207, 209
soltān 194
ṣufiyāneh 200
thaqil 187, 189, 193, 195, 196, 199, 200, 201, 202
thaqil al-avval/thaqil-e avval 185, 186, 188, 221
thaqil al-ramal/thaqil-e ramal 186, 188, 192, 207
thaqīl al-thānī/thaqīl-e thānī 185, 186, 188, 190, 191, 221
theqāl 191, 203, 204
torki žarb 187, 192-197, 199-202, 238
torki-yē asl 189
torki-yē khāfīf 189
torki-yē sari’ 189,192
varashān 187, 191, 193, 195, 197
varashān-e zā’ed 191
ye ki 187
žarb 207
žarb al-asl 187
žarb al-‘esḥaq 196
žarb al-fāth 189, 193, 195, 196, 198, 200, 201, 202, 237
žarb al-moluk 196, 199, 200, 202
žarb al-qadim 194, 202, 207
žarb-e asl 187, 192, 196
žarb-e fār‘ 192
žarb-e lang see lang
žarb-e rāst 187
žarb-e rengi 88, 212, 255
žarb 88, 194

Musical Instruments
anuṭakinutak 30, 72
arghanun 18
chagur 37
chahārātār 34
chini 72
daf 34, 57, 66, 76, 89, 90, 92, 95, 219
dayereh 10, 93, 248
dombak 34, 57, 62, 66, 76, 77, 86, 87, 89, 90, 95, 97, 248, 256
dōtār 47, 93
harmonium 86, 91
mandolin 88
musiqār 34
naqqāreh 34, 57
nay 84, 86, 88-89, 95-97, 110, 122, 166
nay-e ‘erāqī 122
piano 71-72, 82-83, 94, 95, 99
qānum 10, 30
santur 30, 34, 36, 49-50, 53, 55, 61-62, 65-66, 69, 71, 82, 84, 86, 87, 97, 166, 252
sārangi 93
setār 32, 36, 37, 49-51, 61-62, 71-74, 85, 95, 172, 173
sitar 93
sornā 12, 34
tablā 93
tanbur 18, 29, 30, 34, 68
tār 36, 49-51, 57, 59, 61-62, 65-66, 72-74, 83, 86, 87, 90, 95, 97, 166, 173
‘ud 15, 18, 122

General Terms
acuity 122,123
Afghan musicians 93, 253
Afshārs 28-30, 47, 97
āhang 122-124, 137, 231
ahl-e naghmeh 15, 18, 19
ahl-e ūrāb-e mardāneh 60
‘amaleh-yē khāyat 65, 81
‘amaleh-yē ūrāb 60, 64-65, 69-71, 75, 97
‘amaleh-yē ūrāb-e khāṣṣeh 60-65, 73-75, 96-97
‘āmel 152
andalūr 60-61, 63, 74, 77, 80-83, 89, 90, 92, 98
Aq Qoyunlu 10, 11
arbāb-e ūrāb 38
‘arūsī 81
āshpazān 64
bādīhēh 229, 243
bāghātī-khān 236
bāng-khānēh 13
bayt al-lotf 11, 13
bāzīgar 29, 31, 37, 50-52, 64, 77-78
bazm 9, 33
bazm-e zanāneh 64
bazmārā 9
blind musicians 54, 89-90
buzeh-khāneh 13
chālchi-bāshi 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 67, 233
chālānchi 49, 50, 53, 69
chānnavāz/changi 9, 11
chāshni 152-155
dancing boys 51, 55-57, 63, 75-79, 86-87, 89-90, 97-98
dancing girls 54, 76, 80, 86, 91-93
dār-al-sanāye‘ 95
darāmād 128, 129, 130, 135, 150, 152, 153, 162, 167-170, 177, 254
dārurgheh 21, 33
dasteh 48, 55, 75, 77, 85-93
daste-ye shāhī 97-99
dastgāh 48, 112, 114, 142, 148-174, 246, 251
dastgāh-e bāzīgar-khāneh 36, 37, 47-49, 51, 55, 68, 80, 255
dombakchi 66
dombakzan 66
dowlakhāneh (garden) 190
forūd 130, 134, 150, 153, 156, 157, 170
foyuj 31
Golestan Palace 64
Gramophone Company 46, 80, 99-100
gusheh (concept) 116, 138-144
gravity 122-123
guyandeh 15, 77, 219, 220, 249
hāfez 77, 236
ženā bandān 81
jahānārā (garden) 9
kamānchekhsh 66
kamānchehchi 66
Kashmiri musicians 93
khālavat 60, 64, 77
khândān 52, 61, 173
khāneqāh 95
khārabát 31
khayl 31, 32
khvānandeh 15, 77
khātneh surān 81
kowli 16, 26
laleh-ye ḥoǰur 59
