

Université de Montréal

Analyse de la Musique de Film Iranien
(Avec un accent sur certains compositeurs contemporains)

Analysis of Iranian Film Music
(With focus on some contemporary composers)

Présenté par
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Unité académique : Faculté de Musique

Mémoire présenté en vue de l'obtention du grade de
Maîtrise - Musique en Composition pour l'écran

August 30th, 2020

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Ce mémoire intitulé

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— International —
Master in Composition
— for Screen

Research paper

2nd cycle (Master)

University year 2019-2020

**Analysis of Iranian film music (with focus on
some contemporary composers)**

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Date of the presentation: October, 2020

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to express my special thanks to my Principal discipline teacher Dr. Stoffel Debuysere for his patience, and immense knowledge. His guidance helped me in all the time for research and writing this thesis.

Second, I pay my deep sense of gratitude to my composition professor Dr. François-Xavier Dupas for all he did for me during this master's degree. Without his continuous encouragement, support and enthusiasm, this study would hardly have been completed. I consider myself fortunate indeed to have had the opportunity to be his student. Also, many thanks to all InMICS members and professors for the opportunity they gave me to study this course.

I am very much thankful to my parents and my brother, for their love, cares and sacrifices for helping me to educate and prepare for my future career. I am extremely grateful to my caring, loving and supportive soulmate Alireza Mohammadkhani, for all his help and for always believing in me, even when I did not believe in myself.

I would also like to thank Amir Hossein Eslami, Leila Khalilzadeh, Khodayar Ghaghani, Katayun Vahedi, Ali Parvizi and Mohammad Hadi Majidi for their help in completing my project and my special thank is for Majid Entezami, Peyman Yazdanian and Mohammadreza Aslani for their time and the opportunity they gave me for the interviews.

In the end, my deepest appreciate is to two inspired women I had the chance to meet during this master's degree, for their kindness, encouragement and support, Sheida Gharachedaghi, the notable Iranian woman composer and Mary Catherine Harris who gave me the opportunity to do my internship with her. Also, thanks to my family members, friends and so many people whose names may not all be enumerated here, whom without their kindness, encouragement, support and love, I couldn't pass this phase of my career easily.

Table of contents

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements 5

Table of contents 7

Introduction 11

I. Film scoring in Iranian cinema:..... 14

A. Birth of cinema in Iran 14

B. Live musics for silent movies : 14

C. 1930_1940 : Early Iranian movies 15

1. Lor girl 16

2. Lor girl's music 16

D. Development of the film industry..... 17

E. Music in the 40s and 50s : 18

1. Bohlul, the first movie with original soundtrack : 19

F. Intellectual cinema : 20

1. Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults:..... 21

G. Vitalization of film scoring : 22

1. Song writing : 22

1. Film Scoring..... 23

2. Iranian Traditional Music 23

3. Sound, a Musical Element: 23

H. Islamic Revolution: 24

1. New Rules for Cinema..... 25

2. Rebirth of Cinema:..... 25

3. Intellectual Cinema after the Revolution: 26

4. Film Music after the Revolution: 26

I. Today's Cinema of Iran : 27

1. Film Music in Today's Cinema of Iran : 27

J. Conclusion : 28

II. Ahmad Pejman: 29

A. A short brief of his Life an and educational background : 29

B. Film scoring: 29

C. Music characteristic: 30

D. Tall Shadows of the Wind (Drama 1979, Bahman Farmanara) : 31

1.	Brief story :	31
2.	Score Analysis:	32
III.	Sheyda Gharachedaghi:	38
A.	<i>A short biography</i> :	38
B.	<i>Film scoring</i> :	38
C.	<i>Music characteristic</i> :	38
D.	<i>Downpour : (Drama/ Romance 1971, Bahram Beyzai)</i> :	39
1.	Brief story :	39
2.	Music :	40
IV.	Majid Entezami:	42
A.	<i>Early life</i> :	42
B.	<i>Becoming a Film composer</i> :	42
C.	<i>Music characteristic</i> :	42
D.	<i>The Scent of Joseph's Shirt (Drama 1995, Ebrahim Hatamikia)</i> :	44
1.	Brief story :	44
2.	Music :	45
V.	Peyman Yazdanian:.....	47
A.	<i>A short biography</i> :	47
B.	<i>Music characteristic</i> :	47
C.	<i>Tale of the Sea (Drama 2020, Bahman Farmanara)</i> :	48
1.	Brief story:	48
2.	Analysis of the Music in Relation to Picture :	49
	Conclusion	51
	Bibliography.....	52
I.	Cited literature:	52
II.	Interviews:	52
	Films cited	53
	Table of illustrations.....	55
	Abstract:	56
	Résumé:	57

