

Iranian Contemporary Flute Music: An Analysis of Kouchyar Shahroudi's *Dances Mystiques*

(2017) and Kiawasch SahebNassagh's *Amusie* (2018) for flute and piano

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Every single word of this document was written during the period I could not see my family,
I am forever grateful for their help and support,

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Introduction

This document discusses how Iranian native composers who have studied Western classical music incorporate Iranian classical music elements.

For the first chapter, I have selected multiple sources to write a general chronology about Western music in Iran and its history. Currently, few English articles are available on the subject of Western music in Iran. The majority of sources about the subject are in Farsi except for a dissertation recently published in Germany¹ and a doctoral dissertation published in France.² The topic of Western music in Iran is an exhaustive subject that requires more scholarship, and the first chapter of this document starts the scholarly research in English. Furthermore, the first chapter is vital to understanding the background of Iranian composers and their historical placement in the context of symphonic music in Iran.

Mohammadreza Darvishi's *Negahi be Gharb* (A westward look) is one of the best books about Western music in Iran. *Negahi be Gharb* begins with a chapter on military music and then explores the history of orchestral music and opera. In addition, Darvishi writes a chapter on a specific school of thought in the Iranian approach to Western music. This document will follow *Negahi be Gharb*'s structure of historical events, starting with military music by French musicians and ending with music in orchestras.

¹ Madjid Tahriri, "Iranisch-europäische Instrumentalmusik Im Kontext der Modernisierung Der Iranischen Musik Und Des Iranischen Musiklebens Ab 1850" (PhD diss., Folkwang Universität Der Künste Essen, 2018).

² Manoutchehr Sahbai, "La Musique Polyphonique Persane (1868-1998) " (PhD diss., Université Marc Bloch (Strasbourg), 2000).

During the past three decades, a new wave of composers emerged from Iran. This new generation is active in the global music community and has received international acclaim. As a flute player, I have commissioned new pieces by some of these recent Iranian composers. These commissioned pieces are available either online or in print. This project further proved the need for English scholarship about Iranian flute music. This lack of information is even more evident when it comes to the composers of the past two decades.

As an Iranian, I decided to devote my final thesis to the analysis of two recent compositions by Iranian composers for flute and piano. This analysis addresses the question of “Iranian identity” and its representations in the pieces. This analysis will encourage other Iranians studying in English-speaking countries to write on this topic by providing some historical background and discussing the use of Iranian identity.

This document will provide a structural analysis of the pieces *Danses Mystiques* (2017) and *Amusie* (2018). I premiered these two pieces in my DMA recitals and, I will accompany the structural analysis with interviews with the composers about the pieces and Iranian identity.

For each portion of the analysis, I will provide musical examples from each piece and compare that to its Iranian classical music origins. These examples can be a motive, melody or even a textural idea. The Iranian classical music examples will compare the composers’ uses of the melodies with the origins of the melodies. A separate portion will trace the composers’ background and life and their compositional process. This biographical information will provide the readers the historical placement of each composer in the context of Iranian and Western music.

My goal is not just to understand the use of Iranian melodies; it is to define Iranian identity and explore how each composer encapsulates that idea in his piece. Each composer has a different approach in forming his own hybrid of Iranian-Western style of composition.

Kouchyar Shahroudi's *Danses Mystiques* comes from a more traditional approach where he derives textual ideas and uses direct melodic quotes from the canon of Iranian classical music. Shahroudi also derives textural ideas from Iranian classical music. Alternatively, SahebNassagh's approach is to use Iranian cultural elements, like Persian poetry, in the context of the piece. SahebNassagh's music assimilates and adapts Iranian motives instead of direct quoting. The assimilation goes further than quotation and uses the Iranian identity as a form or as a structure. I commissioned these two pieces by these composers to have two contemporary case-studies for the subject.

Terminology

This thesis will regularly discuss three distinct musical cultures. In order to have a consistent text

I intend to address these different types of music as follows:

- Western Classical Music (Western music)
 - o Music composed in the European-American tradition between 1500 to 1900, generally known as Classical Music in the West.
- Iranian Classical Music
 - o Music using Iranian traditional instruments and based on Iranian scales and modes. Scholars refer to Iranian classical music as Dastgah or Radif music in many texts. Iranian scholars also refer to this as national or traditional music.
- Iranian Symphonic Music
 - o Music composed in Iran around the beginning of the twentieth century and after, using Western instruments but deriving ideas such as modes or melodies from Iranian classical music. This style is a hybrid of Iranian classical music and Western classical music. The early examples of this type of music are by French musicians, who came to Iran to educate the military bands.

The instrumentation of this style is often Western orchestral instruments, but some composers have written pieces using the combination of symphonic instruments and Iranian instruments. The majority of Iranian scholars use this term in Farsi texts.

History of Western Music in Iran

Western music in the context of military and education

The introduction of Western classical music into Iran began in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century during the Qajar dynasty (1785-1925). The Qajar era had historical significance both for Iran's modern history and its music. Music flourished at the courts of Fath Ali Shah (r.1798-1834) and Naser-al-Din Shah (r.1848-96).³ During this time, the government invited French musicians to Iran as cultural missionaries to train and educate the military bands. These bands' goal was to organize events for ceremonies and receptions at the court.⁴ Eventually, through the French music instructors' educational programs, Iranian musicians began expressing interest in Western classical music. Along with the other cultural imports of the Qajar dynasty, piano and other western musical instruments entered Iran's music scene. The presence of Western educators and instruments paved the way for a thriving, complex musical scene in the next decades.

Many scholars refer to Alfred Lemaire (1842-1907) as the pioneer of educating Western music in Iran. A French flutist, Lemaire was a graduate of the Paris Conservatory of Music, and was appointed as deputy music master of the royal guard in the court of Naser-al-Din Shah in 1867.⁵ This appointment began a new era in Iran's music scene when Lemaire started teaching a variety of Western instruments. A significant aspect of Lemaire's work was notating Iranian classical music using Western notation; he published a collection of these transcriptions in 1900.⁶

³ Michael Church, *The Other Classical Musics: Fifteen Great Traditions* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2016), 325.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Yahya, Kayvan. "موسیقی سمفونیک ایرانی (Iranian Symphonic Music)." *Harmony Talk*. December 17, 2007. Accessed January 01, 2019. <http://www.harmonytalk.com/id/1413>.

⁶ Mohammadreza Darvishi, *Negahi Be Gharb* (A Look towards West) (Tehran: Mahoor Publication, 2014), 31.

He also composed music based on his understanding of Iranian scales. Lemaire's compositions used Iranian melodies or scales in the context of equal temperament, which was revolutionary, and still a subject of debate even today. Many of Lemaire's compositions bear Iranian classical music titles such as *Chahargah*, *Homayoun* or *Mahoor*, and are available through France National Library online database.

At Lemaire's suggestion, the government added a music branch to Dar-ol Fonoun, Iran's only university for decades after its establishment in 1852.⁷ Dar-ol Fonoun (literally, polytechnic college), was a college founded in Tehran in 1851 by Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir, which marked the beginning of modern education in Iran.⁸

After the establishment of Dar-ol Fonoun's music branch, Lemaire began training students and invited music teachers from France. The earliest music branch of Dar-ol Fonoun was dedicated to a military music program. The designated music course took six years to complete and consisted of eight classes. All students wore French military uniforms.⁹ Arguably, the establishment of this course is one of Lemaire's critical contributions to Iran's music scene. This class later developed into Iran's first music conservatory. In 1888, Dar-ol Fonoun's music school had 38 students who formed the royal military band.¹⁰

In 1910, Salar Moazzez (1262-1936) was appointed as the new director of the Royal military band. Salar Moazzez, whose full name was Gholam Reza Minbashian, was an Iranian

⁷ Madjid Tahriri, "Iranisch-europäische Instrumentalmusik Im Kontext der Modernisierung Der Iranischen Musik Und Des Iranischen Musiklebens Ab 1850" (PhD diss., Folkwang Universität Der Künste Essen, 2018), 66.

⁸ <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/dar-al-fonun-lit>

⁹ Mohammadreza Darvishi, *Negahi Be Gharb* (A Look towards West) (Tehran: Mahoor Publication, 2014), 30.

¹⁰ Ibid.

musician and a graduate of Belgrade conservatory in Serbia. Many sources mention the fact that he studied with the Russian composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908).¹¹ Salar Moazzez translated different music theory books from French and expanded Dar-ol Fonoun's music branch to become an independent school. This new school was called Kelas-e Muzik (Music Class). In addition to military music, Kelas-e Muzik had different courses offering Western music theory and performance. Darvishi's book categorizes Salar Moazzez's contributions in the following points:¹²

- 1- Translating textbooks about harmony, orchestration and military music to Farsi
- 2- Composing Iran's first national anthem during the constitutional revolution and publishing the score in Europe
- 3- Composing different marches and military salutes
- 4- Transcribing Iranian classical music using Western notation
- 5- Arranging Iranian classical music for piano
- 6- Teaching choir in primary schools
- 7- Contributing to Albert Lavignac's 1913 *Encyclopédie de la musique et dictionnaire*

Under Salar Moazzez's direction, students were required to study all academic topics, play a wind or string instrument and take a final exam. This exam included composing a polyphonic march and conducting an ensemble or military band.¹³ During the 1920s, the two

¹¹ Mohammadreza Darvishi, *Negahi Be Gharb* (A Look towards West) (Tehran: Mahoor Pulication, 2014), 32.

¹² Ibid., 35.

¹³ Madjid Tahriri, "Iranisch-europäische Instrumentalmusik Im Kontext Der Modernisierung Der Iranischen Musik Und Des Iranischen Musiklebens Ab 1850" (PhD diss., Folkwang Universität Der Künste Essen, 2018), 72.

prominent figures associated with the rising interest in Western music were Darvish Khan (1872-1926) and Alinaghi Vaziri (1887-1979).

Darvish Khan was a virtuoso tar player and made some of the earliest recordings of Iranian classical music in London. He composed many pieces in different genres of Iranian classical music. Darvish Khan's pieces are significant in Iran's canon of classical music and performers regularly program his compositions. Vaziri studied in France and was an essential figure in Iranian classical music pedagogy. He is one of the pioneers of westernizing Iranian classical music.¹⁴

After Salar Moazzez, Vaziri took over the Music Class in 1929. Vaziri renamed the Music Class the Conservatory of National Music. The activities of the conservatory during this period were still mainly military music education. The students, along with Vaziri, held military ranks.

For the first time since the establishment of the Conservatory of National Music, Vaziri removed military music from the coursework.¹⁵ This separation was a significant point for music education in Iran because until then music education had never been a separate entity from the military bands. Furthermore, Vaziri built a music library, a sound archive, and ordered devices for acoustic research. With the help of new progressive equipment Vaziri raised the level of the conservatory to that of a European model.¹⁶

¹⁴ Michael Church, *The Other Classical Musics: Fifteen Great Traditions* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2016), 326.

¹⁵ Mohammadreza Darvishi, *Negahi Be Gharb (A Look towards West)* (Tehran: Mahoor Pulication, 2014), 35.

¹⁶ Madjid Tahriri, "Iranisch-europäische Instrumentalmusik Im Kontext Der Modernisierung Der Iranischen Musik Und Des Iranischen Musiklebens Ab 1850" (PhD diss., Folkwang Universität Der Künste Essen, 2018), 73.

Gholam Hossein Minbashian (1907-1978) was the next notable musician who served a significant role in introducing Western music and localizing it inside Iran. Minbashian was Salar Moazzez's son and graduated from Dar-ol Fonoun and the Geneva conservatory. After returning from his studies in Europe, he accepted the post of director of the Conservatory of National Music in 1934. In the words of *Encyclopedia Iranica*:

Minbashian is known for his contemptuous disregard for traditional Persian music and his attempts to restructure and, to some extent, replace it with Western music. He omitted the teaching of all Persian instruments from the curriculum and terminated all instructions concerning traditional Persian music.¹⁷

Minbashian invited ten musicians from the Czech Republic (at the time, Czechoslovakia) to teach in the conservatory.¹⁸ The tradition of inviting European musicians to teach in the top conservatories of the country had a profound impact on Iran's music. Throughout the last decade of Pahlavi's period (1970s), the tradition of hiring foreign musicians significantly raised the quality of Iranian orchestras and conservatories. Minbashian's other contribution to the Conservatory of National Music was opening new branches in other cities of Iran.

The political changes of 1941 marked an end to Reza Shah's reign (1925-1941) and his son Mohammadreza Shah became the new king. The change in government led to changes in the music scene. Minbashian left the Conservatory of National Music and Alinaghi Vaziri became the

¹⁷ Dehkordi, Morteza. "MINBĀŠĪĀN, Ġolām-Ĥosayn." <http://www.iranicaonline.org>. July 20, 2005. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/minbasian-golam-hosayn>.

¹⁸ Mohammadreza Darvishi, *Negahi Be Gharb* (A Look towards West) (Tehran: Mahoor Pulication, 2014), 37.

director.¹⁹ Vaziri had spent five years in France and Germany studying Western music theory and composition. Before his European sojourn, Vaziri was already known and respected as a virtuoso tar and setar player.²⁰

Vaziri immediately dismissed the Czech musicians teaching in the conservatory and brought back the Iranian classical music curriculum to the conservatory.²¹ Eventually, every student at the conservatory was mandated to learn tar and the fundamentals of Iranian classical music.²²

Unlike Minbashian, Vaziri's take on westernizing Iranian classical music was based on including Iranian instruments, and teaching and organizing Iranian classical music through the process. Vaziri preferred applying Western pedagogical ideas to Iranian classical music without removing the Iranian traditional instruments from the conservatories. Vaziri and Minbashian are the forerunners of the two main approaches of westernizing Iranian music and music education. Their students continued this debate throughout the next three decades.

