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Improvisation and wisely borrowing from master's ornaments

How to adapt playing techniques of other instruments on the Kamancheh

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ABSTRACT

Key words: Improvisation, World Music, Iranian Music, Kamancheh, Modal Music, Segah, Ornaments

The aim of this project is to develop my improvisational and compositional abilities by means of using the traditional method, which is based on imitating the masters' music. In this method not only I try to transcribe, memorize, and then play someone else's melody but also, I will give my own interpretation of a specific melody. The concept of melody in this type of music is a bit different, which we will discuss later. In this process, the basic elements of the desired music style should be considered. For example, in Iranian music, ornaments and embellishments play important roles and should be considered as the basic elements. Melody means a linear succession of musical tones which is a combination of pitch and rhythm, and are built of figures, motifs, and cells. Melodies can be combined to form periods and larger sections.

The next step is to find an appropriate approach to make different techniques and elements playable on the Kamancheh. For example, how I can play the tremolo technique (played on plucked instruments) on the Kamancheh and how this interpretation will sound on this instrument. Performing the same phrase on the Kamancheh, which has already been played on another instrument, is a crucial part of this thesis.

In the first two chapters, I have focused on Iranian music, and I took the phrases from Iranian masters. The last chapter focuses on jazz music and tries to bring jazz elements into the practice and incorporate them into the music. Obviously, constructing elements in jazz, like chord progressions differ completely from the ones which build modal based Iranian music.

Of course, all the mentioned techniques and elements should lead me to improve my musical practice regardless of what I focus on. It can be the ornaments structures in Iranian music or a special chord progression in jazz music. The common point of the entire project is how I can improve my music by means of owning the strength of each genre and style.

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Theoretical Part

Introduction

My background

I am an Iranian Kamancheh¹ player, violinist, and composer and for many years have worked on Iranian music both theoretically and practically.

I was born in 1982 in Tehran and come from a musical family. My first teacher in music was my father who is a singer in Iranian traditional music, and I cannot remember when interest in music was shaped in me. I have a bachelor in “Pure Mathematics” and did my first master's in “Iranian Music Playing” in my hometown. Alongside the education, I have been studying various music sciences by attending non-degree courses and programs and private classes and it was the initial ignition for me to start composing. As an instrumentalist improvisation has always been an important part of my music. As a result, I won first place in the Youth Music Festival in 1997 in the field of playing Kamancheh. Also, it can be mentioned that I was admitted to the master's level of “Iranian Music Playing” with the highest score and graduated with the highest rank among my classmates. I have been working as a composer and arranger in Iranian music and also as a composer in the classical music area. Performing many concerts and recording many pieces and albums are some of my activities as a musician. Also, here should be pointed out that, I was active in the teaching area and have taught at universities, conservatories, and private institutes in different fields like Solfeggio, Orchestration, and rhythm and meter in Old Iranian music. I also have worked in TV and Radio broadcast as an expert host for special programs in the field of music.

Initial idea

The core of this investigation is around improvisation and in order to not get lost in the subject, I limited it to the Improvisation within Iranian music.² The question is how I can improve my improvisation and what strategy I should follow to always have something to work on and to be able to discover unknown sides of my musical practice. Since I started learning music at a very young age, I cannot correctly remember my learning method. But the vivid picture I have from that time is that I was able to improvise even before I had the required technique to play my music on the Kamancheh. That happened because my father taught me to sing by means of the oral method and I was supposed to memorize the musical phrases as correctly as possible from him and repeat them. This music was institutionalized in me and now after thirty years, I

¹ The kamancheh (also kamānche or kamāncha) (Persian: کمانچه) is an Iranian bowed string instrument, used also in Armenian, Azerbaijani, Turkish and Kurdish music and related to the Rebab, the historical ancestor of the kamancheh and to the bowed Byzantine lyra, ancestor of the European violin family. The strings are played with a variable-tension bow. It is widely used in the classical music of Iran, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kurdistan Regions with slight variations in the structure of the instrument.

² For more explanation about improvisation in Iranian music see the text under the title “*A brief explanation of the structure of improvisation in Iranian music*”

can sing them with all the details. During these years I have repeated this method several times, and it worked.

When I learned western classical music notation, at the age of ten, I tried to transcribe one piece as exact as possible with all the ornaments (using my own imperfect knowledge at that time). That piece was played by “Jalil Shahnaz”, a great Iranian Tar player and improviser. The result was terrific, and I was fascinated by it. Not only I could play the melody as exact as it was, but also, I got a better portrayal of what was going on inside the melody and whole the music that Shahnaz was playing seemed clearer to me. During my struggle to write down the piece, I memorize it unconsciously and automatically and I learned a lot from that experience. This experiment repeated to me several times afterward and now after these years, I have decided to do it more methodical and more artistic.

Purpose and aims with the project

Great masters have their own style of improvising which is related to many factors inside and outside the person. It is my aim to put myself in a master’s shoes and try to follow the music in the way that he/she does. Another purpose is related to exploration and expansion of my instrument possibilities, and about challenges in this journey too. To transfer performance practices from one instrument into another. And, as it is written in the title, learning by wisely borrowing from master musicians.

Question(s)

The question: can I acquire a great master’s magnificent way of embellishing the melody and in what way can I borrow from their improvisation and bring them into my own musical practice in order to be applicable and be personalized as my property.

All of us as artists are collections of different artists e.g., our music teachers. We can add to these treasuries by borrowing or imitating from even non-living musicians and there is always this possibility to expand the domain. This technique is by no means a new method. This technique has been widely used by musicians in different genres. Johann Sebastian Bach is a great example of this technique. He learned composition through rewriting and transcribing old music.

Bach's vast knowledge of the musical repertory was a decisive factor behind his art. He had an intimate knowledge of the types and styles of composition of his time and in particular of the work of his most important contemporaries; moreover, he had a sound idea of the music of the past, extending back as far as Frescobaldi and Palestrina. The study of works by other masters went hand in hand with experimentation in his own. It is thus characteristic that his acquaintance with the works of Buxtehude and Bohm, with Vivaldi's concertos, with the Passions of Keiser and Handel and with the masses of Lotti and Palestrina should have left an immediate imprint on his compositions in the same genres. It was less a matter of imitation of a model than of an awareness of the possibilities, an expansion of his own manner of writing and a stimulation of his musical ideas.³

³ Christoph Wolff, *The new grove dictionary of music and musicians*, Last ed. (Oxford: 2019)

During the investigation, I faced interesting challenges which solving them was not less useful than the research itself.