Introduction

Nowadays, numerous articles and books are being published on the theoretical foundations of music for the screen, as well as on the analysis and study of the works of great film composers. Every year at various film festivals, there is a section for judging and evaluating, criticizing and analyzing of motion picture soundtracks. Composition for screen can range from processing of ambient sounds to making an orchestral piece of music, which can be played in a variety of categories such as animation, cinema, television, theater, video game, video art, art installation, advertising, and any type of visual media. In this research, among the wide range of music used in different visual mediums, we focus on the analysis of film music in Iranian cinema by analyzing some of the most prominent composers in the current scene of Iran's film scoring.

Music for the screen in Iran has more than 100 years of history, full of influences and movements, radical composers and influential pieces. Almost none of these art pieces are known worldwide and only a handful are studied in the literature. For decades, Iranian cinema has surpassed the country's borders and established a credible status in the international community. However, attention to originality and structure of music for the film is in its infancy in Iran. Furthermore, very little research has been published on this subject most of which are investigations of music in world cinema with brief peeks into music for Iranian cinema.

Creating music for the screen has become a science in the world and contains special techniques from different fields. Lack of attention to the effect of these techniques on the visual arts can strongly affect the resulting piece and there is little information in Iranian music in this area. Therefore, I found it necessary to research this area and with a deep investigation of the growth of music for the film in Iran. I intend to identify, analyze, and compare three generations of composers of music for the film in Iran. I hope this research helps to improve the state of the art in this field and spark further research and interest from the artist community.

Music has many use cases in all forms of media and arts. A majority of music being used for media in Iran has been incorporated in film. Therefore, this research will be dedicated to investigating music for the film in Iran. More specifically, the questions that this research will be answering are as follows:

1. Who are the most prominent composers in the current scene of Iran's music for the screen?
2. What are the main reasons behind their success?

The research method of this research is qualitative and descriptive. The research community consists of many of Iranian composers having different styles of music, who are mentioned in this thesis, and among them we focus on four of the most prominent composers in three generations who have had the most influence on my work as a young composer.

Based on my previous research conducted in the Conservatory of Bologna, I have gathered a considerable archive of scores, pieces and compositions which will also be used in the current research. Prior to my research, to the extent of my knowledge, there have not been any direct investigation of any kind into this subject. Therefore, the possibility of comparison and continuity with current literature is very limited. However, there are a few indirectly related works (in Persian) that have briefly discussed the matter and will be used as references. Furthermore, interviews have been conducted for this thesis and more have been scheduled to take place with composers, artists, filmmakers, critics, and other contributors to the history and the current trend of music for the screen in Iran.

This research aims to bridge the gap between academia and industrial practice in film music in Iranian cinema. Music for the screen in Iran has not the same growth rate as film industry. By analyzing different pieces of music that have been composed for the screen from different time periods and conducting interviews with some of the most prominent and influential composers, this research will provide a deep insight into the history of 100 years of music for the screen in Iran.

The prospect of this project will be the first scientific reference of film Music in Iran to enable composers of the younger generation interested in working in Iranian cinema to better understand their position in this profession and thus influence the process of music development for the image in Iran. It can also be the first step in the formation of educational methods in academia in Iran and is the beginning of the introduction of Iranian composers as the film's composer to the world. Hoping that one day music will

be taught in Iranian universities as a field study in Iran's universities. And Iranian composers can collaborate in international filmmaking projects

In the process of conducting research for this thesis, there have been numerous challenges to overcome. Among those are the lack of written score available, the lack of access to archives of films before the Islamic revolution and severe shortage of literature covering the problem area. Because most of the existing sources are in the form of criticism, it is not clear whether the flaws that they point out about the composer's work are a direct result of the composer's incompetence or are they influenced by the directors' demand. Therefore, parts of this thesis will be quotes from the judgements passed on the work of composers. Thus, although I have done my absolute best to limit error and misjudgment, I cannot guarantee an unbiased view from the point of view of the interviewees and the critics that I quote.