A student of Vaziri, Ruhollah Khaleghi (1906-1965), was the next director of the Conservatory of National music. Khaleghi is one of the earliest Iranian musicians who worked to integrate Iranian classical music into the canon of Western classical music. In addition, he was a pioneer in using Western music pedagogy to create a method to teach Iranian classical music.

¹⁹ Yahya, Kayvan. "موسیقی سمفونیک ایرانی (Iranian Symphonic Music)." Harmony Talk. December 17, 2007. Accessed January 01, 2019. <http://www.harmonytalk.com/id/1413>

²⁰ Kāleqi, Ruḥ-allāh – Encyclopaedia Iranica, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/kaleqi-ruh-allah> (accessed January 17, 2019).

²¹ Mohammadreza Darvishi, *Negahi Be Gharb* (A Look towards West) (Tehran: Mahoor Pulication, 2014), 38.

²² Ibid.

The formative event of Khaleghi's life was his meeting with Vaziri after the latter's return from his studies in Europe in 1923. Khaleghi cemented Vaziri's ideas about the scalar patterns of Iranian music and applying Western approaches to formalizing Iranian Classical music.

[Khaleghi] was a master of harmony and counterpoint—concepts that are fundamentally alien to Iranian classical music. The objective was to impart sufficient knowledge so that they might be able to compose Persian music with some harmonic texture.²³

In Khaleghi's approach, Iranian musicians should apply the Western hierarchy of chord functions, such as tonic and dominant, to Iranian classical music modes.²⁴ By applying these functions to Iranian scales, composers would be able to harmonize these scales in a way that had not been accomplished before. Although the idea of tonality was no longer a point of argument in the Western world whose music had reached beyond the means of tonality, the application of traditional tonal harmony had a significant impact on Iranian symphonic music and composers.

Iranian musicians openly accepted the teachings of Vaziri and Khaleghi, and soon their theories were part of the Conservatory of National Music's curriculum. Khaleghi complemented his theories with numerous compositions, songs, and pieces that are well-received by critics.

Following Minbashian's suggestion, Khaleghi established a new conservatory called Honarestan-e Melli Musighi (National Conservatory of Music) in 1950.²⁵ After years of debate

²³ Kāleqi, Ruḥ-allāh – Encyclopaedia Iranica, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/kaleqi-ruh-allah> (accessed January 17, 2019).

²⁴ Yahya, Kayvan. "موسیقی سمفونیک ایرانی (Iranian Symphonic Music)." Harmony Talk. December 17, 2007. Accessed January 01, 2019. <http://www.harmonytalk.com/id/1413>

²⁵ Mohammadreza Darvishi, *Negahi Be Gharb* (A Look towards West) (Tehran: Mahoor Pulication, 2014), 64.

over the presence of Iranian classical music in the curriculum of the Conservatory, the new branch was a successful attempt to make Iranian classical music and Western music co-exist.

In 1966, the University of Tehran added music as a degree. The department of music in the school of fine arts offered degrees in musicology, composition, Iranian classical music and music education.

Western music in the context of orchestras

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Iran experienced many political changes. Russia's and Britain's meddling in Iran's internal affairs and the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911 drastically reduced the power of the kings. These changes introduced the ideas of secularism and modernism in politics and arts. The modernization of Iran continued with the beginning of the Pahlavi era (1925-1979). The new monarchy largely supported Western music in Iran as a sign of modernization. This support had a significant effect on the growth of Iranian Classical music, Western music, and their hybrids.²⁶

The orchestra, as a mainly Western idea, appears in Iran around the end of the Qajar era and the beginning of the Pahlavi period. One of the earliest instances of a Western symphonic orchestra was the establishment of Music Class Orchestra by Vaziri in 1925.²⁷ A decade later, in 1935, Minbashian conducted Iran's first symphonic orchestra called Orkestr-e Baladieh (Municipality Orchestra).²⁸ Minbashian's performance was an essential event to pave the way to

²⁶ Michael Church, *The Other Classical Musics: Fifteen Great Traditions* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2016), 327.

²⁷ Yahya, Kayvan. "موسیقی سمفونیک ایرانی (Iranian Symphonic Music)." *Harmony Talk*. December 17, 2007. Accessed January 01, 2019. <http://www.harmonytalk.com/id/1413>

²⁸ *Ibid.*

the establishment of the Tehran Symphony. However, the Municipality Orchestra disbanded with the Anglo-Soviet invasion of Iran in 1941.

Parviz Mahmoud (1910-1996) was the next figure in promoting Western Music in Iran through orchestras. He was a graduate of the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, and after his return to Iran, he reestablished the Municipality Orchestra with a new name, "Tehran Symphony," around 1946. Arguably, Mahmoud was the new "Minbashian" in Iran's music since he was against using Iranian classical music in educational settings. Mahmoud believed that Iranian classical music does not have a systemic pedagogical basis for education and should not be taught in the highest levels of the Conservatory of National Music.²⁹ However, as we see in Mahmoud's compositions and their titles, he was not inherently against Iranian classical music. Mahmoud's view on the presence of Iranian classical music was solely based on the issue of education and the means of pedagogy.

The early composers of Iranian symphonic music had to address several issues dealing with the orchestra as an entirely Western entity. These included pitch, tuning, polyphony, harmony and other fundamentals that did not have any well-documented roots in Iranian classical music. During the 1940s, attempting to address the practical issues, Iranian composers wrote new pieces for the Tehran Symphony conducted by Parviz Mahmoud. The first group of these composers wrote based on Vaziri's approach, using simplified Iranian scales or melodies in the context of Western tonality. The second group of composers sought alternative solutions to create pieces with an Iranian identity for a western orchestra. Morteza Hannaneh (1923-1989)

²⁹ Yahya, Kayvan. "موسیقی سمفونیک ایرانی (Iranian Symphonic Music)." *Harmony Talk*. December 17, 2007. Accessed January 01, 2019. <http://www.harmonytalk.com/id/1413>

belonged to the second group.³⁰ Hannaneh was a composer, conductor and with his later publications, a scholar in Iranian classical music theory. In his book “Gamhaye Gomshodeh” (The lost scales), he explores ideas in Iranian classical music theory:

Hannaneh questioned the blindfolded approach of succumbing to Western traditions and asked whether the evolution of Persian music has to follow the same route as Western polyphony.³¹

After Mahmoud, Rouben Gregorian (1915-1991) directed the Tehran Symphony before the orchestra's second hiatus in 1952.³² Hannaneh took the baton of the Tehran Symphony after the hiatus and conducted the orchestra until 1957.

Until 1957, the conductor of Tehran Symphony, like the director of the Conservatory of National Music, determined the overall approach of the style among Iranian composers who wrote for the Tehran Symphony. Every conductor favors pieces based on the composition philosophy he follows. The two main philosophies at the time were Vaziri's approach or Minbashian's approach. The orchestra's program usually consisted of an Iranian piece followed by a selection from the canon of Western classical music.

The debate over compositional approach ended when Heshmat Sanjari (1918-1995) took over the Tehran Symphony in 1957. Except for a short period (1958-1961), Sanjari was the chief conductor until 1971. He was a violinist and a graduate of the Tehran Conservatory and the

³⁰ Yahya, Kayvan. "موسیقی سمفونیک ایرانی (Iranian Symphonic Music)." *Harmony Talk*. December 17, 2007. Accessed January 01, 2019. <http://www.harmonytalk.com/id/1413>

³¹ Azin Movahed. "Religious Supremacy, Anti-Imperialist Nationhood and Persian Musicology after the 1979 Revolution." *Asian Music* 35, no. 1 (2003): 85-113. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4098473>.

³² *Ibid.*

University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna. During his stay in Europe, he also studied conducting in Italy with Franco Ferrara. Sanjari's appointment was the beginning of a fruitful era for Iranian symphonic music and the Tehran Symphony. The new leadership brought together different approaches in composition which enabled composer of Iranian symphonic music to have a platform through the Tehran Symphony. Under Sanjari's baton, many new names found their way to the program of the Tehran Symphony such as Samin Baghtcheban (1925-2008), Ahmad Pezhman (1937), Aminollah Hossein (1905-1983), Mostafa Kamal Pourtorab (1924-2016) and Houshang Ostovar (1927-2016). In addition to these names, academic composers received opportunities for performance with the Tehran Symphony. Among these academics, names such as Mohammad Taghi Masoudieh (1928-1999) and Fouzieh Majd (b.1938) are the ones that stand out.

Although the Vaziri-Minbashian dichotomy still affected approaches to the compositions, Sanjari and the Tehran Symphony brought together a range of composers with diverse backgrounds.

In the 1960s, Iranian classical music underwent changes similar to Iranian symphonic music:

The "hybridization" and "vulgarization" of Persian classical music became the subject of intensive debate, with the musicologist Bruno Nettl reporting in Tehran in the late 1960s classical music in its serious and complex style

was only practiced by few musicians, while a lighter and more rhythmic style was taking over as a result of Western influence.³³

In 1971, the Tehran Symphony experienced a fundamental change. Farhad Meshkat (b.1938) took over as the artistic director and chief conductor.³⁴ Meshkat completed his studies in Italy studying with Franco Ferrara. In 1968 he won the coveted Dimitri Mitropoulos prize in New York. His first position after returning to Iran was conducting Iran's National TV orchestra and then he accepted the Tehran Symphony's offer.

At the same time, the Tehran Symphony began inviting international soloists to perform, such as Isaac Stern and Yehudi Menuhin. These invitations extended to Berlin Philharmonic conducted by Herbert von Karajan performing in Tehran's Roudaki Hall. Although the invitations caused controversy with the press because of the extravagance of the Ministry of Arts and Culture with Iran's yearly music budget, the guest artists had an immense impact on Iranian musicians of the time.

Meshkat's appointment was a milestone in Iranian symphonic music, and initiated a new era for composers and the orchestra. Meshkat introduced the idea of avant-garde music and prepared the orchestra for experimentation in the selection of repertoire. One of the notable examples of Meshkat's approach to push the musical limits of the Tehran Symphony is the recording of *Tehran Symphony* composed by Alireza Mashayekhi (b.1940). Emanuel Melik-

³³ Michael Church, *The Other Classical Musics: Fifteen Great Traditions* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2016), 328.

³⁴ Yahya, Kayvan. "موسیقی سمفونیک ایرانی (Iranian Symphonic Music)." *Harmony Talk*. December 17, 2007. Accessed January 01, 2019. <http://www.harmonytalk.com/id/1413>

Aslanian (1916-2004) was another significant name in this new air of modernism introduced by Meshkat. Melik-Aslanian studied composition in Hamburg and Berlin under Paul Hindemith. His early compositions were mainly for piano, but later in the 1970s, he began writing for orchestra. Tehran Symphony conducted by Farhad Meshkat performed the majority of Melik-Aslanian's pieces.³⁵

Alongside Meshkat, Loris Cheknavian (b.1937) was appointed to conduct the Tehran Opera Orchestra. Cheknavian had studied in Austria before the appointment and had extensive experience in composition and musicology.³⁶ Notable Iranian operas that were performed before the 1979 Revolution are in the following table:

Table 1.1: Notable Iranian operas before 1979 Revolution

Name of the piece	Composer	Composition date
<i>Zal-o Roudabeh</i> (Zal and Roudabeh)	Samin Baghchehban (1925-2008)	1968
<i>Jashn-e Dehghan</i> (Peasant's Feast)	Ahmad Pezhman (b.1937)	1968
<i>Delavar-e Sahand</i> (Sahand's hero)	Ahmad Pezhman (b.1937)	1969
<i>Khosrow va Shirin</i> (Khosrow and Shirin)	Hossein Dehlavi (b.1927)	1970
<i>Pardis va Parisa</i>	Loris Cheknavian	1975

³⁵ Khoshnam, Mahmoud. "من میدانم چرا مولانا میرقصید (I Know Why Rumi Danced)". www.bbc.com/persian. October 20, 2013. Accessed January 20, 2019. http://www.bbc.com/persian/arts/2013/10/131020_151_melik_aslanian.

³⁶ For further info look at: <http://loristjeknavorian.com/bio.htm>

(Pardis and Parisa)	(b.1937)	
<i>Mani va Mana</i> (Mani and Mana)	Hossein Dehlavi (b.1927)	1978 (Not premiered)

During the 1970s, the majority of the musicians of the Tehran Symphony and Roudaki Hall Opera were from Europe. The presence of these international musicians had a twofold effect on Iranian composers and musicians. First, the new powerful Tehran Symphony was now able to record a body of Iranian symphonic music with a higher performance quality. Secondly, Tehran Symphony international musicians taught in the conservatories, and students of the conservatories received excellent training. However, some believe the employment of international musicians led to a loss of interest among the Iranian students because they could not see themselves having a job with the Tehran Symphony in the future.³⁷

The modernization of Iran went on for decades, and it had its profound impact in every aspect of social and, inevitably, musical life. The decades leading to the 1979 Revolution provided an opportunity for in-depth conversation among composers, allowing them to establish a new musical language to address the issue of Iranian identity. During the decade before the 1979 Revolution, the composers of Iranian symphonic music began developing a new compositional language beyond what Vaziri, Minbashian or Mahmoud had initially established.