The Kamancheh

The Kamancheh (derived from the Persian words *Kaman*, “bow” or “arc”, and *cheh*, little, (a diminutive suffix) is a type of fiddle found throughout the area stretching from China to North Africa. The instrument's name varies from region to region (e.g., *kamange*, *saz-e Keshmiri*, *joze*, *ghiczak*, etc.), as does its shape (it can be spherical or cylindrical and have an open or closed back). The Iranian classical kamancheh has a spherical shape, its bridge resting on the surface of the soundbox covered by a membrane of animal skin. The soundbox has no standard size and can be made entirely from one piece of wood or from many ribs. Its rounded body, made from different kinds of wood (e.g., mulberry, walnut, oak, or maple), has a spike on bottom to support the instrument. The kamancheh's four metal strings are generally tuned in fourths or fifths. The instrument is held vertically and the bow, made of horsehair, moves horizontally, with the performer rotating the instrument when he or she moves from one string to another.

There is no historical evidence of the kamancheh prior to the 9th century, when mention of a bowed instrument first occurs in Persia and China. Fritz Kuttner believes that the bow itself entered China via Persian and Mongolian sources in the 9th century. The first indication of the presence of bowed instrument in Europe is found in Spanish manuscripts of the 10th and 11th centuries.

The philological root of the instrument creates an ambiguity among the scholars to suggest that kamancheh may belong to the pre-Islamic era in Iran. Even the chance of such a connection is possible, however, lack of enough documents hitherto prevents us to make a clear suggestion about the root of pre-Islamic kamancheh in Iran. In this respect the argumentation among the three European scholars (Dr. Unvalla, Farmer and Sachs) during the 1930s can shed light on some question about the existence of such an instrument in pre-Islam Iran.⁴

In modern times, particularly from the 19th century to the mid-1970s, the kamancheh has been overshadowed by the popularity of the western violin. As a result, the repertoire of the instrument, along with its technical and expressive capabilities, have remained under-explored. Bagher Khan and Hossein Khan, two outstanding Kamancheh players at the beginning of the 20th century, and Ali Asghar Bahari in recent years, all tried to bring the kamancheh out of its seclusion. Their romantic style of performance has in turn been replaced since the 1970s by technically brilliant and varied style of young generation exploring new, colorful directions in the classical repertoire. The new generation of kamancheh players in Iran are keeping the heritage and the musical tradition of this instrument intact. After the revolution in Iran (1978), lack of sympathy with the western music and propaganda in favor of traditional music heritage on the other hand, attracted some of the younger generation to instrument of kamancheh. These artists are just beginning to tap the potential of this versatile instrument.

⁴ Mohsen Hajarian, “The Kamancheh,” *Mahoor Journal* 10 (2004): 94.

Short description about Iranian Music Theory and Structure

Dastgāhi System (mode categorizing)

Whilst it is clearly not possible to present a detailed introduction to *musiqi-e assil*⁵ here, nor to examine aspects of the tradition such as learning processes and performance contexts (for which the reader is referred to Zonis, *Persian Classical Music*, During, *La musique iranienne*, and Farhat, *The Dastgāh Concept*), for the purposes of this discussion it is necessary for the reader to have some understanding of the terms *Radif*, *Dastgāh* and *Gusheh*.

During the Qajar dynasty, the old modes were restructured and “*Dastgāh*” system was developed. The modes were replaced by twelve “*Dastgāh*” s. *Dastgāh* has also its own treasury of melodies, each is called “*Gusheh*”. These *Gushehs* are sub-divisions of *Dastgāh*. There are different sorts of *Gusheh*: Some of them are only distinguishable melodies. They can be metric or non-metric. These *Gushehs* are called “*Melodic type Gushehs*” and usually spans only four or five tones. The other sort is called “*Modal Gusheh*”. A *Modal Gusheh* introduces a new mode within *Dastgāh* and serves as a model for improvisation. Generally, *Gushehs* are played in an order which fills the lower, middle, and upper portions of *Dastgāh*'s area. It should be noted that *Dastgāh*'s domain is not based on eight-note scale. So, the melody does not follow the circular habit of octave system. Different *Gushehs* are bound together by melodic fragments known as “*Forud*”s, which inevitably resolve to the final part of *Dastgāh*.

Usually, a *Gusheh* consists of some melodies which are modally connected and in most of cases these melodies benefit from the same theme. Some *Gushehs* introduce new mode within *Dastgāh* and some of them are only categorized based on a typical and remarkable melody which can be distinguished by the listener. *Zābol* is one of the *Gushehs* from *Dastgāh-e-segāh* which presents a new mode itself. Of course, it is not totally new mode, but the same mode with the new modal center. To better understand you can imagine *Dastgāh-e-segāh* as Ionian (Major) mode and *zābol* as Dorian mode.

⁵ *Musiqi-e assil* literally means ‘pure music’ or ‘noble music’ and is also known as *musiqi-e sonnati* (‘traditional music’). It is generally referred to outside Iran as Persian (or Iranian) classical music, but I prefer to use local terminology, particularly since in Iran the term ‘classical’ (klasik) denotes Western classical music. Most English-language writings refer to this music as ‘Persian’ classical music, and it is true that the music is historically rooted in Persian culture. However, over recent decades the music has broadened in scope and has come to be widely regarded as a national music (although the Persian associations are still strong). In Iran, this music is described as Irani (‘Iranian’), and I follow this here. For background information on *musiqi-e assil*, including the history of the music, the reader is referred to Ella Zonis, *Persian Classical Music: An Introduction* (Cambridge, MA, 1973); Jean During, *La musique iranienne: Tradition et évolution* (Paris, 1984); and Hormoz Farhat, *The Dastgāh Concept in Persian Music* (Cambridge, 1990). To clarify the distinction between ‘Iranian’ and ‘Persian’, the former indicates nationality, whilst the latter refers to the largest ethnic/linguistic group in Iran. Iran was of course called ‘Persia’ by Europeans and others for many centuries, but ‘Iran’ has been the internationally recognized name for the country since 1936 (and has been the local name for at least 2,500 years).