The rest of this thesis is organized as follows. Chapter one elaborates on the history of cinema and the influential factors in it's formation. It also includes a brief analysis of history of film music and its points of strength and weakness. We also discuss different styles of music for film scoring in this period. Chapter two to five are dedicated to each of the four influential composers that we aim to discuss in this thesis. Each of these chapters includes biography, music style and analysis of some of their prominent pieces.

I. Film scoring in Iranian cinema:

A. Birth of cinema in Iran

If we consider the day that the first cinematograph was brought to Iran as the origin of cinema in Iran, it began in the year 1900 when the then king of Iran Mozaffar Eddin Shah ordered Mirza Ebrahim Khan Akkas Bashi, the royal photographer, to bring the first video camera to the country. About a month after the king was introduced to the cinematograph in Ostend Belgium, the festival of flowers in Iran takes place. The king, having bought a cinematograph, gives a speech in front of the cinematograph being operated by the royal photographer. This is first Iranian cinematography in history.

When cinema was introduced in Europe and The United States, five years before it's arrival in Iran, it was a social art with many efforts to attract common people to it as the audience. They used cheap theaters to distribute the interest among people with lower budget. On the contrary, the art became a luxury only available to the royal family and the close relatives when it came to Iran. While the public did not generally trust the government and the royal family, they cast this distrust also on the novelties that were introduced to them by the court of the king. That is why it took many years from the introduction of cinema, to its mass adoption by the Iranian audience.

The first interests in the industry by commoners, from building cinema theaters to making movies and capital investments, came from people with dual citizenships from Russia, India, and Europe, who either made movies or cinema theaters to show foreign movies with personal finance. In many cases, shortage of budget made these projects go bankrupt. Up until 1930, there is no record of any Iranian movie having been created. Very few theaters that were made, showed foreign movies with Persian subtitles.

B. Live musics for silent movies :

Music for the screen on the other hand, has a different story. Although there is no record of showing the Iranian made movies on the screens during the 1920s to 1930s, there are some notes which prove that in Iranian cinemas, like in European, there were different kinds of music accompanied by solo players, music bands and also orchestras which performed behind the screen during the shows. But in general, we do not know what pieces of music were played in cinema halls and what kind of style of music was it. It is

also not clear whether it was Iranian traditional music or western classical music. These pieces of information are missing.

“Later, piano and violin entered the cinema as a new privilege for the audience. Ardeshir Khan added ice cream and tea to them. From the beginning of 1300 (1921).”

Jamal Omid, 1991

One notable cinema theater owner was Ali Vakili who started a brand of chain cinemas called Grand Cinema which was the first cinema to regularly show new films on Wednesdays and Fridays. Vakili also set an orchestra for better entertainment quality and variety. The musicians were supposed to perform Iranian music on the stage in front of the screens to start the show, during the show itself and during the breaks.

On the other hand, Colonel Ali Naghi Vaziri, who was one of the pioneers of composing for the Iranian orchestra and the founder of the Higher School of Music in Tehran established a music theatre school called Music Club in 1923.

In the book *History of Cinema in Iran*, it is noted that “Later, he called the club industrial cinema, and every night an orchestra of students from his music school played the works of Iranian composers in this cinema.”

Jamal Omid, 1991

C. 1930_1940 : Early Iranian movies

Filmmaking activities started to take momentum with the formation of a few filmmaking companies founded by investors. Filmmaking schools also begin to form in this period and specialized institutions that support the industry are realized. Finally, in 1930, The first Iranian movie named *Abi and Robbie* was created by an Armenian-Iranian filmmaker Ovanes Ohanian. After success of the film *Abi and Robbie*, Ohanian started making his second film, *Haji Agha Actor Cinema*, which was produced in 1933.