³⁷ Yahya, Kayvan. "موسیقی سمفونیک ایرانی (Iranian Symphonic Music)." Harmony Talk. December 17, 2007. Accessed January 01, 2019. <http://www.harmonytalk.com/id/1413>

Aminollah Hossein was one of the crucial figures in the establishment of this new language. Hossein studied in Russia and Germany, and his music reflects the approach of Russian nationalism of the Romantic era. In 1947, Iran’s Ministry of Culture funded his celebrated piece *Persepolis Symphony*, and Hossein recorded the work in Paris.³⁸ His harmonic approach in *Persepolis Symphony* is beyond traditional tonal music’s tertiary harmony. In this symphony, he creates a modal atmosphere through using a harmony based on fourth intervals and double pitch-centers similar to the techniques of Western composers like Béla Bartók. This quartal approach is still very popular among Iranian composers. The orchestration in *Persepolis Symphony* reflects Hossein’s background as an Iranian and a student of the Russian school. An example of his Iranian influence in orchestration is the use of trumpet as a lyrical solo instrument that reflects Iranian religious theatre *Tazieh*, whose music uses drums, trumpet and military instruments in both lyrical and military context. In addition, his use of harp, winds, and strings resemble those of Tchaikovsky and Glinka.

Other examples of the new wave of Iranian composers of 1970s and 1960s are represented in a collection of pieces recorded by Ali Rahbari.³⁹ The collection includes the following pieces:

Table 1.2: Ali Rahbari’s collection of Iranian symphonic music, recorded in 2005

Name	Composer
<i>Persian Mystique</i>	Ali Rahbari

³⁸ Yahya, Kayvan. "موسیقی سمفونیک ایرانی (Iranian Symphonic Music)." Harmony Talk. December 17, 2007. Accessed January 01, 2019. <http://www.harmonytalk.com/id/1413>

³⁹ Rahbari, Alexander. *Symphonische Dichtungen aus Persien = Symphonic poems from Persia*. Nürnberg: Colosseum-Schallpl, 2005.

<i>Rhapsody</i>	Ahmad Pezhman
<i>Dance from Samandar Opera</i>	Ahmad Pezhman
<i>Scheherazade</i>	Aminollah Hossein
<i>Bijan & Manijeh</i>	Hossein Dehlavi
<i>Iranian Suite</i>	Houshang Ostovar
<i>Symphonic Movement</i>	Mohammad Taghi Masoudieh

The following table lists works composed by Iranian symphonic composers and performed by Tehran Symphony under various conductors between 1949 and 1979:⁴⁰

Table 1.3: Pieces performed by the Tehran Symphony between 1949 and 1979

Date	Composer	Form/Genre	Title
1949	Parviz Mahmoud	Suite	<i>Iranian Suite</i>
1949	Rouben Gregorian		<i>Iranian Suite</i>
1950	Heshmat Sanjari		<i>Rangarang Suite</i>

⁴⁰ Mohammadreza Darvishi, *Negahi Be Gharb* (A Look towards West) (Tehran: Mahoor Publication, 2014), 128.

1952	Morteza Hannaneh		<i>Shahr-e Marjan Suite</i>
1956 1963	Heshmat Sanjari		<i>Iranian Tableaux</i>
1952	Morteza Hannaneh	Minuet	<i>Minuet</i>
1961	Aminollah Hossein		<i>Second Piano Concerto</i>
1962 1963	Loris Cheknavarian	Piano Concerto	<i>Concerto for Piano and Orchestra</i>
1962	Heshmat Sanjari	Symphonic poem	<i>Symphonic poem on Ferdowsi's Poems</i>
1963	Loris Cheknavarian	Prelude, Aria, Toccata and Fugue	<i>Prelude, Aria, Toccata and fugue for strings and timpani</i>
1968	Morteza Hannaneh	Capriccio	<i>Caprice for Piano and Orchestra</i>
1969	Emanuel Melik Aslanian	Symphonic Poem	<i>Golbang Symphonic Poem</i>

1969	Houshang Ostovar	Fantasy	<i>Fantasie for Orchestra</i>
1970	Ahmad Pezhman	Rhapsody	<i>Rhapsody</i>
1971	Hormoz Farhat	Rhapsody	<i>Mazandarani (Rhapsody)</i>
1974	Houshang Ostovar	Symphony	<i>Symphonic Movement</i>
-	Samin Baghchehban	Suite	<i>Boumivar Suite</i>
1976	Shahin Farhat	Symphony	<i>First Symphony</i>
1977	Emanuel Melik Aslanian	Oratorio	<i>Oratorio</i>
1978	Alireza Mashayekhi	Symphony	<i>Tehran Symphony (op.57)</i>

From the introduction of Western music into Iran until the 1979 Revolution, Iranian composers addressed the issue of Iranian classical music in the context of a Western orchestra with three different approaches.⁴¹

The first group were musicians who only saw Iranian music's redemption in using the symphonic orchestra as their medium. These composers mainly used the context of Western

⁴¹ Mohammadreza Darvishi, *Negahi Be Gharb* (A Look towards West) (Tehran: Mahoor Publication, 2014), 90.

musical instruments to explore Iranian melodies, and their compositions were inspired by major-minor tonalities of Western music. Gholam Hossein Minbashian and Parviz Mahmoud wrote works in this category. Later, the composers of this group flourished under the baton of Sanjari and Meshkat and explored new possibilities in the hybrid of Iranian identity and Western music.

The second group tried to incorporate Iranian ideas and instruments into the context of the orchestra. An example is the infamous Golha Radio Orchestra, produced by Davoud Pirnia (1900-1971) and conducted by Ruhollah Khaleghi. The Golha Orchestra used Iranian and Western instruments together, and the compositions represented Iranian Classical Music in their form and content.

The third group tried to build an orchestra with only Iranian instruments. This was an attempt to introduce the idea of orchestra into the context of Iranian classical music. Musicians like Faramarz Payvar (1933-2009) were pioneers of this movement. Payvar was a virtuoso santoor player and established the Orchestra of Arts and Culture for Iranian instruments. As Darvishi writes:

The mentality of the late Qajar era continued all the way up to this point. These musicians had a basic understanding of polyphony and the technical issues of Western orchestral music. Their orchestras usually lack proper balance between the instruments and they mostly perform monophonic music. Even the polyphonies performed by these groups are usually simplistic.⁴²

⁴² Mohammadreza Darvishi, *Negahi Be Gharb* (A Look towards West) (Tehran: Mahoor Publication, 2014), 92.

The Years after 1979

The year 1979 was Iran's most important year in the twentieth century. In this year social instabilities led a total collapse of the monarchy in Iran and after the departure of Iran's king, the whole system of government changed within a year. This change was much deeper than a simple governmental leadership change and its catastrophic cultural impacts on Iran's cultural scene lingered for three decades afterward. Youssefzadeh writes:

The revolution of 1978-1979 forced Mohammad Reza Shah into exile. Initially, this was a political reaction against the authoritarianism of a regime that was a subservient to Western hegemony, principally by the United States. The revolution was a multi-party and multi-ideological movement, and many musicians participated by composing and performing revolutionary songs.⁴³

The revolution created a new era in Iran's music scene. After six decades of trying to solve the problem of westernizing Iranian classical music, musicians faced governmental discouragement towards any manifestation of Western art. The revolution brought a significant change in the attitude of the state towards music, leading to resistance towards any cultural invasion of the West

.⁴⁴

An immediate musical result of the revolution was a hiatus in Tehran Symphony. This hiatus happened after all the foreign musicians left Iran. At the same time, the new government

⁴³ Michael Church, *The Other Classical Musics: Fifteen Great Traditions* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2016), 329.

⁴⁴ Azin Movahed. "Religious Supremacy, Anti-Imperialist Nationhood and Persian Musicology after the 1979 Revolution." *Asian Music* 35, no. 1 (2003): 85-113. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4098473>.

temporarily stopped funding of the Tehran Symphony. These two events had a profound impact on the story of Iranian students and symphonic music. The flourishing days of conservatories entered an era of recession. The new government wanted music to produce “revolutionary songs,” and because of this, a group of musicians who had not left the country decided to establish “The Orchestra of the Revolution.”⁴⁵

The revolution also changed the traits of Iranian symphonic compositions. The forerunners of modernity and Iranian symphonic composition were either forced into silence or left the country. A set of new dictated guidelines for the musicians came from the government and required them to “serve people” instead of promoting Western ideals. This requirement led to propaganda in music. The government needed pieces that praised the revolution.

Many of these pieces required a solo singer, had “revolutionary” poems praising war and the new government, and the compositional approach of them subverted the clear path of music before the revolution.

Essentially, the new direction was towards populist songs rather than art music. However, some writers believed that even under heavy governmental and ideological regulation, some could manage to write pieces that were representative of the traits of Western cultural influence and prerevolutionary experiments.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Kayvan Yahya, "1979 انقلاب در سمفونیک (Iranian Symphonic Music in 1979 Revolution)," Harmony Talk, February 15, 2008. accessed January 01, 2019, <http://www.harmonytalk.com/id/1460>.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Six years after the revolution, Nader Morteza pour (b.1952), a former member of the Tehran Symphony, took the baton of the Tehran Symphony and a new age for the orchestral music in Iran commenced.⁴⁷

Kambiz Roushan Ravan (b.1950), Hossein Alizadeh (b.1951), Mohammad Mirzamani (b.1957), Houshang Kamkar (b.1947), Hassan Riahi (b.1945) and Fereydoun Naseri (1931-2006) were among the composers who wrote for the re-established Tehran Symphony.

Since 1979, Iran's government closely monitors musical activities. These regulations vary for each province, but musicians must still receive government approval for each program. All concerts must be submitted for a censorship check no matter what type of music they include. This mirrored similar censorship in other forms of arts and literature.⁴⁸ Although some administrations in the past years have temporarily limited censorship, Iran's music scene still suffers from the revolution's consequences.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Michael Church, *The Other Classical Musics: Fifteen Great Traditions* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2016), 330.

Chapter 2

2.1 Biography and the music of Kouchyar Shahroudi

Born in Tehran in 1959, Kouchyar Shahroudi was initially interested in photography, film, and theatre. As he states:

Music was the last artform I encountered. That was when I understood I was going to choose music as a career and devote my future to it.⁴⁹

Throughout the 1960s-1970s, Kanoon Parvaresh Fekri Honari (Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults) was one of the active centers in Iran for children and teenagers to learn different forms of the Arts.⁵⁰ Kanoon is the first place Shahroudi began his music training. Shahroudi started playing the recorder and then picked flute as his main instrument.

As we read in the previous chapter, many international musicians lived in Iran during the 1970s. Shahroudi started taking lessons with a Romanian flute player as his primary teacher in early 1970s. Eventually, he enrolled in the Tehran Conservatory and continued his flute studies:

That was the time I started my studies at the Tehran Conservatory and graduated after three years. I graduated with the highest score in Tehran Conservatory that year. The repertoire for my graduation recital was Jacques

⁴⁹ "Interview with Kouchyar Shahroudi." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

⁵⁰ For more info look at: <http://www.kanoonnews.ir/>

Ibert's Concerto, Eugene Bozza's Image, and a Johann Sebastian Bach Sonata.⁵¹

The 1979 Revolution led to the departure of Western musicians from Iran. After his Romanian teacher left Iran, Shahroudi continued his studies with Saied Taghaddosi (b.1952). Taghaddosi was the principal flute player at the Tehran Symphony under the direction of Farhad Meshkat. Along with studying flute as his primary instrument, Shahroudi started taking lessons with Morteza Hannaneh in composition. During these years, he showed no interest in learning Iranian classical music:

I felt a need to compose without knowing what composition is. I did not study Iranian classical music in those years, and it was like I did not have any interest in Iranian music.⁵²

In 1980, the Iranian Cultural Revolution caused universities to temporarily close. The 1979 Revolution led to the Iranian Cultural Revolution, and universities closed for the next three years to create new curriculums based on the ideology of the new government. Shahroudi left Iran shortly after the Cultural Revolution:

I started studying German at the time the cultural revolution was happening, but I ended up going to Paris to study there. I immediately started studying flute in École Normale de Musique de Paris with Christian Lardé and Raymond Guiot.⁵³

⁵¹ "Interview with Kouchyar Shahroudi." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

Throughout the early 1980s, Shahroudi composed while simultaneously studying performance. His compositions of this period were in the context of Western music, and Shahroudi was not interested in Iranian classical music at the time. During his studies in Paris, Shahroudi enrolled in the Folkwang University of the Arts, in Essen, Germany:

The French school of flute playing was all based on aesthetics. The German style was based on logical interpretation of the phrases. The German interpretation was very much based on what we have on the page.⁵⁴

Around 1988, as he got closer to the graduation, Shahroudi began showing interest in Iranian classical music and started learning Iranian ney.

I suddenly realized that I have a natural affinity for Iranian classical music. For me, it was natural to improvise in the context of that music or even perform the melodic ornaments without knowing much about the theory. Eventually, I started using these ideas from Iranian classical music in my compositions. It seemed that I had finally found the last piece of the musical puzzle of my identity as a composer and performer.⁵⁵

Shahroudi's work on Iranian ney and Iranian classical music resulted in the album *Persian Suite* (1991) arranged by Mohammad Shams (b.1954).⁵⁶ Many compositions of this recording are

⁵⁴ "Interview with Kouchyar Shahroudi." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Shams, Mohammad, and Kouchyar Shahroudi. *Suite persane pour flûte et orchestre*. Paris: Techniciens artistes réunis, 1991.

by Shahroudi, and they extensively incorporate Iranian classical music intervals. In addition, Shahroudi transcribed Iranian classical compositions like *Zarbeh Malijeh* (yellow sparrow) by Abolhassan Saba (1902-1955) for flute. In these transcriptions, Shahroudi used Western flute to imitate Iranian nay techniques and ornaments such as tekieh and tahrir.

Persian Suite is still one of the best examples of the Iranian approach to playing Western flute. Iran's national broadcasting stations have used different tracks of this recording over the past two decades and even after almost three decades after its release, *Persian Suite* is one of the best recordings played by an Iranian flutist.