As explained earlier, the Radif is the complete canonic repertory of musiqi-e assil, memorized precisely over many years (usually in a number of related versions), and this knowledge forms the basis for later creative performance. The Radif itself comprises 12 Dastgāhs, which are collections of modally related pieces known as Gushehs. The number of individual Gushehs varies according to the Dastgāh, but there are usually between 25 and 30 Gushehs in each Dastgāh. An improvised performance usually remains within one Dastgāh, although there is a technique known as morakab navāzi in which musicians use modally related Gushehs as 'bridges' to move between Dastgāhs. In performance, musicians select and present a number of Gushehs from the chosen Dastgāh. The length of a performance depends on a number of factors including context, the number of Gushehs selected and the extent of the musician's improvisations. Typically, nowadays, a performance will last somewhere between 30 minutes and an hour. Whilst performances may include 'precomposed' ensemble compositions, particularly at the beginnings and ends of performances, the discussion of this article will focus on the central section, known as āvāz (literally 'voice', 'song', a term used to refer to both vocal and instrumental renditions), which is usually performed solo (or with a vocalist accompanied by a solo instrumentalist) and generally constitutes the main part of any performance. In the case of ensemble performances, instrumentalists usually take it in turn to play solo and to accompany the vocalist (where there is one) in the āvāz section.⁶

A useful analogy to the Dastgāh/Gusheh relationship is the series of modally related pieces in a Baroque suite. However, a Dastgāh performance also involves a gradual rise in pitch (through the progressively higher tonal center of each successive Gusheh), with the music reaching a pitch climax towards the end of the performance before returning to the opening 'home' mode of the Dastgāh at the end. Therefore, a complete Dastgāh performance is usually 'arch-shaped' in contour.⁷

A brief explanation of the structure of improvisation in Iranian music

One of the most important sources of improvisation in Iranian music is "Iranian Music Radif".

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The Constituent materials of "Radif" are one of the important sources for musicians in improvisation, which they use as a Motif or Theme, using various techniques, such as repetition, changing the length of the notes, reduction, and other development techniques, to make numerous variations of this theme or motif. Then they go to the next material that may have been taken from another source and try to create a new presentation of that musical idea; or rarely, they create a material that has never existed in the repertoire of Iranian music.

⁶ Laudan Nooshin, "Improvisation as other," *ROYAL MUSICAL ASSOCIATION* 128 (2003): 242-296

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Laudan Nooshin, "Improvisation as other," *ROYAL MUSICAL ASSOCIATION* 128 (2003): 242-296

Characteristically, improvisation perpetually shifts between precomposed musical ideas and those conceived in the moment. . . . This cyclical process of generation, application, and renewal occurs at every level of music making.⁹

But the concept of improvisation should be considered relative anyway, because listeners, even experts, are rarely able to judge the extent of a performance, and even less so, the degree of spontaneity.¹⁰

Overemphasis on the spiritual element of Iranian music and Radif that cannot be taught has left many aspects of Iranian music unreachable, unintelligible, and unintuitive.

Therefore, the position of improvisation in Iranian thought and music is spiritual.¹¹

Yet, despite many similarities between the techniques that an Iranian musician uses in his improvisation and the standard techniques of development, no attempt has been made to nominate or even collect and classify these techniques for educational instructions of improvisation in Iran.

Iranian musicians do not isolate this branch of theory, and they do not teach it formally... the student simply absorbs the compositional procedures without being aware of them as such... For this reason, a musician is often unable to explain precisely what he is doing during his improvisation.¹²

Research on improvisation, for several reasons, has addressed only the materials and elements of "Radif", even though many other sources are widely used in such performances. We try to explore the materials and elements that Iranian musicians utilize to create both improvised and pre-made music. These elements and materials come from "Radif" and other sources such as Folk music, religious music "*Taziye*"¹³ and the music of the neighboring tribes which origin from the same source with Iranian Music "*musiqi-e Dastgāhi*".

⁹ Paul Berliner, *Thinking in jazz: the infinite art of improvisation* (1st. ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994)

¹⁰ Jean During, *La tradition en question* (3rd. ed. Geuthner, 2010)

¹¹ Majid Kiyani, "Improvisation in dastgahi music of Iran," *MAHOOR* 20 (2018): 145-156

¹² Ella Zonis, *Persian classical music: an introduction* (3rd. ed. Cambridge: University of Illinois Press, 1973)

¹³ Ta'zieh or Ta'ziye or Ta'zīya or Tazīa or Ta'ziyeh, (Arabic: تعزية, Persian: تعزیه, Urdu: تعزیه) means comfort, condolence, or expression of grief. It comes from roots aza (عزو and عزى) which means mourning. Depending on the region, time, occasion, religion, etc. the word can signify different cultural meanings and practices:

· In Persian cultural reference it is categorized as Condolence Theatre or Passion Play inspired by a historical and religious event, the tragic death of Hussein, symbolizing epic spirit and resistance.

· In South Asia and in the Caribbean, it refers specifically to the Miniature Mausoleums (imitations of the mausoleums of Karbala, generally made of coloured paper and bamboo) used in ritual processions held in the month of Muharram.

Ta'zieh, primarily known from the Persian tradition, is a shi'ite Muslim ritual that reenacts the death of Hussein (the prophet Muhammad's grandson) and his male children and companions in a brutal massacre on the plains of Karbala, Iraq in the year 680 A.D. His death was the result of a power struggle in the decision of control of the Muslim community (called the caliph) after the death of the Prophet Muhammad.

Today, we know of 250 Ta'zieh pieces. They were collected by an Italian ambassador to Iran, Cherulli, and added to a collection which can be found in the Vatican Library. Various other scripts can be found scattered throughout Iran.

Tuning system of Iranian music

Iranian music is based on the tuning system that has been developed by Abu Nasr Al-Farabi (Alpharabius)¹⁴, Avicenna¹⁵, Ishaq al-Mawsili¹⁶, Safi al-Din al-Urmawi¹⁷, Abd al-Qadir Maraghi¹⁸ and Qutb al-Din al-Shirazi¹⁹. This system has been built on Pythagoras' ²⁰ tuning system and it does not follow the equal temperament tuning system.²¹

Method

The method chosen is divided in four stages:

- 1- Memorizing materials
- 2- Transcribing materials.
- 3- Analysis.
- 4- Playing and experimenting with selected materials from the transcription.

Memorizing Materials: In the traditional method mimicking what the teacher perform is the core of the learning process. The pupil learns how to play by means of imitating his/her teacher. This procedure has been the core of my investigation as well. Through the years many musicians have used this method to improve their performance practice or to convey a special musical concept to their students. Musicians spend a lot of their time memorizing a special piece of music that their idol has performed and try to imitate in detail and with all its intricacy. Sometimes a music teacher forces his/her student to copy a piece that a master has played. Not only for learning that special piece but also in order for the piece and its details to influence the student.