lutī 7
lutī-bāshi 68
maddāh 85
mahalleh-ye naghneh 19
māhaṭṭ 128-130, 137, 177
mahfel 32, 219, 247
majlis 9, 11, 17, 85, 88
ma‘jun-khāneh 13
maktab 46, 51, 74
ma‘rekh-gir 15
mash‘aldār-bāshi 21
mashq 50
maskhareh 64, 79-80
maskhareh-bāshi 68
nāth-e naghamāt 235, 246
nazm-e naghamāt 229, 235
mo‘allem-khāneh 50-52, 55, 80
modulation 134-144
moghanni-bāshi 68
mokhannath 14
monāseb-khānī 32
moqaddameh 153, 154, 170
moqalled 64, 69, 79-80, 92
moqalled-bāshi 68
morakāb 135, 139, 140, 141
morāssa-khānī 236
motreb 38, 57, 67, 69-70, 75-78, 85, 87, 88
motreb-bāshi 36, 49, 68
motreb-zādeh 37
mowzlūd 81, 85
mozhk 14
naqqāl 13
naqqārehchi 15, 66-68, 70, 201
naqqārehchi-bāshi 69
naqqāreh-khāneh 12, 67, 70, 97, 197, 203, 207, 208
naqsh-e jahān (garden) 190
nāshed 219, 222
navāzandeh 76
navāzandegān-e khvābgāh 64
nāyeb 69-70
note names 116, 132, 147
nurā (garden) 9
ozān 244
qāsr-e tarabafzā 9
qavvāl 13, 14, 15, 17, 38, 188, 219, 220, 236, 239, 249
qavvāl-khāneh 13, 14, 17
qomār-khāneh 13
radif 62, 71, 75, 95, 154, 166, 172-174, 248
rāg 111, 155, 160
raqās 31, 57, 77-78, 98
raqs-e golrizān 255
raqs-e māt 255
rishsefid 16
rowżeh 64
saj‘ 240
santurchi 66
santurkhān 66
santurzan 66
sardasteh 86, 89, 92, 97
sharveh-guy 236
shashmaqom 169, 204
sayr 120, 134, 138, 155, 176
sāzandeh 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 26, 29, 33, 68, 76
sāzandeh-bāshi 68
sāz-tarāsh 15
scale degrees, see note names
seraglio 18, 25, 52
shabih-khvāni 64
shadd (mode) 115, 144
shadd (pitch level) 122
shadd (modulatory scheme) 144-146
sornāchi 66
sornāzan 66
storyteller 65
tahrir 138, 152, 160, 169, 173, 169, 170, 173, 236
taqlid 79-80, 86
taqlīdchi 79, 86, 92
tarannom 233, 240, 242
tārchi 66
tarkib 138-142, 155, 157, 160
tārzan 66
taşnifikhān-żarbār 65
ṭavā’ef 15, 17
ta‘ziyeh 64
ṭoy 81
Turkmen 46, 47, 80, 93
Zands 30-35, 47
zāghān (garden) 190
żarbār 60, 77, 248
PLATES
Plate 3. Painting of Shah Ṭahmāsp made for his brother Bahrām Mirzā. Tabriz or Herat, 1520s. Courtesy of the Topkapi Palace Museum, Istanbul.
Plate 5. Courtesan with a long-necked lute, Isfahan, circa 1600-1610. Reproduced by permission of Los Angeles Museum of Art, the Nasli M. Heeramanec Collection, gift of Joan Palevsky (M.73.5.457).
Plate 7. Pen box showing a courtesan making love with a gentry. Isfahan, dated 1712. From the private collection of Nasser Khalili, London.
Plate 11. Pasteboard showing courtesans entertaining a patron. Tehran, circa 1810.
Source unknown.
Plate 17. A courtesan playing the kamāncheh associated with the dastgāh-e bāzīgar-khāneh, Tehran, circa 1820. Source unknown.
Plate 18. A courtesan playing the *santur* associated with the *dastgāh-e bāzigar-khāneh*, Tehran, circa 1820. Source unknown.
Plate 23. Court bāzigars in the early nineteenth century. Source unknown.
Plate 25. A postcard depicting a musical gathering in the house of the Sardār of Yerevan in the second half of the nineteenth century.