Throughout the early years of the 1990s, Shahroudi played on multiple recordings of both genres of Iranian symphonic music and Western classical music. In his 1998 recording, *The smile of the rose*, Shahroudi performed works by Benjamin Godard, Francis Poulenc, Maurice Ravel, and Eugène Bozza.

In 1991, he won the flute position in Rouen Opera in France, and he has been playing with the Rouen orchestra since. Praised for his unique interpretation of modern works, Shahroudi has worked with different generations of modern musicians, including composers and conductors, such as Pierre Boulez and Bruno Maderna. Throughout his career as a flutist, Shahroudi has composed many pieces for flute, ney, and other instruments. His background with Iranian ney and his studies in France and Germany helped him develop his approach to composition. His pieces include several direct quotations of Iranian folk music as well as his own melodies inspired by his homeland.

In addition to composition and performance, Shahroudi has been active as a teacher at the Le Havre conservatory. He teaches a wide variety of students in his private studio and actively arranges and composes pieces for flute ensembles that he performs with his students.

When approached by the author for a piece to perform in the National Flute Association Convention in San Diego, California, Shahroudi wrote *Danses Mystiques for flute and piano* (2016). This piece is a clear example of the composer's hybrid use of Iranian and Western styles. The piece borrows folklore melodies from Northern Iran as well as Iranian classical music's Dashti dastgah. As a result of his command of the instrument, Shahroudi transforms these Iranian melodies into virtuosic flute passages followed by cadences for each instrument. Recognizing its significance, other flute players performed the piece in Germany, Iran and France. In addition, this author has performed the piece three times in the United States.

2.2 Analysis of *Dances Mystiques (2016)* by Kouchyar Shahroudi

In 2016, the author commissioned Kouchyar Shahroudi for a piece for flute and piano to perform in the National Flute Association Convention in San Diego, California. The result of the commission was *Dances Mystiques for flute and piano*. Iranian flute players received the piece enthusiastically and have performed the *Dances Mystiques* in Germany, Iran, France and the United States.

Dances Mystiques borrows folk melodies from northern Iran as well as Iranian classical music's dastgah *Dashti*. Shahroudi morphs these melodies into virtuosic flute passages followed by cadences for each instrument. In the following analysis, after establishing the overarching section of the piece, we will address the components of each section and their source of influence.

The title of the piece carries the word "dance," the foundation of piece's character. Shahroudi states:

For me, it was vital to develop the piece on the idea of a dance. After I decided on the title, I came up with different ideas that inspired me to write down the three sections. My initial idea was to hint to the ancestors of both instruments.⁵⁷

The piece is based on three overarching sections. These sections are ABA, but each section comes with a cadence at the end, and bridges separate each section.

The detailed structure of the pieces is as follows:

⁵⁷ "Interview with Kouchyar Shahroudi." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

Table 2.1: Structural sections of *Danses Mystiques*

A	Measures: 1-26
A ¹ (First Cadence)	Measures: 28-56
Bridge/Modulation	Measures: 56-67
B	Measures: 68-80
B ¹	Measures: 81-103
Bridge	Measures: 103-106
B ² (Second Cadence)	Measures: 107- The fourth beat of 142
A ³	Measures 145-end

Shahroudi's intention to imitate the flute and the piano's instrumental forefathers happens in the opening. This effect creates a metallic quality in the sound. The use of the stick is a reference to Iranian instrument Santoor, an Iranian hammered dulcimer that dates back to 226 C.E.⁵⁸ In the flute's part, through using different alternative fingerings and microtones, the composer tries to imitate a sense of the Iranian ney, an oblique rim-blown flute of the Arab

⁵⁸ During, Jean, Scheherazade Qassim Hassan, and Alastair Dick. 2001 "Santur." Grove Music Online. 11 Jan. 2019. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000051800>.

countries, Iran and Central Asia.⁵⁹ These two sound effects produce a mystical sounding opening for the first section of the piece.

The opening melody in the flute line belongs to Dastgah-e Homayoun.⁶⁰ Each Dastgah in Iranian music has several subordinates called Goosheh, the smallest entity in Iranian dastgah music and most of the time a melody. Measures 1-5 loosely follow the melodic model of Goosheh *Suz-o Godaz* in Homayoun. The opening melody is compared to Goosheh *Suz-o Godaz* in the example (2.1).

Figure 2.1: The comparison of *Danses Mystiques*' opening melody and *Suz-o Godaz*

The image displays two musical scores side-by-side for comparison. On the left is the score for 'سوز و گداز' (Suz-o godâz), which consists of three staves of music in a 7/8 time signature. On the right is the score for 'Danses mystiques' by Mehرداد Gholami, 'Pour flûte et piano' by Kouchyar SHAHROUDI. This score is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 68 and includes performance instructions like 'Avec rigueur' and 'mf'. It features complex rhythmic patterns with triplets and sixteenth notes, and includes a 'gliss.' marking at the beginning of the flute line.

Imitating a traditional *Suz-o Godaz*, the opening flute melody in *Danses Mystiques* starts with an upward motion and reaches a fourth interval higher. After the upward motion, the composer puts the emphasis on C and B. This alternating emphasis between C and B resembles the original *Suz-o Godaz* melody.

⁵⁹ Hassan, Scheherazade Qassim, and Jean During. 2001 "Ney." *Grove Music Online*. 11 Jan. 2019. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000019644>.

⁶⁰ Lawergren, Bo, Hormoz Farhat, and Stephen Blum. 2001 "Iran." *Grove Music Online*. 11 Jan. 2019. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000013895>.

Shahroudi uses several techniques to embellish the opening melody. Timbral trill is one of the techniques that is ornamenting C in measures 2 to 4. Another example is a fully-notated *Tahrir*. *Tahrir* is an Iranian equivalent of a repeated mordent in moving melody. The fast 32nd notes in measures 4 and 8 are examples of notated *Tahrir*.

The composer's intention for the flute's melody is to imitate Iranian classical music singing. Traditionally, Iranian singers improvise a melodic line on an ostinato played by a group of instruments like tar, santoor and a percussion instrument. The piano's role in the opening is to provide an ostinato for the flute to play the melody.

The pitch centers of the opening section are E and A. Based on Iranian classical music theory, A is *Shahed* (equivalent to reciting tone) and E is *Foroud* (the finale note). Shahroudi does not exactly follow the rules of Radif music and changes the roles of E and A. The piano emphasizes E as an ostinato from measures 1 to 15. In measures 16-18 the ostinato temporarily goes to an A and comes back to E in measure 19. The A ostinato appears again in measures 23 to 25 and it finally resolves to E in measure 26.

Measure 28 is the beginning of the next section (A¹). As the first cadence of the piece, A¹ uses A section's material to develop a cadential section. The composer uses an unmetered improvisatory notation to provide space for both performers to freely explore the

cadenza. Shahroudi states that both cadences in the piece try to find a Western representation of an Iranian idea.⁶¹

Shahroudi uses extended techniques to imitate the sound of a ney. These techniques include glissandi, timbral trills, pitch bends and alternate fingerings. Measures 47-51 are an example of these carefully crafted extended techniques in the flute part. In this example, Shahroudi mixes the timbral trills on a G# with harmonic series building on the G#.

Figure 2.2: An example of extended techniques in *Danses Mystiques*

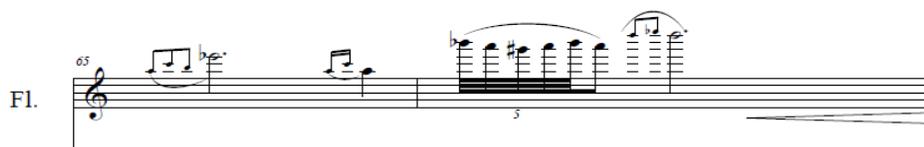


The next section, Souplement (measure 56), is the bridge to the middle section of the piece. Here, the composer is eventually going to move the music away from the dominance of E and D and take the pitch center to the dominance of A and D. Later, A and D come back as an ostinato to introduce the next Iranian melody in *Deylaman* Goosheh. A rhythmic piano accompaniment plays through souplement, and throughout the bridge, we can see the increasing dominance of the note D in the bass line. The flute melody presents virtuosic passages that use the whole range of the instrument. These passages extend all the way to the highest D as a result of Shahroudi's mastery of the instrument to write a difficult passage to accentuate the presence

⁶¹ Interview with Kouchyar Shahroudi." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

of D. This accentuation happens in dynamic and range where the flute player ends this section with a high D for three beats in measure 65.

Figure 2.3: An example of flute's extended range in *Danses Mystiques*



As Shahroudi mentions in the interview with the author, he uses minor second dissonances in ostinato line to provide dissonances and tries to emulate a microtonal texture.⁶² Before moving to the next measure, it is necessary to mention another critical pitch in measures 56 to 67. Here, we can see a strong presence of Eb both in flute and piano's part. An example of this is measures 64-66 in flute line. In the next section, keeping the dissonant role, Eb makes a triton with the pitch center (A).

The B section starts in measure 68, and is based on *Deylaman*, a folklore melody from a region in northern Iran with the same name that has entered the body of radif by Abolhasan Saba, a prominent Iranian classical music master. This Goosheh is one of the subordinates of a larger structure called *Avaz-e Dashti*. The following example is the notation Abolhasan Saba used in his method for Iranian violin playing.⁶³ Saba notated the structure of the melody, and the notation is

⁶² Interview with Kouchyar Shahroudi." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

⁶³ Rahmatollah Badiee, *Doreye Ali-e Violin*, Maktab-e Saba (Advanced Violin Method, Saba's School) (Tehran: Soroud Pulication, 1994), 46.

based on improvisatory singing without any specific meter or time signature. The text of the melody is a sonnet by thirteenth-century Iranian poet, Sa'di Shirazi (1210-1291).

Figure 2.4: Abolhasan Saba's transcription of *Deylaman*



One of the earliest examples of setting *Deylaman* on a rhythmic accompaniment is performed in a recording of Golha radio program from Iran's National Radio. The Golha (literally, Flowers) music series was produced by Iranian National Radio for 23 years from 1956 to 1979.⁶⁴ It seems the inspiration of setting *Deylaman* to a context of piano accompaniment and a wind instrument comes from this program.

Measure 68 is the beginning of accompaniment to prepare the entrance of *Deylaman* melody. The main pitches of the accompaniment are the pitch centers D-A and an extra Eb. The intentional combination of a fourth and a fifth tries to evoke a sense of an open-string ostinato by Iranian tar; since the tuning of tar's open strings has the same interval relation. In addition, the presence of Eb provides a feeling of dissonance.⁶⁵

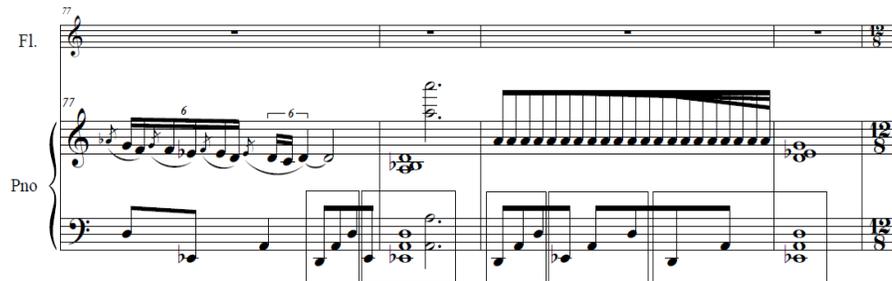
⁶⁴ Lewisohn, Jane. "The Golha Programmes." <http://www.golha.co.uk>. <http://www.golha.co.uk/en/about/programmes#.XEU5IVxKg2y>.

⁶⁵ Interview with Kouchyar Shahroudi." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

After two measures of accompaniment, piano starts the first presentation of *Deylaman* melody.

The time signature is 4/4 although through measures 77 to the end of 80, this rhythmic accompaniment transforms into a triple meter grouping, and eventually, the composer starts using 12/8 in 81. In the following example, we can see the change in the ostinato grouping and the eventual change of time signature.

Figure 2.5: *Dances Mystiques*, Measures 77-80



The next iteration of *Deylaman* begins in measure 83, this time in the flute line. The composer develops this simple melody into a virtuosic flute passage by the end of this section (measure 103). These virtuosic passages demonstrate a chromatic treatment of the theme that reflects composer's Western composition training, and at the same time, they use Iranian classical music ornaments like *Tekieh* and *Eshareh*.

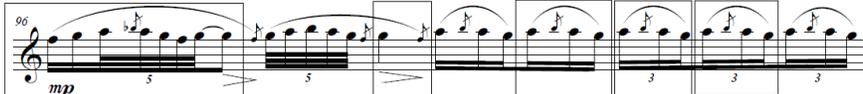
Example of the chromatic treatment of the Iranian melody, *Deylaman*:

Figure 2.6: Chromatic treatment of the Iranian melody in *Danses Mystiques*



Example of using Iranian ornaments tekieh and eshareh:

Figure 2.7: Use of Iranian ornaments in *Danses Mystiques*



The piano accompaniment in this section (mm. 81-103) stays simple and provides a space for the flute to explore the melody in different registers. In the following example we can see the difference in the density of the solo line and accompaniment.

Figure 2.8: *Danses Mystiques* Measures 92-93



The B¹ section ends with a connecting passage that serves as a bridge to the next cadenza. This bridge uses ternary and binary elements presented in the accompaniment over the past two sections from measure 68 to measure 102. The binary motive comes back in piano's right-hand part, and the piano's left hand continues the ternary accompaniment.