Transcribing materials: The big difference has been the depth and profundity of the mimicking. I did not tend to only memorize a specific piece of music but also tried to go through it by using the transcribing method. In this method, Western Classical Notation has been used. Although I had to borrow signs from the Iranian method of music notation which is like western

Originally, Ta'zieh dramas, like other Western Passion Plays, were performed in a public arena, allowing large audiences to convene.

¹⁴ Born c. 872 AD– died between December 950 and January 951 AD

¹⁵ Born c. 980 AD – died June 1037 AD

¹⁶ Born 766 AD in Rey, Iran - died 889 AD in Baghdad, Iraq

¹⁷ Born c. 1216 AD in Urmia, Iran, died 1294 AD in Baghdad, Iraq

¹⁸ Born middle of 14th AD – died 1435 AD

¹⁹ Born October 1236 AD in Kazerun, Iran – died 7 February 1311 AD in Tabriz, Iran

²⁰ Born c. 570 BC – died c. 495 BC

²¹ References for further study about tuning system in Iranian music:

Hormoz Farhat, *The dastgah concept in Persian music* (Cambridge University Press, 1990)

Ella Zonis, *Persian classical music: an introduction* (3rd. ed. Cambridge, 1973)

Introduction written by Mehdi Barkeshli for: *The Radif of Iranian Music*. The specification of this book is listed as below: Jean During, *Le Répertoire-Modèle de la Musique Iranienne: Radif de tar et de setar de Mirza 'Abdollah: version de Nur 'Ali Borumand*, trans. Pirouz Sayar (Tehran: Soroush Multimedia Corporation, 1991)

music notation or in some cases invented some signs to transcribe the music I wanted to work on. Fortunately, most of the signs have been standardized in Iranian music in recent years.

Analysis: As I mentioned what I have done was not limited just to mimicking the phrase, but also, I wanted to act more profoundly. The next step was to analyze the chosen phrase. By using the word “Analysis” I do not mean something like “Schenkerian analysis” or similar items. However, my analysis has been like that part of “Schenkerian analysis” which is looking for Themes, Variations, development, and the relevance amongst motives, etc. By using a transcribed version of the music, these relations between elements are easier to grasp. This method of analysis is more of a personal method and is about understanding the various dimensions of written music. In this method, I have tried to clarify the theme and its variations, the development of the melody, and the relationship among the motifs. This kind of analysis gives the musician an overview of the music that is going to be re-performed.

Playing and experimenting with selected materials from the transcription: And the last step has been to play the selected phrase, both exactly as it is and besides that based on my own interpretation of this specific phrase. In the first part of the thesis which exclusively investigates Iranian music, correct performance of the embellishments in my rigid performance and having a relevant interpretation of the ornaments in my freer performance play important roles. The goal has been to bring all the ornaments and embellishments in my own practice. In this procedure, I benefit from the way these masters develop their melody and learn their method of development.


Sometimes I had to perform several interpretations of a particular piece. It is natural that passing the time changes the musician's perception and feeling towards the piece. Therefore, it led to different performances of a certain piece which I had to choose among them.


Note on the music transcriptions


In transcribing the music from performance into notation I have used a modified form of staff notation with the aim of conveying the sound of the music as closely as possible to the reader. Unmeasured sections are notated without bar lines or note stems, both of which would be redundant. Instead, the horizontal layout of the pitches and the phrase markings indicate relative lengths of sustained pitches and rests. However, it should be noted that this is not a time-based notation. A transcriber clearly works according to his or her analytical needs, and since the focus of this study was not the temporal aspects of the music, the system used served the current analytical purposes adequately.


To avoid struggling with many variable parameters, all the examples have been chosen with the same mode “*Segāh*” which is one of the *Dastgāhs*. Most of them remains in the domain of *Zābol* which has been presented before.


All examples are notated using the treble staff, and the following additional symbols are also used (some of these following conventional five-line staff notation symbols):


 **koron**, approximately a quarter-tone flat (for example, A-koron lies between A_b and A₄).


 **riz** (tremolo). This is the only use of note stems in the unmeasured sections of music.


 a pitch which is slightly sharp or flat.


(a)  **phrase markings** used to indicate (a) the relative (approximate) duration of pitches and (b) the phrasing and grouping of pitch patterns by musicians.

(b) 

 **dorāb**, (sometimes is indicated with $\hat{\wedge}$) an ornamental pattern, often found at the beginnings of phrases, particularly on *tār* and *setār*.

 a slide between two pitches in which the intermediate pitches are not clearly individually discernible.

(●) or  a very faint pitch may be indicated in parentheses.

 pause between phrases are indicated using a comma.

Whilst there is no concept of standard pitch in musiqi-e assil, Segāh is usually notated with either E-koron or A-koron as the shāhed (tonal center) of the darāmad (main opening melody). For ease of comparison, all the examples in this article have been notated with A-koron as the shāhed of the darāmad. The actual pitch of the shāhed (of the darāmad) is indicated in square brackets at the beginning of each example.

Practical Part

In this section, I focus more on the practical implementation of the mentioned method. Two prominent masters of Iranian music have been selected. I selected a part of a performance from each of these masters and worked on it. In this chapter, two experiments are presented and discussed. The first is an Improvisation by a great Iranian santoor player, Parviz Meshkatian and the second experience is done on an improvisation by a great Tar player, Jalil Shahnaz.

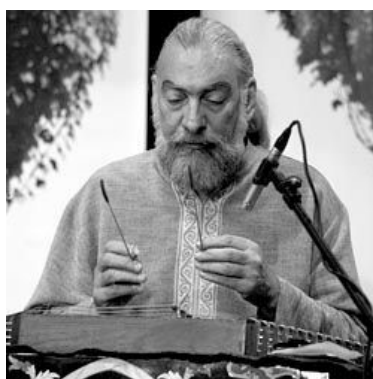
Parviz Meshkatian`s Improvisation (Originally played on the Santoor)

Who is Meshkatian?

I started with transcribing a recorded performance by Parviz Meshkatian a great composer and Santoor²² player and improviser. The transcription is as follow and the audio recording has also been provided.

Parviz Meshkatian (May 15, 1954 - September 21, 2009) was an Iranian composer, musician, university lecturer, researcher, and Santoor player. He was also familiar with playing the Setar (Another Iranian plucked instrument). Meshkatian was born in Nishapur. He entered the Tehran Academy of Arts, where he studied music theory and was introduced to the Radif (the Persian classical music repertoire) by the masters Nour Ali Boroumand, Dariush Safvat, Mohammad Taghi Massoudieh, and Mehdi Barkeshli. He focused on the “Radif of Mirza Abdollah²³” for the Santoor and the Setar.