Both *Haji Agha Actor Cinema* of Ohanian and the film *Revenge of the Brother* directed by Ebrahim Moradi which were produced at the same time were good quality films but their coincidence with production of the first Iranian film with sound technology caused both films to be underappreciated under the shadow of the new film.

1. *Lor girl*

Lor Girl, the first Iranian sound film, was an instantaneous success and the shows were ultimately sold out. In collaboration with Iranian director Ardeshir Irani, Abdolhossein Sepanta, who lived in India in 1933, brought *Lor Girl* to the screen relying on better technology, equipment, and experience of the Indian cinema. Before the screening of this pioneering film, some theaters were equipped with the technology to reproduce sound to show American and European sound films. The problem with these films was that the average Iranian audience could not understand the dialog and therefore, it did not create much interest in the public as was expected. This lack of interest discouraged the investors to bring new sound equipment to their theaters. One key turning point was the screening of a news film about the 11th republic anniversary of Turkey where an Iranian minister gave a speech in Persian. This made the Iranian audience so excited and interested that made the theater owner Grisha Sakvarlidze aspire to screen *Lor Girl*.



Figure 1 : Golnar (Roohangiz Saminejad) in *Lor girl*

A long period of screening *Lor Girl* in the cinema and the huge success that came out of it made it possible to attract more investment and all theaters in the country were equipped with sound technology in a relatively short time. *Lor Girl* had many advantages and was analyzable from different points of view. As the first Iranian sound film, and the first commercial, focused on attracting the common Iranian audience and was well received by them and was also acclaimed by critics. The huge financial success of this product paved the way for more investments in the industry which helped it grow tremendously.

2. *Lor girl's music*

Along with creating the first Iranian sound film, Sepanta's film *Lor Girl*, is also the first Iranian film with film music. The film features both selective classical music and real-time recordings that were performed by the actors on the scene. For example, the main

characters start signing in several scenes and are accompanied by a group of musicians who are part of the scene. The recording of these musical pieces seems to happen on the scene. The method used to record audio in this film, written in Sepanta's own notes, has been described in detail.

“The second truck was specific to moving the sound equipment. The recorders were in this truck that had double-layer walls to prevent outside noise from coming in. It only had an opening to the outside with glass plates on top with markings on them: good, bad, and again. After each recording session, one of these plates would turn on, indicating to the director and the crew on the outside how the quality of the recorded sound was and whether they had to repeat the recording or not. The equipment had an amplifier and many knobs to manipulate pitch and volume with different grade markings. Sound was recorded through a process which turned waves into light and it would be directed at a photosensitive film, similar to photography. The truck contained all the raw material as well as cables and microphones and tripods.”

Jamal Omid, 1991

After *Lor girl*, Spanta made four other films in four years, including *Ferdowsi*, *Shirin and Farhad*, *Black Eyes* and *Layla and Majnun*. All of these films are accompanied by selective Iranian or western classical music.

D. Development of the film industry

The incredible reception of *Lor Girl* by the public, paved the way for a few other Iranian films which were the results of attracting investors to this highly profitable industry. These investments affirmed the prosperity of the industry in Iran in the future. On the other hand, this financial perspective to cinema led the production of many films that were of very little artistic value and were produced only to make profits. This steered the investments away from academics and learned artists and filmmakers. Censorship was also heavily applied from the beginning which further limited the capacity to make movies that upheld the standards of art and quality. Hence, quality did not grow as well as quantity in Iranian filmmaking.

“Iranian cinema made 632 films from 1930 to 1979, the year the Islamic revolution occurred. In this period, 58 studios and 124 filmmakers begin working but, in the end, only 16 studios and 75 filmmakers are able to continue. ”

Jamal Omid, 1991

“When I asked any technicians for help, they wanted money first and told me without any money up front, we will not do anything. That is why I decided to start making this film all by myself. I know that you can not incorporate the artistic style the way you want all by yourself and the movie will not end up the way you meant it to.”

Quote from Aziz Rafeie, Jamal Omid, 1991

In a decade, other than a few low-budget films that made their way into Berlin and Venice film festivals, no significant pieces were made. The onslaught of low-quality repetitive films with no actual aesthetic value distanced the audience from the theaters and bankrupted many film studios. As a result, investors were forced to make fundamental changes to make the industry profitable again.