Figure 2.9: *Dances Mystiques* Measures 103-106

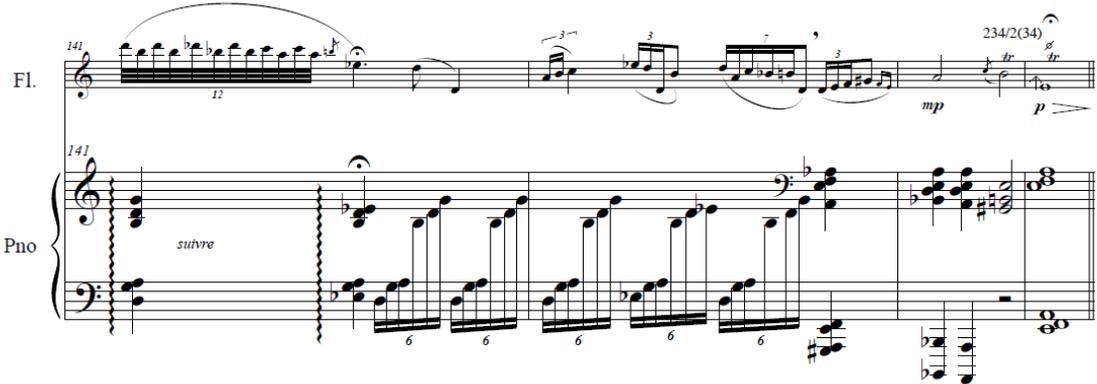
The image shows a musical score for measures 103-106. The top staff is for the Flute (Fl.) and the bottom two staves are for the Piano (Pno). The Flute part starts with a whole note chord in measure 103, followed by a long horizontal line indicating a breath mark. The Piano part features a complex accompaniment with a ternary rhythm in the left hand and a binary rhythm in the right hand. The score ends with a double bar line in measure 106.

The B² cadenza begins in measure 107 and is marked *Librement*. Unlike the first cadenza, the second one starts with only piano. Shahroudi divides the *Deylaman* melody into smaller motives, and builds the cadenza on these small motivic reiterations of *Deylaman*. A reminiscence of competition pieces for Paris Conservatory, this cadenza contains technical passages and showcases double-tonguing technique on flute. Although the beginning of this cadenza was different from the first one, at the end it goes through the same rhythmic development that the first cadenza went through. In measure 129, the piano accompaniment starts a faster harmonic rhythm and by measure 138 this accompaniment moves in quarter note chords.

The transition to the return of A happens immediately on the last beat of measure 142. Here, after the breathing mark, the harmony is back to the dominance of E and D. Also, in the

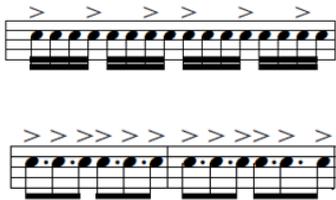
flute line the composer immediately resolves the G# to A and then eventually brings the melody down to E.

Figure 2.10: *Danses Mystiques* Measures: 141-144



The reiteration of A section (measures 145-end) is less active rhythmically compared to the beginning of the piece. Here, the sixteenth notes of the piano accompaniment are regrouped into longer dotted eight notes. However, through accentuating the notes, the music still has the 8/8 character of the beginning, where the sixteenth notes are in groups of 3+3+2.

Figure 2.11: The comparison of note groupings in the beginning and ending of *Danses Mystiques*



The piece ends on an E-A chord that is accompanied by the flute player using the whistle note technique.

Discography of Kouchyar Shahroudi in chronological order:

Suite persane pour flûte et orchestre

Shams, Mohammad, and Kouchyar Shahroudi
Publisher and date: Techniciens artistes réunis, 1991.

Eclats

Music for Philippe Tréhet created by Romain Ponsont and Jean-Jacques Schmidely
Extracts of the «mysters of a new word»
Publisher and date: MCAS, 1993.

Persian Flute Players

Kouchyar Shahroudi, Reza Najfar, Saide Taghadossi, Hossein Samieian, Mehdi Djamei, Furugh Karimi, Fereshteh Rahbari, Firuzeh Navai-Taghadossi.
Conductors: Shardad Rohani, Iradj Sahbahi
Publisher and date: Koch-Discover International, 1997.

The Smile of The Rose

Kouchyar Shahroudi, flute, Aurélien Richard, piano
Publisher and date: Koch-Discover International, 1998.

Musique et Poésie, Trio A PIACERE

Kouchyar Shahroudi, flute, Alain Rizoul guitar, Maria-Carmen Barboro, piano
Publisher and date: MANDALA- Harmonia mundi, 2000.

GIULIANI

Kouchyar Shahroudi, flute, Alain Rizoul, guitar
Publisher and date: Ogam, 2002.

Un Havre de Flûtes

Ensemble flût'Océane
Direction: Jean-Yves Lefrancois
Publisher and date: Association Flût'Océane, 2004.

Sensation

Kouchyar Shahroudi, flute, Alain Rizoul, guitar, Maria-Carmen Barboro, piano, Françoise Masset, soprano
Publisher and date: MANDALA-harmonia mundi, 2005.

Heitor Villa-Lobos

Sextuor mystique

Publisher and date: MANDALA-harmonia mundi, 2006.

Normandie et impressionnisme

Soloists of the opera of Rouen with H el ene Vincent reciting.

Publisher and date: Skarbo, 2010.

Bolero and Other Ravel Favorites

Kouchyar Shahroudi, flute, Aur elien Richard, piano

Publisher and date: Reader's Digest, 2010.

French Masters

Kouchyar Shahroudi, flute

Aur elien Richard, piano

Publisher and date: Reader's Digest, 2010.

2.3 Biography and the music of Kiawasch SahebNassagh

Kiawasch SahebNassagh was born in Tehran in 1968. His first encounters with music happened at a young age when he started learning music at home:

We had an old violin that belonged to my father, and just like many other families, we owned a melodica that we later replaced with an electric organ and around the early years after the 1979 Revolution we purchased a piano.⁶⁶

SahebNassagh started sketching and writing music almost the same time as he started taking piano lessons. The piano repertoire was the inspiration for these early compositions:

I listened to Beethoven's 9 symphonies and the repertoire that I learned in my piano lessons. These pieces had a significant impact on me at that time and I started imitating them immediately. For example, I wrote some Nocturnes based on Chopin's Nocturnes, and I wrote a piece called *Eastern Impression* which was inspired by Debussy.⁶⁷

Eventually, SahebNassagh started taking lessons with Mohammadreza Darvishi and Mehran Rouhani (b.1946). Darvishi and Rouhani were prominent teachers in Iran's 1980s music scene.

SahebNassagh enrolled in college to study science, and at the same time, he started learning setar and Iranian classical music. During these years, he began listening to Jazz music and

⁶⁶ "Interview with Kiawasch SahebNassagh." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

improvising on the piano. These different musical experiences prompted SahebNassagh's decision to pursue music as his career:

That is when I studied an intensive harmony course with Alireza Mashayekhi and then expanded my repertoire on piano with Fereydoun Nasehi. Later, Darvishi referred me to Ahmad Pezhman who had recently returned from The United States. Pezhman told me about Austria and the United States. Pezhman also mentioned a good composition teacher in Graz, Austria. That is when I found out about Beat Furrer (b.1954) who later became my mentor in Austria. ⁶⁸

In 1995, SahebNassagh began his music studies at the University of Music and Performing Arts, Graz. For the first two years, most of his compositions used a Western style as he intentionally refrained from drawing attention to his Iranian identity.

It is like stripping away from the place you are coming to make room to let in the new atmosphere. This voluntary ignorance is not necessarily only about music and might be something that you do in every other aspect of your life as well. ⁶⁹

One of the compositions from this period is *Hast Shab (The night is)* for voice and piano. Although the piece is written based on Iranian poetry by Nima Yooshij (1907-1960), it follows a Western concept of composition. The form is a rondo, and the piece goes beyond tonality and explores atonality.

⁶⁸ "Interview with Kiawasch SahebNassagh." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

The compositions of this period of SahebNassagh’s music reflects his subconscious battle over his dual identities. Although the composer refrains from bringing out his Iranian identity, it still emerges:

Now that I am talking about it, I realize this resistance and the presence of an inner dichotomy. This dichotomy of identities was my life for the first two years of my work in Austria. Although *Hast Shab* was the only piece that I wrote that had some relationship to my Iranian identity, I still felt a responsibility to hide that identity and let the new space and culture change me.⁷⁰

After his first two years in Austria, SahebNassagh started composing a series of pieces named after mythological demons. The following pieces are examples of this new period:

Table 2.2 Kiawasch SahebNassagh’s pieces after mythological demons

Name	Instrumentation	Composition year
<i>Zarwan I</i>	Saxophone Quartet	1999
<i>Zarwan II</i>	Flute and Percussion	1999
<i>Zarwan III</i>	Mixed Octet	1999
<i>Waran</i>	String Quartet	2000
<i>Anast</i>	violin and tape	2000

⁷⁰ "Interview with Kiawasch SahebNassagh." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

SahebNassagh named each piece after an Iranian mythological demon. The basis of these demons come from Zoroastrianism, and each of them reflects a specific vice:

It started with *Zarwan* that was a saxophone quartet and I made a version for flute and marimba. *Waran* was the lust demon, and I wrote it for string quartet. *Zarwan* was the God of time and Ahuramazda's father. These compositions reflected my Zoroastrian backgrounds as an Iranian. Also, this was the beginning of my infatuation with the idea of time.⁷¹

These pieces are excellent examples of Iranian identity as a subconscious presence in music. The composer does not necessarily use Iranian melodies that are harmonized in order to reflect an Iranian identity. SahebNassagh's idea is to reflect his life philosophy as an Iranian:

My resistance towards my Iranian identity in the early years of my studies in Austria pushed that identity into my subconscious and it manifested in my life's philosophy. This is the time when I started reading about Persian mythology and subconsciously exploring my identity as an Iranian composer. Later I realized that many people had been infatuated with the idea of time and something, that some philosophers like Marcel Proust called Lost Time in their writings.⁷²

⁷¹ "Interview with Kiawasch SahebNassagh." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

⁷² Ibid.

The next phase of SahebNassagh's compositional career started when he utilized the idea of time in his compositions. An excellent example of this era is *Memento* (2002) based on a movie with the same title by Christopher Nolan (b.1970):

Nolan reveals the events backward, and that idea and its musical representation inspired me. For me, that has changed the way I compose my music and look at the structure of the piece. It's like sitting on top of the bridge and looking at a river and not knowing where this river is going. This shook my idea of musical structure. After that, the traditional placement of beginning or ending changed in my music.⁷³

As well as exploring time, SahebNassagh also started looking deeper into the idea of language and spoken word. The notion of speech and its differences across languages becomes another idea through which to explore an Iranian identity. The composer believes that Iranian classical music and identity is mainly inspired by spoken and unspoken words:

You believe that Iranian music is nothing but the untold stories between those representations of different melodies of a Dastgah. It is like the music is talking to you but some of the words are removed due to censorship. This censorship is another representation of that Iranian identity. This is that Illuminati-like atmosphere that Iranians were using to protect their music against Arab

⁷³ "Interview with Kiawasch SahebNassagh." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

invasion. It is like these are secret codes that are taken from language but are not language anymore.⁷⁴

The idea of spoken language and its intricacies inspires many of SahebNassagh's compositions. The title of this new series of compositions are different mental conditions or speech impediments. Some of the examples are in the following table:

Table 2.3: Kiawasch SahebNassagh's pieces after mental conditions and speech impediments

Name	Instrumentation	Year
<i>Deja-Vu</i>	Solo Oboe	2004
<i>Jamais-Vu (Agnosie)</i>	Solo Flute	2013
<i>Dyslexia</i>	For Ensemble	2015
<i>Demenza (Dementia)</i>	For Ensemble	2016
<i>Amusie</i>	Flute and Piano	2018

SahebNassagh incorporates electronic or computer-generated sounds in his music to manipulate and defamiliarize sounds and tones in a musical framework. He accepts the use of any and every instrument that will bring the listener out of the stupor of listening to familiar

⁷⁴ Ibid.

tunes. To him, electronic sounds and computer programs can bring diversity to music, but he remains cautious about the music thus generated.

Active in the field of new media, SahebNassagh has experimented with new technologies and social media. These experiments have created a wide range of innovative approaches to contemporary music with his Mobile-Improvisations, Side-by-Side Improvisations, and his strong artistic online presence.

SahebNassagh graduated with a master's degree in composition and music theory in 2002. He started his doctoral studies in the field of electronic music and ethnomusicology under the guidance of Dr. Robert Höldrich. During his time in Austria, he received multiple scholarships and founded several ensembles that perform contemporary music and Iranian symphonic music.

SahebNassagh returned to Iran in 2005 and started teaching in Tehran universities. As a teacher, SahebNassagh has worked with the recent generation of young Iranian composers. His students have received numerous awards and recognition around the world.

As one of the most prolific composers of his generation, SahebNassagh's compositions encompass a wide range of genres. These pieces are collected in several albums published in Iran under different labels, such as Mahoor and Hermes publishing companies. These albums vary from solo piano improvisations to orchestral pieces and chamber music collections. This activities have not been confined only to music. He recently published his first collection of poems in Tehran (2016).

SahebNassagh newest composition *Amusie* (2018) for flute and piano will address both his experiments with the music of his native Iran and Western classical music.