Meshkatian was one of the founding members of the Aref Ensemble, founded in 1977, as well as the Sheyda Ensemble. He was also one of the founding members of the Chavosh Artistic and Cultural Foundation. The Chavosh foundation has played a major role in the development of Iranian music for a few decades.²⁴



²² The Santur (also santūr, santour, santoor) (Persian: سننور, is a hammered dulcimer of Iranian or Mesopotamian origins.

²³ The radifs of Mirza Hossein-Qoli and Mirza Abdollah are the oldest radifs which are still in use for many students who wish to carry on learning Persian music. They are very famous as they consisted of many melodies collected from that time and before.

²⁴ Parviz Meshkatian Official website <https://web.archive.org/web/20160418222743/http://www.meshkatian.org/>

Santoor as an Iranian musical instrument

Santoor is an Iranian stringed instrument. It is a trapezoidal instrument that has many strings and is played with two little wooden hammers. The most common type of the Santoor has 72 strings, which are divided into groups of four and it has 18 bridges.²⁵ Every four strings tuned in the same tone and lay on the same bridge. In the most popular kind of Santoor, 27 different notes are playable.

The Santoor is played with two thin sticks called "mezrab". In the past, the mezbabs were without felt or muffler, but now they attach more felt to the mezbabs, which makes the sound of the Santoor softer and smoother. In the past, both hands worked together to play a single melody, but now in some pieces which have been composed by a new generation of Iranian composers each hand plays a different melody and the performer has to play two different melodies at the same time. For this reason, playing this instrument, besides the agility of the hands, also requires concentration of the mind, which can only be achieved with a lot of training and practice. This instrument can play very fast and quick melodies and arpeggios easily and agilely. Of course, performing arpeggios and chords in its traditional context was less common.

The tuning of the Santoor is fixed due to the large number of strings and the difficulty in changing the tuning of every single string. Because of that, changing the tuning is not very common in this instrument. For this reason, it is considered as a reference instrument in an ensemble and usually, the other instruments of the ensemble are tuned based on the tuning of the Santoor. It is sometimes said that the Santoor has the same role in Iranian music as the piano in Western classical music, the reference instrument.



(Listen to the file²⁶ which is named: Parviz Meshkatiyan.mp3. The transcription is provided on the next page)

²⁵ *Dehkhoda Dictionary Encyclopedia online*, s.v. “سنتور,” accessed June 15, 202, <https://dehkhoda.ut.ac.ir/fa/dictionary/186383/سنتور>

²⁶ Parviz Meshkatiyan *Duet for santur and tombak in segah mode* (Music Album. Chahar Bagh Bang, 1982)

Transcription and audio file

Segah, Zabol

Parviz Meshkatiyan
Santoor player, composer & improviser

u

u'

v

3 → phrase extended using (u)

u

u'

u

8

w

3 → 1

My interpretation and improvisation based on selected music (Audio file)

(Watch the video which is named: My Interpretation based on Meshkatian`s performance.mp4.)

Here I have played my interpretation based on Meshkatian`s playing. In this video I have tried to be loyal to what he has played, and I have not added too much of my interpretation. I tried to make a variation just by altering ornaments and embellishments and the whole structure has been remained untouched.

Challenges and adopted techniques on Kamancheh

Now I am in the middle of the way of mastering this piece and I will have a short reflection on how it works, for instance my experience of implementation Santoor ornaments on the Kamancheh. However, my previous experience stated that almost all ornaments can be translated to my instrument.

Reflection

I tried to memorize and play it over and over. But at the same time transcribing as exact as possible. As an outcome, this procedure helped me to be aware of microscopic and macroscopic aspect of this music. As an example, the very tiny ornaments as well as how Meshkatian has structured his phrases and his music. After a while because of high awareness, the way of using ornaments and structuring music will become part of my musical practice and I will be able to use this style freely in its pure sense or in the mixed style, both in my compositions and improvisations.

Jalil Shahnaz's Improvisation (Originally played on the Tar)

Who is Shahnaz?

Jalil Shahnaz was one of the greatest maestros of Persian classical music and a legend in playing the Tar. He was born in 1921 in Isfahan, Iran, and was a member of "Persian Music Maestros Ensemble". In 2004, he was selected as a permanent figure in art and music. He cooperated with the "Golha" radio program from the very beginning. Golha was a popular and famous radio program whose aim was to help the Iranian traditional music being heard by all the Iranian people.



Tar as an Iranian musical instrument

Tar, (Iranian: "string"), long-necked lute descended from the tanbur of Sāsānian Iran and known in a variety of forms throughout the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Its name traditionally signified the number of strings employed—e.g., dutār ("two-strings"), setār ("three-strings"), and cartār ("four-strings")—but this is no longer true, as the sitar of India has up to seven strings. The body of the tar is hollowed out of a single piece of wood and is rounded out in two bulges so that the membrane-covered belly is like a figure 8 or hourglass. The instrument, which is played with a small metal pick, has movable frets and lateral pegs for the metal strings that are rib-fastened. The word tar is also a generic term for Middle Eastern tambourines.²⁷



(Listen to the file²⁸ which is named: Jalil Shahnaz.mp3. The transcription is provided on the next page)

²⁷ *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, s.v. "Tar, musical instrument," accessed February 27, 2009, <https://www.britannica.com/art/tar-musical-instrument>.

²⁸ Jalil Shahnaz *MOOYE and Segah* (Music Album. Chahar Bagh Bang, 1986)

Transcription and audio file

مؤسسه آموزش عالی علمی - کاربردی موسیقی
وابسته به وزارت فرهنگ و ارشاد اسلامی

① \wedge - اظہارِ باخوبیت این صفت

② α - سبک یا پیچک

③ \circ - تکرار یا تکرار

④ \sim - زین

⑤ vib - ویبریشن (مروارید)

⑥ \wedge - اظہارِ باخوبیت این صفت

⑦ α - سبک یا پیچک

⑧ \circ - تکرار یا تکرار

⑨ \sim - زین

⑩ vib - ویبریشن (مروارید)

⑪ \wedge - اظہارِ باخوبیت این صفت

⑫ α - سبک یا پیچک

⑬ \circ - تکرار یا تکرار

⑭ \sim - زین

⑮ vib - ویبریشن (مروارید)