1950s can be thought of as a decade of reformation and effort to solve the problems of Iranian cinema. As an example, large budgets allocated to overdub foreign movies which exported money outside the industry, were reallocated to production of domestic movies to equip the studios with better technology. This made the creation of a variety of movie genres possible such as action, drama, crime, romance, and historical epics.

Gradually, the Iranian cinema was revitalized by the professionals who brought new filmmaking techniques according to the world cinema standards of that time. Films like *A Party in Hell* 1956, directed by Samuel Khachikian, and *Broken Spell* 1958, by Siamak Yasemi, were the initiators of this trend. These films were different from the mainstream in both technique and content. They both entered the 9th Berlin international film festival.

E. Music in the 40s and 50s :

Since singing was an inseparable component of many Iranian films in this period, musicians participating in the projects are either singer or song writer. In all of the documents remaining from the movies of this time, until 1957, there are no mentions of any original film composer. When a filmmaker decided that some parts of their movie

required some music, they usually used classic western music, traditional Indian or Arabic music, or pieces by contemporary composers of that time such as Ali-naqi Vaziri, Darvish Khan, and Ruhollah Khaleqi. These pieces were either copied from existing records or performed again by the national orchestra.

Regarding selective music, there have been much criticism that shows in many cases the filmmaker did not have enough knowledge about the function of music for the screen. One important remark is that the western classic music was alien to the Iranian community back then and since the stories and characters were all coming from the community itself, the audience could not make a logical relation between what they saw and the music they heard. This logical inconsistency had a deep negative impact in the overall structure of the movie in some cases. In essence, not only this kind of music did not help the progress of the story and character developments, but also it created an alien atmosphere that would confuse the audience.

Another issue was that lack of sufficient knowledge about western classic music led to all filmmakers using a limited supply of pieces. As a result, the music was not synchronized with the picture. Furthermore, the chosen pieces did not have the same expression as the pictures and the story. For example, where a screen is showing thrilling events, the music is not supporting the picture's theme. Another problem is that in this period, the sound volume of music relative to effects and dialog is irritatingly high, so much that it sometimes prohibits clear understanding of dialog and words.

1. Bohlul, the first movie with original soundtrack :

Bohlul, 1957 directed by Sadegh Bahrami. Is the first film in history of Iranian cinema that has an original film composer. *Bohlul* has two types of music heard. One is the realistic music which is visually sung, dance, or played on the screen. This includes 18 pieces of traditional Iranian music of various composers. Second is the original scores which are written by Morteza Hannaneh who was later dubbed father of the Iranian film scoring.

Hannaneh is a composer, researcher, and a graduate of the Vatican music institute. He has scored more than 30 movies and television series. Since traditional music and the Iranian regional music, is monophonic and follows the forms of heterophony, Hannaneh believed that we can gradually train the audience's ears to polyphonic music. His music

is a combination of western classical music composition structures such as music harmony, counterpoint, musical form, and orchestration, with the traditional structures of Iranian music.

By using musical modes that were close to Iranian music, Hannaneh made a balance in his pieces that created an eastern atmosphere. In some parts of the score of Bohlul, transition from European modes to Iranian Dastgah. Iranian Dastgahs are closely related to western music modes with quarter tones, Sori and Koron (Figure 2&3). Composers who wanted to arrange their pieces for western instruments, use a tempered version of these scale. In the works of Hannaneh and many other Iranian composers we see examples of this temperament.



Figure 2 : 1/4 pitch up in Persian music, called "Sori"

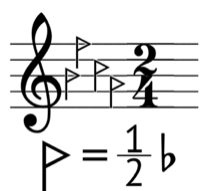


Figure 3 : 1/4 pitch down in Persian music, called "Koron".

F. Intellectual¹ cinema :

The final years of the 60s can be thought of as the golden years of cinema. Intellectual cinema is born in these years. The new generation of intellectual filmmakers, contrary to the previous ones, did not shoot their philosophical view directly to face of the audience because they believed most viewers thought of cinema as entertainment and do not possess the cultural capacity to receive a rather unknown message. These filmmakers

¹ Intellectual cinema is known as the New Wave in Iranian cinema, but in order not to confuse this movement with the New Wave in the cinema of Europe, the term intellectual cinema has been used in this thesis.

conveyed their views and social ideas using finance and facilities of the industrial cinema with an expression familiar to the audience.