Plate 26. Court male musicians in 1863. From right to left, first row: Moḥammad Şadeq (santur), Mirzā Ḥasan (tār), Khoshnavāz Khān’s son (kamāncheh), Āqā Gholām-Ḥosayn (tār), Āqā Ḥasan (singer and tār), Āqā Moṭalleb (kamāncheh), Moḥammad Ḥasan Khān (santur); second row: Sayyed Qorāb (singer), Reżā-Qoli (singer-accompanist), Āqā Ḥasan’s son (dombak), Āqā ‘Ali Kāshi (singer). Courtesy of the Golestan Palace Museum, Tehran, Album 189, no. 59.
Plate 27. Court male musicians in 1863. Moḥammad Ḩasan Khān (the head of court musicians and santur), Āqā Moṭalleb (kamāncheh), Āqā Gholām-Ḥosayn (tār), Āqā ‘Ali Kāshi (singer), Āqā Ḩasan (singer and tār), Reżā-Qoli (singer-accompanist), Sayyed Qorāb (singer), Āqā Ḩasan’s son (dombak), Khoshnavāz Khān’s son (kamāncheh), Moḥammad Šādeq (santur), and the son of Āqā ‘Ali-akbar (tār). Courtesy of the Golestān Palace Museum, Tehran, Album 281, no. 2.
Plate 28. Court male musicians around 1880 including Moḥammad Šādeq Khān (santur),
Esmāʿīl Khān (kamāncheh). Courtesy of the Golestān Palace Museum,
Tehran, Album 149, no. 28.
Plate 31. The ceremony of āshpazān (making soup) in October 9, 1894. Bāzigars are sitting in the front row and professional musicians such as Mirzā ‘Abdollāh are sitting in the back. Courtesy of the Golestān Palace Museum, Tehran.
Plate 32. The ceremony of āshpazān (making soup) in October 9, 1894. Bāzigars are sitting in the front row and professional musicians such as Mirzā ‘Abdollāh and Ĥabibollāh Samā‘-Hożur are sitting in the back. Moḥammad Šādeq Khān (ra’īs) is also standing as the coordinator. Courtesy of the Golestān Palace Museum, Tehran.
Plate 33. Moḥammad Šādeq Khān with his two sons, Moṭalleb and ‘Abdollāh, and his brother, Mirzā Shafi‘. Courtesy of the Golestān Palace Museum, Tehran, Album 295, no. 54.
Plate 35. A postcard showing a troupe of urban musicians and bāzigars in Tehran.
Plate 41. Anis al-Dowleh, the favorite wife of Nāṣer-al- Din Shah. Source unknown.
Plate 42. Musā Kāshi, a Jewish kamāncheh player (top right), Bāqer Khān Rāmeshgar (top left), Morad Khān (bottom right), ‘Ali-akbar Kāshi (bottom left).
From private collection of Bāqer Khān Rāmeshgar.
Plate 43. A troupe of female musicians and dancers. Source unknown.
Plate 44. A troupe of female musicians and dancers. Source unknown.
Plate 45. A postcard showing a troupe of male musicians and a dancing boy including Dāvud Kalimi Shirāzi (tār) and Aqā Jān (dombak).
Plate 46. A troupe of Jewish male musicians and dancing boys. Source unknown.
Plate 47. A mixed troupe of male and female musicians and dancers. Source unknown.
Plate 50. Nāṣer-al-Din Shāh in the andarun together with some of his wives and concubines and Za’farān Bāji. Courtesy of the Institute for Iranian Contemporary Historical Studies, Harvard University.
Plate 51. Ghazāl (dancer), Aziz Sheshlulband ((tār) and Marāl (dancer). Courtesy of the Institute for Iranian Contemporary Historical Studies, Harvard University.
Plate 52. Turkman musicians at the Qajar court. Courtesy of the Central Library, University of Tehran, no. 1052.
Plate 55. Garden party at the *anjoman-e okhovvat*. The musician playing the *kamāncheh* is Ḥosayn Khān Esmāʿīlzādeh. From the private collection of Golshan Ebrāhimi.
Plate 56. Garden party at the anjoman-e okhovvat. Some of the musicians in the picture include Darvish Khān (tār player), Montażam-al-Ḥokamā’ (setār), Ḥosayn Hangāfarin (violin).

From private collection of Golshan Ebrāhimi.
Plate 57. Āqā Ḥosayn-Qoli and his students in the house of the luthier Yahyā. Source unknown.
Plate 60. ‘Abdollāh, an adolescent singer who performed widely at the court. Courtesy of the Golestān Palace Museum, Tehran.
Plate 61. Taymur Raqqāş, a prominent dancing boy amusing Jenāb Sarhang, head of the Shāhsavan tribe. Courtesy of the Institute for Iranian Contemporary Historical Studies, Harvard University.