2.4 Analysis of *Amusie* (2018) by Kiawasch SahebNassagh

Kiawasch SahebNassagh composed *Amusie* in March 2018 for the author's last DMA flute recital. *Amusie* exemplifies composer's lifelong search for the connections between spoken language and music. This search manifests in a series of pieces after different mental disorders and speech impediments. SahebNassagh's last piece in this series was *Agnosie for flute solo* (2012) composed for a commission by Iran Flute Society's Tehran Flute Competition.⁷⁵ In addition, just like *Agnosie*, *Amusie* is a continuation of the composer's search for lost time. As SahebNassagh states in his initial conversation about the piece:

“*Amusie* is a continuation of what I started around 20 years ago with my pieces for percussions Nasusch (1998) and Abaie (2001). The involvement of spoken language in music was my main interest, and after decades of writing based on spoken language, I tried to reproduce a musical representation of spoken language in *Amusie*.”⁷⁶

Analyzing a piece containing recitative-like motives that develop in a non-linear manner is not possible with conventional approaches of form and harmony. For this analysis, the approach is to address different aspects of the composition through the lens of the composer. These different aspects are form, pitch centers, notation/dynamics, and the presence of an Iranian identity.

⁷⁵ Recorded by the author in a collection of Iranian pieces for flute and different ensembles

⁷⁶ "Interview with Kiawasch SahebNassagh." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

Form

The overall structure of the piece is recitative, and essentially, *Amusie* is a free monologue for the flute augmented with percussive piano chords. This recitative addresses the composer's search about timing and the space between phrases. Inspired by directors such as Christopher Nolan, SahebNassagh states:

It is like sitting on top of the bridge and looking at a river and not knowing if or where this river is going to. [This idea] was shaking my grasp of musical structure and the beginning or end of a piece. This is something different than the typical language of "once upon a time", and at the end, "they lived happily ever after."⁷⁷

The other idea in *Amusie* is using fractal development instead of linear development.⁷⁸ The composer continuously refines the material of the piece until he carries the piece to a climax that becomes our most tense moment with numerous technical passages.

You hear and repeat what you have already made, but it keeps coming back with some small additions. The repetitions here are even more slight, and it looks like it is a periodical form. It's like a dance where you keep circling yourself to the point that you lose the control of time and your balance.⁷⁹

Marking the separate entities of the music, there is a slight pause separating each phrase that we can call them formal pauses. These pauses are short at the beginning of the piece and they happen at the same time in flute and piano lines. For example, the first formal pause happening

⁷⁷ "Interview with Kiawasch SahebNassagh." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

⁷⁸ Ibid

⁷⁹ Ibid

in measure three is two eighth note triplets. These pauses provide enough time to separate the ideas and convey the feeling of a recitative. The climax of the formal pauses happens in measure 63 where we have a full measure of rest happening in both instruments. The last formal pause is in measure 148 where we have 1.5 beats of rest for both instruments.

Measure 159 marks the beginning of the end in this piece. After this point, we have no formal pauses happening at the same time in both lines. The notation beyond measure 159 is active, and the flute part is dense and technical. As the register of the flute line goes higher, we see a descend in the piano's line. This change in register increases until the final measure where we have the largest interval of the piece:

Figure 2.12: *Amusie*, Measures: 196-198



The form in this piece follows a fractal development where it is hard to pinpoint exact moments. However, with the placement of the rests and their importance as a musical tool, we can propose the following structure for *Amusie*:

Measure 1-62: Increasing rests culminating in a whole rest. The texture resembles a dialogue between flute and piano.

Measure 63-132: Decreasing formal pauses. The texture is thinning, and although we do not have many rests, the individual parts are thinner and spaced out.

Measure 133-159: The texture gradually becomes dense and technical.

Measure 159-end: No more pauses. Both instruments move rapidly, and in addition to the dense texture and technical movement of each instrument, the range becomes wider and culminates in a 41st interval on the last chord.

Pitch centers

The definition of '*amusie*' is the inability to recognize musical tones or to reproduce them. This condition can be congenital (present at birth) or be acquired sometime later in life (as from brain damage). *Amusie* is composed of A+Musie and means the lack of music. Also, commonly called tone deafness.⁸⁰ This definition states SahebNassagh's approach to the idea of pitch centers.

The collections of the pitches usually start in one single note for me. This collection eventually builds up in different directions. It is usually an ascending motion. Improvisation is another factor here that has importance is the piece. Another idea is tuning in Iranian music. In some cases, we have such tunings that are a tone cluster in their nature, and I have looked at their potential to be a spectrum of notes and intervals that gives you a vast sound world to draw. These

⁸⁰ <https://www.medicinenet.com>. Accessed January 20, 2019.
<https://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=19458>.

clusters in the piece will not go to a contemporary sound necessarily if we imagine a cluster being that tuning idea.

As the composer states, the piece has multiple moments where a single note develops to a center. These centers are not necessarily tonic-like gravitations for the music to sound like a center. However, they are the core note of a development that happens in a fractal manner.

The first example is measure 62 to 67. In measure 62, G is the loudest and longest note. In measure 65, G is the only note. Measure 65 and 67, G becomes less present, but the G still remains the center of all the notes.

Figure 2.13: An example of developing a pitch center in *Amusie*

The figure displays four musical staves illustrating the development of a pitch center.
 - **Measure 62:** A staff with a cluster of notes. A bracket above the notes is labeled '14'. A 'port.' marking is above the cluster, and a 'ff' dynamic marking is below it.
 - **Measure 64:** A staff with a single note. A bracket above the note is labeled '6', and a 'f' dynamic marking is below it.
 - **Measure 65:** A staff with a single note. A bracket above the note is labeled '10', and a 'mf' dynamic marking is below it.
 - **Measure 67:** A staff with a cluster of notes. A bracket above the notes is labeled '6'. A 'p' dynamic marking is below the notes, with a wedge-shaped hairpin indicating a decrease in volume.

Using a pitch as a center of development happens in different forms throughout the piece. Another example is measures 100 to 103 where the composer builds an ascending line with rhythmic motives on the note G. None of these similar rhythmic motives are the same but in performance, they resemble spoken language patterns, where every reiteration of the same word is slightly different.

Figure 2.14: Reiteration of an idea in *Amusie*, measures 100-103



Notation/Dynamics

At first glance, *Amusie* looks like an unedited piece, that the composer has played into a computer using a MIDI keyboard. Throughout the piece, many beats divide into groups of 10,13 and 15 notes. These groupings happen in a tempo where the performance will inevitably suffer from inaccuracy. SahebNassagh answers this question of complexity:

My rhythmic material does not have necessarily a mathematical formula.

However, it comes from what I like to call the spoken word inspiration over the context of written music. No matter what and where this idea comes, eventually it becomes a formula for me to write it down and use it in different ways depending on the piece. It seems like it is coming from my subconscious and gets formulaic through the course of composition.⁸¹

In addition to the idea of assimilation of spoken language, the composer is going beyond the traditional groupings of the notes and propose another approach to the notation:

Another issue about the complicated groupings is that they are coming from another philosophy about music notation that I have. One of the things I teach my students is how to distant yourself from traditional notation and make a

⁸¹ "Interview with Kiawasch SahebNassagh." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

progression towards something that will end up in a newer language. Polyrhythm in a context of different pulsations will lead to what I write down eventually. For example, When I have a four-note figure in the context of a five-note figure, I will notate the combination of them both which will be a nine-figure.⁸²

In this piece dynamics represent the same ideas of notation. Sudden changes in dynamics and dense textures with many dynamics are different ways that the composer achieves his complexity. An example of this complexity is measures 7-11, where the abundant use of dynamic markings on every note, where most notes are different multiphonics, create a complex texture:

Figure 2.15: An example of multiphonics in *Amusie*



The last point about the notation and dynamics is how to create a representation of medical condition in the context of music. The composer creates a texture where the notes can be heard slightly out of tune. This slight pitch deficiencies resemble the inability to reproduce a pitch after hearing it. Furthermore, the music has abrupt changes in dynamic and metric complexities. These “abnormalities” create a musical equivalent of amusia.

⁸² Ibid.

The presence of an Iranian Identity

The music of Kiawasch SahebNassagh frequently reflects his identity as an Iranian. However, this “identity” is not a melody or a scale or anything that is easily found on the surface of the music. *Amusie* carries two types of traits that are a reflection of Iranian identity.

The first trait is to subconsciously write music that appears to have characteristics of Iranian classical music melodies. These characteristics can be even small motives drawn from the context of *radif*. The second trait is for the music to have a philosophical approach reflecting the Iranian identity. In this trait, the composer bases the piece on the idea of being Iranian rather than just using Iranian classical music as his identity.

Iranian classical music patterns in *Amusie*

There are examples in *Amusie* where the composer subconsciously imitates patterns driven from Iranian classical music. As the composer stated in an interview with the author, there is no deliberate plan to have Iranian music patterns. The idea of SahebNassagh writing such similar patterns to *radif* music without having the intention to, has roots in the connection of Iranian poetry to Iranian classical music. Iranian poetry has influenced SahebNassagh’s creative process. The nature of this poetry is exceptionally rhythmic, and it has deep ties with Iranian classical music. *Amusie* uses spoken language as an inspiration to imitate the rhythmical chunks of poetry in the context of the music. All these connections will lead to inevitable similarities in *Amusie* with motives from Iranian classical music.

An example of this rhythmic representation is measures 116-120. In these measures, the flute line is imitating a traditional *Daramad* (introduction) in *radif* music. The overall form of

Daramad in Iranian music is having an introductory phrase and emphasizing a single note. This main note is usually along with a lower neighbor tone as an ornament. Here are two examples from *radif*. The first one belongs to *Dastgah Nava* and the second one belongs to the *Dastgah Homayoun*.⁸³

Daramad-e Nava:⁸⁴

Figure 2.16: An excerpt from *Daramad-e Nava*



Daramad-e Homayoun:⁸⁵

Figure 2.17: An excerpt from *Daramad-e Homayoun*



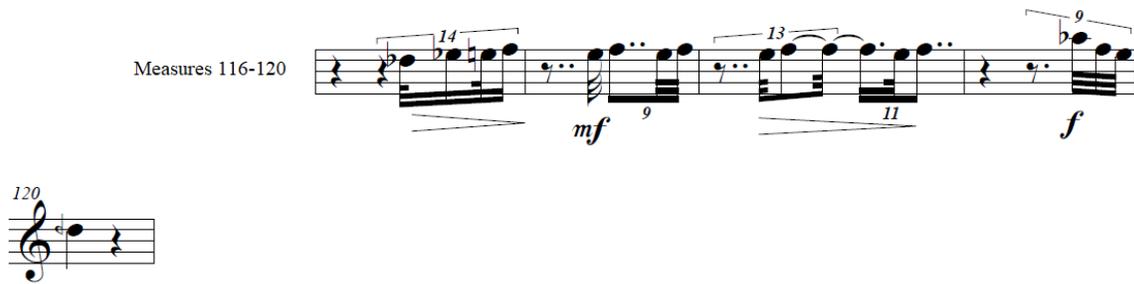
⁸³ "Interview with Kiawasch SahebNassagh." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

⁸⁴ Dariush Talaie, *Radif-e Mirzaabdollah - Analytical Notation* (Tehran: Ney Publication, 2013), 183.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 220.

This is a clear motivic development inspired by *Radif* introductions in *Amusie*:

Figure 2.18: An example of motivic development in *Amusie* based on Iranian classical music



Just like the examples from the context of Iranian classical music, measures 116 starts with an ascending figure to the note F, and then F gets ornamented with a lower neighbor tone, and after that, the melody comes back to the note that started the ascend.

Iranian identity as a philosophical approach in *Amusie*

The idea of Iranian identity and its presence in pieces by Iranian composers is still a matter of debate between Iranian musicians. Kiawasch SahebNassagh believes that the notion of using an Iranian melody and harmonizing is not an in-depth approach to this debate:

This is the easiest approach to put Iranian melody as an exotic element in the context of Western classical music structure. Although it has had good examples, it cannot go further than just a superficial and immediate fix for a deep and complex issue.⁸⁶

To address these deeper cultural issues, SahebNassagh goes addresses the beginning of the problem:

If you want to address them deeper, you should look at how Iranian musicians in the early days of the entrance of Western classical music to Iran started to change the classical Iranian music from within. For example, if you look at Alinaghi Vaziri playing the tar in those days, you can find formal changes in that era. These changes are inspired by Western music but unconsciously done in the context of Iranian classical music. If you look closely, you will encounter intervals or polyphonic structures that are not identifiable using traditional western classical harmony. For me getting deeper into these ideas is a way to understand the concept. Even the way the instruments are tuned. It is like the spectrum of Iranian music. It is like a sound world that is attractive to my ear.⁸⁷

Amusie has different non-traditional approaches to represent Iranian identity in the music. Two significant solutions by SahebNassagh are incorporating poetry and silence. Throughout the piece both instruments get closer to spoken language, and with the spaces between the lines, the music reflects a dialogue between flute and piano. This dialogue is a prominent form in Iranian

⁸⁶ "Interview with Kiawasch SahebNassagh." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

poetry, and SahebNassagh choses the idea of rhythmic recitative-like bursts of motives as one of his representations of Iranian identity. The second point is silence and the space between the rhythmic representations of poetry. The composer pays attention to the importance of silence in Iranian culture:

These[silent moements] are some of the experiments I went through in my initial years in Austria. These experiments are mostly driven from language. It is the subconscious Iranian identity that is not necessarily the quarter tone or the melodic presentation of Iranian identity, but it comes from the core of our language or even the silence and spaces in our language. This is where you believe that Iranian music is nothing but the untold stories between those representations of difference melodies of a *Dastgah*.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ "Interview with Kiawasch SahebNassagh." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2018.

Discography of Kiawasch SahebNassagh:

Schlaflied unter der Ruine (Lullaby under the ruins)

Music Orchestra and Computer

Publisher and date: Kargaah Musighi - Mahoor Publication, 2000.

...Und hier in der Stille (... and here in silence)

Piano Improvisations

Publisher and date: Kargaah Musighi - Mahoor Publication, 2000.