⑯ \wedge - اظہارِ باخوبیت این صفت

⑰ α - سبک یا پیچک

⑱ \circ - تکرار یا تکرار

⑲ \sim - زین

⑳ vib - ویبریشن (مروارید)

㉑ \wedge - اظہارِ باخوبیت این صفت

㉒ α - سبک یا پیچک

㉓ \circ - تکرار یا تکرار

㉔ \sim - زین

㉕ vib - ویبریشن (مروارید)

㉖ \wedge - اظہارِ باخوبیت این صفت

㉗ α - سبک یا پیچک

㉘ \circ - تکرار یا تکرار

㉙ \sim - زین

㉚ vib - ویبریشن (مروارید)

㉛ \wedge - اظہارِ باخوبیت این صفت

㉜ α - سبک یا پیچک

㉝ \circ - تکرار یا تکرار

㉞ \sim - زین

㉟ vib - ویبریشن (مروارید)

⋯

The transcription of this piece is done by my brother, Farzad Saremi who is a Tar player and musician. I got the help of him to write down special Tar techniques more accurately.

My interpretation and improvisation based on selected music (Audio file)

(Listen to the file which is named: My interpretation based on Shahnaz's performance.mp3)

In this recording, I tried to imitate his playing as exactly as it is.

Challenges and adopted techniques on Kamancheh and Reflection

My challenge was to mimic the effect of ornaments and to add these embellishments to the treasure of my own techniques. Sometimes I was struggling with the number of them as well.

Reflecting on challenges which I faced during the procedure made me aware of another aspect of the music which is very determinative. During all these years I had not realized that although I was trying to imitate a tone from another instrument, the produced note can never be the same because of my instrument's sound quality which is called "Timbre".

*Timbre*²⁹

Timbre is mostly about the structure of the overtones, which is unique for each instrument, and something you modify when you are playing. For example, by varying the pressure and the speed of bow. In here, the attack and decay mostly have a definitive role in our discussion. Sound of different instruments, synthesizer patches, and vocalists are made of different structure of overtones, contributing to the timbre of the sound they produce. This can account for the difference between two singers performing the exact same cantata.

This term describing the tonal quality of a sound; a clarinet and an oboe sounding the same note at the same loudness are said to produce different timbres. Timbre is a more complex attribute than pitch or loudness, which can each be represented by a one-dimensional scale (high–low for pitch, loud–soft for loudness); the perception of timbre is a synthesis of several factors, and in computer-generated music considerable effort has been devoted to the creation and exploration of multi-dimensional timbral spaces.³⁰

This concept is tightly connected with different techniques that are playable on one instrument. These techniques can be explained under the "Sonic Envelop" topic. A sound's sonic envelope alters the listener's perception of timbre. Sonic envelope consists of four factors: attack, decay, sustain and release (sometimes abbreviated as ADSR).

²⁹ For further study refer to:

Isabella Van Elferen, *Timbre Paradox, Materialism, Vibrational Aesthetics* (Bloomsbury Publishing Inc 2021)

³⁰ *Grove music Online*, s.v. "Timbre" accessed April 07, 2021,

<https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000027973>

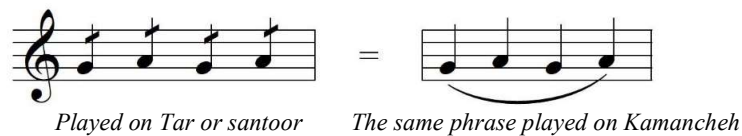
- **Attack** is the time it takes for a note to go from inaudible to its loudest peak.
- **Decay** is the time it takes for a note to go from its peak loudness down to the sustain level.
- **Sustain** is the loudness of the sound's post-peak level, lasting until the player stops sounding the note.
- **Release** is the time it takes for the sound to decay all the way to silence after the instrumentalist stops playing.

ADSR is mostly used in the electronic music and the synthesizer context. For with acoustic instruments perhaps attack and decay are the most important factors, and of course, the sustaining quality of the sound should be considered when we speak about the distinction between instruments, like the violin, and wind instruments, in contrast to percussive instruments, like the Santoor.

These elements determine the sound quality of each instrument. Two instruments of different brands can produce distinct timbres on account of their ADSR envelopes. Even the same instrument can produce multiple sonic envelopes; a violin played pizzicato (plucked) has a faster attack and decay than a violin played arco (with a bow). The variances in playing style affect the physical characteristics of sounds produced by the violin.

Here I want to bring an example that how techniques and timbre could be related together and why I mentioned timbre and performing techniques.

As I begin to imitate, my mind subconsciously converts the tremolo notes on a plucked instrument (riz) into legato and categorizing them into one bow.



On the other hand, single notes on plucked instruments which are called “Tak” would be played as staccato, mezzo staccato, or staccato forzato.



Sometimes depending on the phrase, the notes might sound as detaché or tenuto.



That is because one single note on Tar or Santoor lasts differently from the bowed instrument. When you play a single note on the plucked or hammered instrument the sound can stay for a while depending on the power of the plucking or hammering. But the same note on the bowed instrument like Kamancheh can last forever. So, the character of one single tone on plucked or hammered instruments can vary from a very short note (staccato) to a longer note with an accent in the middle (tenuto) and sometimes with an accent at the beginning of the note (staccato forzato). It means a single note can be heard like that. How you interpret a simple note on a plucked or hammered instrument depends on how familiar you are with that particular music and practical techniques of that particular instrument. However, notes played on plucked instruments or hammered dulcimer are attenuated and damped. That is why most of the time they are simulated with the staccato on the Kamancheh.

Just a hint to the bigger scope

Elucidation

The first goal of mine in starting such a project was to find similarities and differences between elements and techniques that each musical culture uses for expressing itself. As an example, while in jazz music chord progression and coloring the chords by adding extensions of 9s, 11s, and 13s to the chords play important role in this musical culture, in Iranian music, for instance, melody progression and development of the melody is considered the driving engine of the music. By mentioning jazz in here I am referring to standard jazz based on functional harmony.

Iranian music consists of linear successions of musical tones which are combination of pitch, rhythm, and ornaments and decorations that form the motifs, and phrase. Melodies can be symmetric or asymmetric. This kind of music is basically monophonic. So, when the performer wants to develop the music usually thinks horizontally and developed the music in a linear progression. Here, ornaments and embellishments play an essential role in the development, and they are not just something to decorate the melody, but the basic elements to develop the music.

