



Made in Iran: Theoretical Principles of Iranian Music Tested on West Music Performers Living in Iran
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Persian classical music is based on a large collection of *gūsheh-ha* (tunes; melody types) organized in seven *dastgāh-ha* and five auxiliary systems, *āvāz-ha*. The seven *dastgāh-ha* and the five *āvāz-ha* have an advanced theory of modal system (see Farhat 1990) and the system of conforming poems to melodies and the rhythmic structure (see Azadehfar 2006) comprising a rather comprehensive set of rules most of which not known directly by traditional performers. The rules transfers from a generation to the next generation and from master to student through hardly practicing of more than 250 *gūsheh-ha* in the course of some time—same principal of tradition learning applies more or less in *rāgā* system of Indian music, *Makām* system of Turkish music, *Maqām* of Arabic music, and *shesh-maqām* in Uzbek and Tajik music.

Analyzing the music of cultures using their own generated tools of music theory is the preferred approach to illustrate the fundamental structure of music by insiders. Facts made available through such approach explains the construction of music and the musical matters in every culture which are not known through conventional analytical systems developed and spread by western music theory. Such efforts have been done in examining the rhythmic principles of Iranian music in some previous studies of the author. What is more in the current study is using the music theory generated within the Iranian culture to examine the point of view of western music performers living in such culture to see how breathing in a culture can influence the fundamental musical perspective and the music perception even if one plays a music coming from thousands of miles outside the culture.

In perusing this project a subject of 35 performers of various kinds of western musical instruments living in Iran (mostly natives) and 35 performers of various kinds of Iranian musical instruments were selected. Two kinds of pieces played for both groups, one purely Iranian music recorded in Iran and one purely western classical music recorded and produced in western countries. A questioner which was designed based on the fundamentals of Iranian music theory handed to subjects to fill after listening to every piece. Some questions were designed to examine only taste and the musical habit of the subjects, among them are the questions asked to check if they think the pieces contain enough repetitions, ornamentations, rhythmic complexities, distinguishable melodies, the compass and so forth; while other questions examine the musical ability and

understanding of the subjects such as asking about the strategy of composer to extend the melodic range, boundaries of phrases, causes of rhythmic complexities, the nature of ornamentations, lyrical-musical relationship and so forth.

Results showed the subjects of both groups shared views in many significance issues in the two specific lines of investigations: musical tastes and the musical judgments. Since the west music performers participated in this project were mostly under musical schools in which the only music taught is Western one and the methodology and the principle of teaching is same as the methods taught in West countries, it can be concluded that the cultural inhabitation influences on musical outlook of the person more than the musical school in which one educates. In other words, the shared views between the performers of Iranian instruments and those of West instrument performers mostly based on the musical habits coming from the principles imposed by the culture than anything else.

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