Moments

Collection of Piano pieces

Publisher and date: Hermes Records, 2004.

Zarman

Three Orchestral pieces and three solo pieces

Publisher and date: Barbad Music, 2009.

Waran

Pieces for Acoustic/Electro-Acoustic Orchestra on Ahmad Shamlou's Poetry

Publisher and date: Ava Khorshid, 2013.

Piano-ye Hamrah (Mobile Piano)

A collection of Mobile-Improvisations for Piano and iPhone

Publisher and date: Ava Khorshid, 2014.

40 Robaie ta Sheikh-e Kharghan (40 Quatrains until Sheikh Kharghan)

Poetry of Amirhossein Allahyari recited by the poet and music of Kiawasch SahebNassagh.

Publisher and date: Javan Publication, 2017.

Conclusion:

With the entrance of foreign musicians to Iran and the introduction of Western music in the beginning of twentieth century, Iranian musicians faced the challenge of adapting to a new musical culture in two main areas.

The first area was how to adapt Iranian classical music to address the possibilities of orchestration and polyphony. These ideas were new for the Iranian classical musicians at the time. The second area was how to use Western music to have the capacity to include Iranian classical music. This inclusion could be in form, melody, orchestration or instrumentation. Although these two traits of inclusion seem to be separate, eventually musicians realized that both of them are parts of a larger problem that needs to be solved. This problem is how to make a hybrid of two vast cultures, without being destructive to the basis of each.

Over the next six decades, Iranian musicians divided into three groups. The first group privileged Iranian classical music as dominant in the equation of “Iranian vs Western.” The second group, infatuated with the complexities of Western music, favored Westernizing Iranian music and leaving local traditions. The third group tried to compromise favorable elements of each musical culture and create something new. These three approaches still persevere, but the third group has had the most success.

The pieces analyzed in this document belong to the third approach, creating a hybrid of two musical cultures. One of the pieces (*Danses Mystiques*) is closer to the ideas of the first group and the other piece approaches the ideas of the second group. However, both pieces in this document stay within the ranges of Iranian-Western music.

Kouchyar Shahroudi's *Danses Mystiques* presents Iranian melodies in the context of Western music. He uses orchestral instruments and with the help of contemporary techniques, tries to achieve an Iranian timbre. Shahroudi successfully creates an Iranian improvisatory singing texture simply by using an ostinato and microtones. The composer evolves these textures through a completely Western technique of motivic development.

The other piece, *Amusie*, addresses the third approach in a creative way. For the composer, the sound world that he is working within cannot be anything but Iranian-Western. In this approach, no matter how far from his Western music training we get, and no matter how concealed the Iranian musical ideas, the music itself is a hybrid of both. SahebNassagh goes beyond the musical elements and addresses his identity with the philosophy behind the music. In this philosophy, even the rests have that ever-present Iranian identity.

Appendix I

Glossary of Iranian classical music terms

Radif: The complete collection of all 12 components of Iranian classical music. The 12 components are divided in 7 Dastgahs with an addition of 5 Avazs. Although usually treated independently, each Avaz is technically related to one of the Dastgahs. Radif literally means the row or the order. This order includes the order of Gushes within each of the larger components. Usually, the order was recalled by a master of Iranian classical music and transcribed by himself or his students.

Dastgah: Dastgah is a sub-component of Radif and the largest collection of Gushehs in Iranian music. In each Dastgah each Gusheh (usually) shares a common scale/mode with other Gushehs. The seven Dastgahs of Iranian music are as followings: Shur, Se-gah, Chahar-gah, Nava, Homayoun, Mahoor, Rast-panj-gah

Avaz: Avaz literally means a song. Next to seven Dastgahs of Iranian Classical music, there are five Avazs. These form the structure of Radif. One of the differences of an Avaz with a Dastgah is in their rhythmic components. Avaz is free-metered and usually improvisatory. In addition, Iranian scholars believe some of these Avazs are a subdivision of a Dastgahs themselves. Iranian Avazs are as follows: Bayat-e Isfahan, Bayat-e Tork, Bayat-e Kord, Abou-Ata, Afshari.

Goosheh: A component of Radif, smaller than Dastgahs or Avazs. Gusheh is a melody or a formula for a melody within the soundscape of a Dastgah or Avaz. These melodies can be improvisatory, rhythmic or dance-like.

Tekieh: Literally means “to lean against.” Tekieh is an appoggiatura-like ornament that happens at the end of the main note. Tekieh happens right before moving on to the next note and the performer slightly touch the upper neighbor note before moving on. Sometime Tekieh hints a farther note than only a step higher.

Tahrir (literally: ornament, to write): Tahrir is usually a vocal ornament in Iran music. To perform a vocal Tahrir the singer breaks the sound and hints the falsetto part of the voice. In instrumental music, Tahrir is transcribed to fast mordents played in the context of a moving melody. These mordents create an illusion of sound being broken down or ornamented.

Shahed: Literally means witness. Shahed is an important note in the context of each Dastgah or Avaz. Some argue this is the Iranian equivalent of “dominant tone”. Although Shahed is not necessarily the fifth degree of the scale/mode.

Foroud: Literally “Descend.” Foroud is the last note of the Goosheh. The last note of each Goosheh and the first degree of the mode is called Foroud. Foroud also can be beyond the last like the last phrase of the melody or even the last section of a Goosheh.

Appendix II
Transcript of the Interviews

Transcript of the interview with composer Kiawasch SahebNasagh – December 23, 2018

Author: First, I would like to get permission to use the voice messages regarding your pieces which you had sent me earlier this year and transcribe it here within the text.

Kiawasch: Yes, that is ok.

Author: When did you start? Can you tell me about your background in Iran and when and why did you leave Iran to study music?

SahebNassagh: In our time music education was not as developed in Iran and we did not start the music seriously at an early age. We had an old violin that belonged to my father. Just like most other families, we owned a melodica which led to an electric organ and around the early years after the revolution we were able to purchase a piano. I started to play melodies that I heard on these instruments. The same person that sold me the piano later helped me find a school in Austria. I started taking lessons when I was 9, and I loved to play the things I had learned myself and suddenly I realized I do not want to do anything else except music. I started writing early when I was 13, and I still have those pieces. I used to listen to rock music, specifically Pink Floyd, and on the other hand, I listened to Beethoven 9 symphonies, and at the same time the repertoire that I was learning in my piano lessons. This had a deep impact on me at that time and led me to start imitating those genres in my writing. For example, I wrote some nocturnes after Chopin, and I wrote a piece called Eastern Impression, that was inspired by Debussy. I still have it. After those years and the difficulties of 1980s in Iran, and the poor music education years, I took lessons with Mohammadreza Darvishi and Mehran Rouhani and I studied Harmony and basic music theory with them. But just most other students, I was not correctly following the rules of the classical harmony and I regularly changed the harmony problems into what I liked them to be.

Author: Did you study any Iranian Music before going to Europe?

SahebNassagh: It was around ten years before leaving Iran that I was studying in Isfahan. I started learning setar myself with a self-tutoring book by Jalal Zolfonoun and in that time, I was inspired by Alizadeh's album *Hejrani* and Vaziri's playing. When I look back, I am still shaken by those pieces and musical experiences. These led to me trying to learn Iranian classical music and walking into another musical language. I hadn't decided to be specifically a musician for sure, but I guess those musical encounters rooted deep in my subconscious. I need to add that with one of my uncles' return from the US in those days, I got introduced to Jazz music, which later stuck on with me for a long time. These experiences became an amalgam for a launching pad to leave Iran to study in Austria.

Author: Why did you decide to leave and why Austria, and how it happened?

SahebNassagh: Before leaving Iran, I was studying a non-musical degree but eventually, I convinced my parents that I need to study music and that is when I started to study German. That is when I studied a compact harmony course with Alireza Mashayekhi, and then expanded my repertoire with Fereydoun Nasehi. Darvishi referred me to Ahmad Pezhman, who had recently returned from studying in the United States. Pezhman told me about Austria and the United States. He also mentioned a good composition teacher in Graz, Austria. That is when I got introduced to my teacher Beat Furrer, who later became my mentor in Austria. In that time, Vienna was more conservative and that is what led me to go and take exams. I got accepted to the Graz university of arts around 1995. The first year, I studied unofficially before getting into the school, and that had a significant impact on my studies. My first teacher was musically conservative which gave me a good insight into what I wanted to learn. Furrer was a typical

“Artist” character. There was a connection between us without having to speak much about it and that led to me feeling that connection, even in the silence between us. This wordless connection was something that later had an impact on my composition and my idea about silence. You can see those hesitations even in my other flute piece, *Amusie*. The first six years I was studying a six-year-long master’s degree. I was going through an experimental phase through the first two years, and the next four years was about letting those experiments simmer. I was interested to see how those experiments changed my composition style and character. An important issue here about my nationality was that I intentionally refrained to be an “Iranian” composer for the first couple of years. It is like you strip away from where you are coming to make room for the new atmosphere. This is not necessarily only about music and might be something that you do in every other aspect of your life as well. If you decide to stay all “Iranian” and act exactly as you were acting before leaving the country, this won't do you any good and you are protecting yourself against any changes that you might go through in the new society that you are staying and studying. The exchange of cultures in a new atmosphere is what makes you change and grow as a person and eventually as a musician. The other issue is the identity that comes from Iranian music. I feel in the first two years, except for one piece that was called *Hast Shab* which was based on a poem by Iranian poet Nima; I wasn't using many Iranian elements in my music. This is the year 1995, and when you hear that piece which has a Rondo character, it sounds like a journey from a tonal structure to an atonal structure and the interesting issue is that it is based on a modern poem.

In this piece, the poem works reversely into the piece that I am writing. The more I try to impose an atonal texture into the harmony, the more the melody refrains from becoming atonal. This place in the piece is where that identity keeps coming back. This had a significant meaning at the

time. Now that I'm talking about it, I realize this resistance and the presence of dichotomy that was coming from my background and was being exposed to a new cultural foreground. This was the reality of the first two years of my work in Austria. Although *Hast Shab* was the only piece that I wrote that had some relation to my Iranian identity, I still felt a responsibility to hide that identity and let the new space and culture change me. It's like learning a new language where you try not to even think in your mother tongue.

This is the time I started writing pieces with titles of demons. This idea came to me thinking about the reality that we didn't benefit from goodness, and let's see if we can derive benefit from demons or evil. At the time I thought that evil was much more straightforward than goodness. Because it tells you that I'm evil and that is that, it's straightforward and transparent. It started with *Zarwan* that was a saxophone quartet and a duet for flute and marimba. *Waran* was the Lust demon which turned into a string quartet. *Zarwan* was the God of time and Ahoramazda's father. These years are when my Zoroastrian backgrounds as an Iranian came into my music and also, I got fascinated with the idea of time. Something that I feel the burden even up to this moment. This resistance towards your Iranian identity lets the identity to go into your subconscious and come out as your life's philosophy. This is where I started reading about Persian mythology reading and realizing subconsciously about my identity as an Iranian composer. Later I realized that many people had been fascinated with the idea of time. Some philosophers called this idea the "Lost Time".

I started looking at my pieces more structurally. I wasn't looking analytical until later. This was years later when I was teaching Harmony. I started understanding people like George Fredrich Haas and Furrer. Order these ideas I got into the idea of repetition and the idea of repetition of the same musical entity with different or small variations. These might not be necessarily

variations of the same idea but a periodical function that produces similar entities but every time adds on different things. This got me introduced to the philosophy of the French philosopher Paul Virilio. Something that I got from this philosophy was how to manipulate time to be able to gain what you have lost over time. These ideas lead to pieces that I wrote then like the piece *Memento* which was based on a movie by Christopher Nolan. It's where they are revealing the events backward and that idea and its musical representation inspired me.

For me, that's changed the way I compose my music and look at the structure of the piece. It's like sitting on top of the bridge and looking at a river and not knowing where this river is going to and that was shaking my idea of musical structure and the beginning or ending of a piece. This is something different than the typical language of *once upon a time* and *at the end, they lived happily ever after*. When you listen to my piece *Memento*, it is like you just got to the performance hall and you are late to the show. The piece is different ways of finishing a piece and constantly trying different endings for the idea. These are some of the experiments I went through in my initial years in Austria. They are driven from the language. That's the subconscious Iranian identity that is not necessarily the quarter tone or the melodic presentation of Iranian identity, but it comes from the core of our language or even the silence and spaces in our language. This is where you believe that Iranian music is nothing but the untold stories between those representations of difference melodies of a dastgah. It is like the music is talking to you but has gone through a few words being censored from the context. This is another representation of that Iranian identity. This is that Illuminati-like atmosphere that Iranians were using to protect their music against the Arabs invasion. It's like these are secret codes that are taken from language but are not language anymore.

This comes out in my flute solo piece where the performer whispers and talks and censors at the

same time. These are my early experiments with the idea of language and the language being my identity. This is where I figured out how much potential different languages have even without using them directly in the context of the music. *Abaie* for percussions was an excellent example of this new experiment where I transcribed a rhythm from a poem into its rhythmical form. The piece was based on the poetry of Iranian poet Ahmad Shamlou. He is an excellent example of using language but not paying attention to the meaning and mostly using that language in a rhythmic context. Other examples might be the poetry of Ahmad Reza Ahmadi. It's like these poets are polyphonic. Later, I engaged in writing poetry and realized how this word-engineering and rhythmical representation is essential. This is when my music became a representation of poetry and eventually a representation of spoken language.

Author: I wanted to ask a typical question. What is an Iranian composers' role to produce a hybrid of Iranian Classical music and Western classical music? Is there such a thing?