On the contrary, jazz music is homophonic music in which chord progression plays an important role. A jazz musician should always have in mind which chord or mode is now being played. Not getting lost in the Harmony is one of the jazz performers' duties. The concept of the chord is tightly connected with the mode concept in this kind of music. It means it is very common to use II9 in major tonality and call it Dorian which is the name of a mode. That is why for a jazz musician the harmony has superiority over the melody. The harmony is an element that a jazz improviser thinks of before creating the melody.

Why Jazz

I aim to do the same method for learning jazz music. Jazz music is my next interest which I want to focus on. As a start, here comes two pieces of jazz standard repertoire which I played in the mentioned concert.

Why the violin

As I mentioned in the introduction section, I also play the violin. I started my musical education by vocal training and then learning the Kamancheh as my principal instrument. Afterward, I started learning the classical violin. These instruments have always been my favorite instruments since childhood. During six years, I learned classical violin from various masters. I also continued to study this instrument at the university of Gothenburg after coming to Sweden. But the main thing is that because of the similarity between the violin and the Kamancheh, both in terms of performance techniques and structure of the instruments, learning the violin has been much easier for me than it normally is. There is also a special way of playing Iranian music on the violin in Iran, which is called "Iranian violin style". In fact, it is very similar to what I play on the Kamancheh.

When I expanded this thesis to the jazz field, I wondered if I could use the violin timbre in my experiment as well. So, I assigned one part of my third semester performance to some jazz pieces. The pieces were played by both Kamancheh and violin.

As it comes in the following sections, although these instruments are similar in some respects, they differ a lot in many other aspects including timbre. Therefore, it was interesting to me that how these instruments would sound differently regarding the context. Especially the Kamancheh which has not been applied so much in a jazz context. That is the reason that I added the violin from here onwards.

[Transcription and audio file](#)

The audio file for the whole concert is provided in the following pages. Here you can listen to some part of my performance. The followings are excerpts from the scores of the mentioned pieces.

(Watch the video which is named: *In a Mellow Tone.mp4*)

In a Mellow Tone

By Duke Ellington
Arranged by Tim Ray

Medium Swing (♩ = 100-110)

mp

4

7

L.H. L.H. p

9 **A** *Reo.* ***

Eb7(13) Bbm7 Eb7(13) AbMa7 Bbm7 Bb7 AbMa7(9) AbMa7

13 Ebmi7 Ebmi(Ma7) Ebmi7 Ab7(b13) DbMa7 Ebmi7 Ebmi7b5 DbMa7 Ab7(b13)

(Watch the video which is named: Black Orpheus.mp4)

Black Orpheus

Words and Music by Luiz Bonfá
and Antônio Carlos Jobim
Arranged by Robert Christopherson

Rubato ♩ = 88

Dmi F#mi7(add11) B7(b13) C

The first system of musical notation for 'Black Orpheus' is in 4/4 time and marked 'Rubato' with a tempo of 88. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a whole note chord of Dmi, followed by a half note chord of F#mi7(add11), a half note chord of B7(b13), and a whole note chord of C. The bass staff provides a simple harmonic accompaniment with quarter notes and half notes.

4 F+ F6 Bmi7b5 E+7

The second system of musical notation continues from the first system. It starts at measure 4 with a whole note chord of F+, followed by a half note chord of F6, a half note chord of Bmi7b5, and a whole note chord of E+7. The treble staff features a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, while the bass staff continues with a steady accompaniment.

7 Gentle Bossa Ami Bmi7b5 E7 Ami Bmi7b5 E7(13) E7(b13)

The third system of musical notation is titled 'Gentle Bossa' and begins at measure 7. It features a series of chords: Ami, Bmi7b5, E7, Ami, Bmi7b5, and E7(13) E7(b13). The treble staff has a melodic line with eighth notes and quarter notes, and the bass staff provides a consistent accompaniment.

11 Ami Dmi7 G7 CMa7 C#o7 A7

The fourth system of musical notation starts at measure 11. The chords are Ami, Dmi7, G7, CMa7, C#o7, and A7. The treble staff continues with a melodic line, and the bass staff maintains the accompaniment.

15 Dmi Ab7 G7 CMa7 Gb7 FMa7

The fifth system of musical notation begins at measure 15. The chords are Dmi, Ab7, G7, CMa7, Gb7, and FMa7. The treble staff continues with a melodic line, and the bass staff maintains the accompaniment.

As I mentioned, under the “Method” title, my investigation consists of four stages. Memorizing materials, transcribing them, analysis and playing and experimenting with selected materials from the transcription. But since this project is more about the improvisation in Iranian music and most of my time have been spent on that part of the project, this part of the thesis is just an indication to what I am going to do in the future. Therefore, I did not go too much in details, like so much I did in the two last parts. However, I did not do it perfunctorily and carelessly.

My performance of these two pieces is more based on my own interpretation of these pieces rather than based on a special performance. I listened to many different performances mostly played on the violin and then tried to perform my interpretation of those which I had heard. In this procedure the transcription taken from the book that is called “BERKLEE JAZZ STANDARDS FOR SOLO PIANO”³¹ was my main source of inspiration. I did not do the transcription but memorized the tunes and tried to analyze these pieces. My analyses were mostly searching the functional harmony in these pieces and finding the form of the tunes.

From my childhood, it was difficult for me to limit myself to any kind of musical genre and I always looked for something new to add to my music or finding a genre in the middle of two known genres. So, I started with classical music and endeavored to use classical harmony in my music. For sure, I was not the first one with that idea, but I tested this idea with harmony from different periods in classical music and added them to my music. The initial tries were awful, and I was so disappointed. It seemed that I wanted to forcefully adjoin and link two different things. But gradually and with more experience in trying different ideas, I could manage it. I guess!

In the following audio file, which is my third-semester final concert, you can hear one Iranian mode (Homayoun) which is accompanied by a 20th-century harmony.

(Watch the video which is named: Homayoun Mode.mp4)

³¹ Robert Christopherson et al., *BERKLEE JAZZ STANDARDS FOR SOLO PIANO*, (Boston: Berklee Press, 2017), 14-19

Homayoun in A (Shushtari)

Farshad Saremi

$\text{♩} = 60$

Kamaneh

Piano

Kam.

Pno.

accel.

a tempo

p

mf

mp

f

My experience of playing jazz was a little different than it supposed to be. I started performing without any background. Of course, this can be a different experience, as it was for me. As I mentioned, as a modal musician, I pay more attention to the beauty and eloquence of the melody

than to other layers of music, harmony, counterpoint and etc. On the other hand, according to the structure, my improvisation should have been based on harmony. This extremely affected my creation. Creating a horizontal succession of tones that is beautiful and smooth and at the same time is taken from the harmony below. This is not something I am good at. Although I had done a lot of studies on harmony, counterpoint, and practical harmony, it was difficult for me to create music based on harmony at the moment. So, I decided to play the improvisational part in two different ways. Once using the score, I had already written based on the chords. Of course, during the performance, I tried to add some ornaments to it. And once using a completely improvised performance based on a given harmony. That is as it should be.

To me, the performance that I played based on a precomposed part was a better result. However, it can no longer be called improvisation, and this is fundamentally against the nature of the music. But this experiment showed me the fact that creating a melody based on harmony is an ability that is not so easy to achieve, and it takes years of practice to create music based on a given harmony. It should be noted that in many cases, in addition to the melody, also selection of harmony is done in the moment, which can make the improvisation process more complicated. Essentially, the improviser of modal music thinks completely different from the improviser who improvises based on the chord progression and the church modes, and they prioritize different topics.³²

In this experiment, I played both the Kamancheh and the violin. I can say that I liked the result in both cases. Performing with a violin, timbre was nothing new. The clear and crystalline sound of the violin made the expression of the phrases very precise and clear, and all the details were recognizable. On the other hand, the penetrating, pervasive, and colorful sound of the Kamancheh, with a twang in its sound, gave the phrases a special taste that was unique. This instrument has not been used so much in this kind of music. But in my opinion, the timbre of this instrument is very suitable and effective for this type of music, and it can be combined with many instruments that are used in this type of music.

The recorded sample is a complete concert. The first piece I played is called “In a Mellow Tone” by Duke Ellington, arranged by Tim Ray from the standard jazz repertoire and then the piece that is named “A piece in Homayoun Mode” composed by me and at the end “Black Orpheus”, the famous jazz piece by Luiz Bonfá and Antonio Carlos Jobim, arranged by Robert Christopherson. Between the first and second pieces, a bit of improvisation based on Iranian music has been performed, which is for showing how an Iranian improvisation sounds. Due to the contrast, two jazz pieces were played on the violin and Homayoun was played on the Kamancheh.

(Listen to the file which is named: Eternity of the moment, The whole concert.mp3)

³² Modal music here does not mean music that is based on the church-modes. To understand the concept of modal music, refer to the content in the same text entitled: Dastgāhi System (mode categorizing).

Tuning system and different parts

At first glimpse, it might seem unsettling for a Kamancheh player to be accompanied by an equally tempered piano. I should mention that it is true to some extent. Since Iranian music is not based on the equal temperament tuning system. But while I was playing alongside with the piano, I did not feel so strange and that might be because of the tiny difference between the intervals which are barely audible. Of course, in Hodayoun piece this collision is intentional.³³

Achievements

The achievements in this project are:

First, as many musicologists and musicians have shown before me, the western classical notation system is not appropriate for transcribing Iranian music. However, it can help a lot to picture the whole idea that a musician has in mind. But in terms of articulation, it cannot express the floating language of Iranian music.

Second, even if you write the music by means of many articulation marks with very high accuracy, the transcribed music will be so complicated to read and perform and at the same time the score will not have a high value. The reason can be the essence and quiddity of Iranian music. This kind of music like many other improvised cultures has floating, fluid and mutable nature. Although, there is a core in every phrase which is its identity and recognizable by the listener, but one of the most important part that is ornaments and embellishments varies in time.

Ornaments in Iranian music do not play only decorative role, but they are part of the melody and its identity. Embellishments are kind of structuring elements of the melodies, and their roles are not by no means less than the melody or rhythm itself.

Third, transcribing the melody should be done according to the instrument which you write for. That is because of the important role of the ornaments, articulation and duration of sounded tone that are totally different on any instrument. For example, a phrase transcribed for the Kamancheh would sound totally different if you want to play all written articulations and ornaments. Transcribed melodies should be used just as the skeleton of the melody and just as the reminder that how the whole phrase would sound and nothing more. It is a big mistake to rely entirely on the scores in improvisational part of the Iranian music.

Forth, imitating, and transcribing method can cooperate shoulder to shoulder and the result can be excellent in learning many oral musical cultures. What you can discover during this traditional learning process is limitless and I am sure that I will use these methods in future for many other tasks as well. They are practical and efficient especially when they combine.

³³ See "Tuning system of Iranian music".

Conclusion

As a conclusion I would mention that I could develop my improvisational and compositional abilities by means of using the traditional method which is based on imitating the masters' music. In this method not only I tried to transcribe, memorize, and then play someone else's phrase but also, I displayed my own interpretation of a specific phrase. In this process, the basic elements of the desired music style should be considered. For example, in Iranian music, ornaments and embellishments play important roles and should be considered as the basic elements.

Finding an appropriate approach to make different techniques and ornaments which can be playable on my instrument was a challenge for me. I had been doing it unconsciously through my whole life, but after doing this project I became more aware of what I used to do.

In the short master period, I could not focus too much on other genres of music, like jazz that has been my life-long dream. But as I could experience, I can distribute my methods to that field. Obviously, I am not a jazzman, but this research will lead me through the bigger scope that I would expect.

What I grasped is that taking the advantage of all techniques and constructing elements should lead me to improve my musical practice regardless of what I focus on. It can be the ornaments structures in Iranian music or a special chord progression in jazz music. The common point in the whole of this project is *How I can improve my music by means of owning the strength of each genre and style.*

This project has brought me questions in two different aspects. First, it made my passion stronger to search different improvisational musical cultures and add their methods of improvisations. Now I am more eager to add these methods to my musical skill. It is always rewarding to learn that how musicians in other cultures use techniques and elements of their own culture and how they convey information to the next generation, how they teach their students to improvise or create music in general.

Second, this project has the potential to develop within itself. I focused only on the non-metric part of Iranian music. On the other hand, I limited myself to a certain mode, which is called Segah. There are too many other modes that can be focused on. It is possible to expand this project in these ways. One can focus more on modes in Iranian music and the metric aspect of this kind of music or expand the research domain to other improvised musical cultures. These two issues are the possibilities for further research.

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Submitted audio- and video files

Parviz Meshkatian.mp3

My Interpretation based on Meshkatian`s performance.mp4

Jalil Shahnaz.mp3

My interpretation based on Shahnaz`s performance.mp3

In a Mellow Tone.mp4

Black Orpheus.mp4

Homayoun Mode.mp4

Eternity of the moment, The whole concert.mp3