SahebNassagh: A historical point is that the composers that have not studied in Western countries have felt the responsibility to address the issue of their Iranian identity versus their Western education. The forerunners of the movement looked around Iran to see what other countries like Azerbaijan had done to preserve the national identity in the context of the classical Western music. Amirov and even the Russians are an excellent example. A problem occurs where Westerners come to study the Eastern examples and their understanding ends up being shallow. These encounters usually won't go further than a simple harmonic minor scale with some accidentals here and there. It is usually an exotic approach to an idea that spices up your music rather than understanding the context. It's a trend. This exoticism also happens in a language where someone pronounces your name with a Western accent. This is the reality where

even your name won't be what your name is. This is the most natural approach to put Iranian melody as an exotic element in the context of Western classical music structure. Although it has had some excellent examples, it cannot go further than just a superficial and immediate fix for a profound and complex issue. Bypassing the colonial look at these encounters is hard. That's why their use of third intervals becomes prevalent in early examples of Iranian music using Western classical music context. When you look at the early models we can see this. Eventually, this look will move further away from third intervals harmony and leads to 2nd or 4th intervals that comes out in the music of composers like Hannaneh, Baghchehban or Nasehi.

Author: Two questions, in your opinion who has done a good job in the early years with this hybridization?

SahebNassagh: I want to emphasize again that all these issues are a historical topic to address. If you want to discuss them more in-depth, we can even find out some changes in the ways that Iranian musicians in the early days of the entrance of Western classical music to Iran start change in the traditional classical Iranian music. For example, if you looked at Vaziri playing tar in those days, you can find formal changes in that era. If you look closely, you'll encounter intervals or polyphonic structures that are not identifiable using plain classical harmony. For me delving deeper into these ideas is a way to understand the concept. Even the way the instruments are tuned. It's like the spectrum of Iranian music. It's like a sound world that attracts my ear. This is the understanding that might not be audible by a Westerner composer. People like Mahmoud looked less into these issues and just copied melodies. No one necessarily looks at the instruments, even in those you can solve many problems. Dehlavi is one of the composers that have addressed this issue much deeper than most of the other composers. He immediately goes

down to the intervals and their characters. *Bijan and Manizheh* is a prominent example of this issue. Another example from the later composers is Mohammad Darvishi in his *Musem-e Gol*. The harmony here gets way more complicated based on the critics of the time. Alireza Mashayekhi's look at this is noteworthy and even Dariush Dolatshahi in the U.S. I want to also name Houshang Ostovar and Ahmad Pezhman and Hormoz Farhat.

Author: Now let's go to your piece, my first question is about the notation. The piece looks like that it has been played/performed and has been dictated to the software. It seems like it has not been edited not to scare the performer away.

SahebNassagh: This question brings up another aspect of my composition. My rhythmic material doesn't necessarily have a mathematical formula. But it comes from what I like to call the spoken word inspiration over the context of written music. No matter what and where this idea comes eventually it becomes a formula for me to write it down and use it in different ways depending on the piece. It seems like it is coming from my subconscious and becomes formulaic through the course of composition.

When I'm designing this, and it is raw, the next step will be how to prepare this raw material for the performer as far as grouping and beaming go. In the past, I thought that the performers might speak these patterns and not need the reconstruction of the score. Then, I realized it might be wrong, but the fundamental issue and importance of it were deep that I would decide not to change it.

Most of the time, I write these patterns on paper and then move them to the notation software. Since I have tried to avoid composing on the piano this issue also became hard in this piece since I was planning the piece away from the keyboard, but I was writing the piece for the piano and the question of performing those clusters later became something that I needed to address.

Another issue about the groupings of those 14 or 15 beamings is that they are coming from another philosophy about music notation that I have. One of the things that I teach my students is how to go away from traditional notation and make a progression towards something that might end up in a newer language. Polyrythm in a context of different pulsations that will lead to me wanting to write them down eventually. I have a four-note figure in the context of a five-note figure and I'll notate the combination of them both.

Author: Next question is about the dynamics. Are they following any reasoning? It reminds me of total serialism.

SahebNassagh: This again goes back to looking at the music like spoken word. Also, this comes from Iranian music punctuation by the way these hesitations are played out in the context of improvisation and spoken word on top of the music. If you pay close attention to the piece, we can notice a space between what we say and what we censor and avoid talking about. Also, the dynamic in this context plays a role to bring back what we have already heard that goes back to the idea that we talked earlier about repetition or variations of the same idea.

Another issue would be not trying to prioritize what is better and trying to understand that everything might be useful if you use it at the right moment and what if we use these different variations of the same concept that we have been trying to prioritize and use them all together.

It's like the composer doesn't decide for you what is better and presents everything; every dynamic and every melody at the same time and lets you decide.

Author: We talked about fractal development, do you mind expanding on the form here?

SahebNassagh: We do not have any form on its classical definition here. I think all the composers especially the old ones were interested in a certain idea to "come back." We can call it the collecting of a memory. The closer we come in the history of classical music we can see a different view about form. Then look at form changes into an additive attitude. Bartok is a good example of this. You constantly hear and repeat what you have already made but it keeps coming back with some small additions. The repetitions here are even more slight and it looks like it's a periodical form. It's like a dance where you keep spinning around yourself to the point that you lose the control of time and your balance. This repetition has its contemporary meaning in the Eastern cultures where that hesitation becomes important.

Author: The other question is going to be explaining some interesting events in the piece, is there any pitch centers?

Kiawasch: The collections of the pitches usually start in one single note for me. This eventually builds up in different directions. It's usually an ascending motion. Improvisation is another factor here that has importance is the piece. Another idea is tuning in Iranian music. In some cases, we have such tunings that are a tone cluster in their nature and I have looked at their potential to be a spectrum of notes and intervals that gives you a vast sound world to draw from. These clusters in

the piece might not go to a contemporary sound necessarily if we imagine a cluster being that tuning idea.

Author: Thank you very much for your time.

Transcript of the interview with composer Kouchyar Shahroudi – December 22, 2018.

Author: When did you start music?

Shahroudi: Before I start studying music, I was interested in photography, film, painting and theater. Music was the last artform that I came across. That's when I understood it is the music that I'm going to pick as a career and devote my future to. Kanoon Parvareh had classes for young children, and I started to play the recorder at that age. I was interested in playing the recorder and I learned that instrument quickly. Later, I decided to pursue a more serious instrument or an orchestral instrument. Through the same educational organization, I was sent to the center of the Kanoon's organization and then I got introduced to play flute. There, I met Hossein Alizadeh. After that, I went to “Kargaah Musighi” (music workshop) and I was picked to play flute based on my interest. There was a Romanian flute player that taught flute in that center. He realized I am learning fast and he recommended I should go to the Tehran Conservatory. After that, I entered the Tehran Conservatory. At the time, I was in my senior year of high school, but I was okay with spending one more year to be able to transfer to Tehran Conservatory. That was the time I started my studies at the Tehran Conservatory and finished after three years of studying flute. I graduated with the highest score in Tehran conservatory in that year. For my graduation recital, I played Ibert's concerto, Bozza's Image and a Bach sonata. This was around 1979. After the revolution, I kept studying with Saied Taghaddosi which had taken over the Tehran Conservatory's flute post. At the same time, I studied instrumentation with Hannaneh and I started composing at the same time with writing pieces for piano. I felt a need to create without knowing what

composition is. I didn't study Iranian classical music in those years. It was like that I didn't have any interest in Iranian classical music.

Author: When did you leave Iran?

Shahroudi: As you might know because of the Cultural Revolution, the universities were closed, and we didn't have anything to do at the time. My only teachers at the time were tapes and recordings. James Galway and Rampal were our idols of the time. I started studying German, but I ended up going to Paris to study there. I immediately started studying flute in the *Ecole Normale* of Paris with Christian Larde and Raymond Guiot.

Throughout all these years I was still writing and composing. At the same time, I started enrolling in classes in Germany. At the time I was taking lessons with a German flute player and a French flute player and this difference in the style made me become a flexible performer.

The French style of the time was all based on aesthetics. On the other hand, the German side was based on logic and interpreting the phrases based on what we have on the page.

The articulations in a German Orchestra is different than the logical interpretation in France. In France, articulation is serving the aesthetics. As I was getting close to the end of my studies, around 1988, I eventually started to become interested in Iranian music. The reasoning for this was my connections with some friends that were performers of Iranian music. I suddenly realized that I have a good intuition about Iranian music and it is natural to improvise based on the Iranian music or even perform the melodic ornaments without knowing much about the theory. This is where I taught myself how to play ney. I realized playing ney comes to me without much hardship. At this point, I started using these ideas in my compositions. It seemed

that I had finally found the last piece of the musical puzzle of my identity as a composer or performer. Around these years I recorded *Persian Suite* where I finally found my style in performing Iranian classical music on my flute. It was mostly about intuition that came naturally. This intuition didn't let me get away from the Western culture I was living in and it was only completing me and adding another dimension to my musical language.

Author: In your opinion what does “Iranian composer” mean? Does it exist?

Shahroudi: I would classify myself as a Western-Iranian composer with an emphasis on the Western. The musician who knows Iranian music intuitively. I do not think the music of first generation of these composers were necessarily Iranian. Their framework was completely Western, and they mostly used melodies or some ideas in a Western context.

In the music that I write, the language is purely Western, but I will try to break that framework and create a texture of Iranian music. People like Aminollah Hossein are entirely western composers that have used only an Iranian Melody as an inspirational. If we switch that idea, the music immediately loses its character. That idea can come from any culture. It does not have to be Iranian.

Author: Where do you like to make a difference in creating “Iranian” music?

Shahroudi: I have tried to write in a larger framework than just melody. I am trying to write in the context of a dastgah instead of picking a melody. Although, I also use the Iranian melodies too.

Author: Who do you think has done an excellent job between these composers?

Shahroudi: Mashayekhi's music has done a great service to modern Iranian music, even though it's a different style than mine. His solo flute piece based on Marcel Proust's novel is still one of my favorite pieces for the repertoire.

Author: Now let's talk about your piece, and let's get started on the form:

Shahroudi: If you let me, I'm going to go through the piece part by part and analyze different sections of it. To compose this piece as you know, I thought for a long time to plan the piece. In my process, the development of the ideas usually starts when I pick a title for the piece. This title will allow me to develop and plan the piece before writing anything. For me, it was essential to include the word dance in the title of the composition. After I decided on the title, I came up with some different ideas that was driving me to write down the different sections. My initial thought was to point at the ancestors of both instruments. That's the reason that the beginning sounds in that particular way. I also intended to use my identity as an Iranian and write down the piece based on that. That's the reason I try to find a specific sound using different fingerings on flutes and using the special effects on the piano. The other idea here was thinking about who is going to play the piece, therefore, I did use all the capacities I could. As we talked about it, I didn't want to only use an Iranian melody and garnish it with some harmony. That's why I picked the modal texture for the beginning and through that, I tried to get closer to dastgah music language. I wanted to balance the imagination, inspiration, intuition, expression and technicality. I picked Isfahan as a context to start. Some might believe it's an avaz that belongs to another dastgah. In this type of music, the fulcrum goes back to tonic or the most important note. Shahed and Foroud which is the tonic per se. If you look at the score we are continually circling around the tone A. This E-A is an interval that has a distinct Iranian character. This singing in a dastgah or avaz

usually happens above a texture of ostinato. I have done this through using the piano as preparation for that sound. This section is A. I also have used some dissonant intervals like minor seconds to try to make an effect of using quarter tones. Around measure 16 I start to get away from those dissonant intervals. This part is the ending of section A. Measure 28 is still A, maybe lower-case a, with a different texture. It's a cadence based on A.

Author: Is this a Western cadence?

Shahroudi: Yes, this is not avaz anymore. These are motives and cells that get developed in the cadence. From measure 56 this is a development that modulates us to the pitch center D. This is moving us to Dashti. D is preparing is to move to a Dashti in A. Measure 68 is B Which happened in Gooshe *Deylaman*. Again, you have the intervals that circle around a fourth with a hint of dissonance. That hint of dissonance is provided with Eb in the piano's left hand. We also have the ostinato again here. The binary ostinato slowly moves towards a ternary rhythm. Around measure 81, we move to section b1. We can see a free development on *Deylaman* here, like in m.92 that we go far from it. 103 is a bridge that is a conclusion for that rhythmic play. 107 is another cadence, b2. This cadential section is in a contemporary style. Again, we are back around A and eventually that will introduce the E versus A. The ending of the sequence will be around 126. "Souplement" is another texture with added rhythm which ends the Dashti around 142 and immediately goes back to Isfahan.

Author: Thank you so much, I had already looked around E-A, D-A and then goes back again but this will clear out my insight into why it happens like this.

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Vita

Personal Background

Mehrdad Gholami

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Education

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Abstract

This document explores how Iranian native composers who have studied Western classical music incorporate elements of Iranian classical music in their compositions.

The first section covers the history of Western music in Iran, spanning from the early 1910s to 1979. It includes charts, references and resources for further study.

The next section provides biographical information about Kouchyar Shahroudi (b.1959) and Kiawasch SahebNassagh (b.1968), establishing the historical placement of each composer within the context of Iranian and Western music. The author includes a structural analysis of the pieces *Danses Mystiques* (2017) by Kouchyar Shahroudi and *Amusie* (2018) by Kiawasch SahebNassagh, addressing the question of “Iranian identity” in the music.

The author provides musical examples from each piece and compares them to their Iranian classical music origins. These examples can be a motive, melody or even a textural idea. The Iranian classical music examples compare the composers’ uses of the melodies with the origins of the melodies. Each composer has a different approach in forming his own hybrid Iranian-Western style of composition. The goal is to define “Iranian identity” and explore its manifestation in each composer’s work.