The year 1969 is a turning point of cinema in Iran. In this year two films were screened: *Qeysar* by Masoud Kimiaei, and *The Cow* by Daryush Mehrjui, which were pioneers and were later the origin of many structural reformations.

Gheysar is a movie with a social approach that presented the forerunner form of heroism and *The Cow* is a structuralist piece of art with a tragic surrealistic storytelling, far away from the mainstream, demonstrating a new type of filmmaking. After receiving the FIPRESCI award in Venice 1971, it found its way into other festivals such as Cannes, London, Berlin, Mosco, Los Angeles and Chicago, and was well received by the viewers. Ezzatollah Entezami received the best actor award of Chicago for his role.

The two films were received very well by domestic and foreign critics and pioneered the intellectual cinema in Iran. From this point forward, the Iranian cinema is divided into three categories: industrial cinema, intellectual cinema, and Third Front, which is a combination of the other two.

1. Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults:

Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young better known as Kanoon is an Iranian institution with a wide range of cultural and artistic activities in the field of mental and cultural development for children and young adults.

The formation of Kanoon in 1969 created an opportunity for content rich cinema in Iran. The investments in Kanoon made by UNICEF to produce movies for children also enriched the cultural level of Kanoon. The cultural movement formed by the filmmakers of Kanoon together with considerable disinterest of the audience in industrial and poor content films, especially among the younger generations and the more educated people, were the forces that powered a new flow in Iranian cinema between 1970 and 1978. Bahram Beizaei, Abbas Kiarostami, Khosrow Sinai, Kamran Shirdel, Dariush Mehrjui, Nasser Taghvai, Ali Hatami, and Amir Naderi were among the key filmmakers who not only laid the foundation to make Iranian cinema visible and considerable in the

international community, but also some of these filmmakers were able to establish a new point of view in artistic cinema internationally.

G. Vitalization of film scoring :

In this period, music composition for film found its place in filmmaking projects and many musicians started to work on film scoring projects. Some of these scores were so influential and well-received that they were later released as albums in the market and their main themes were memorized by the audience.

Following the new generation of intellectual filmmakers, a new generation of music composers were introduced to the industry. Hormoz Farhat, Sheyda Gharachedaghi, Ahmad Pejman, Loris Tjeknavorian, Farhad Fakhreddini, Babak Bayat, Esfandiar Monfaredzadeh, and Varoujan Hakhsbandian were among these musicians. The presence of different composers also brought about the different styles of composition for the screen.

1. *Song writing :*

A large portion of film music in Iran is composed of songs of different genres such as Jazz, Pop, Blues, and in general, western music in combination with Iranian traditional music. Although the use of songs is not technically equal to film scoring, but the widespread use by the filmmakers in the history of Iranian cinema, be it selective music or original, makes it impossible to overlook.

To understand why music in Iranian cinema is so intertwined with songs and vocal music, we should consider the history of Iranian music itself. Most Iranian folklore and traditional music are in the form of songs. Classic Persian poems are at the heart of these pieces to the point that we could say music was viewed as a conduit to help convey the message of the poem. Melody is strong in both vocal and non-vocal pieces and the monophonic and homophonic texture is heard more than the polyphonic texture. Therefore, it is only natural for the Iranian audience to prefer vocal pieces with rich melodies to instrumental polyphonic ones.

Song writing in Iranian cinema had two forms in this period: realistic music, which included the musicians and singers performing in the picture, and original songwriting that did not. Usually in editing, the singing parts were of video clip nature to the point

where environment sounds were removed entirely. Many singers of that time were also actors and they usually sang the songs themselves. They also sometimes released the sound tracks separately in their own music albums.

1. *Film Scoring*

As mentioned before, Morteza Hannaneh and Fouzieh Majd were among the first composers who began working on film scoring but the fame and success of the two movies *The Cow* and *Gheysar* made many believe that *Gheysar* is the first ever original score for a film in Iran. Esfandiar Monfaredzadeh is the music composer of *Gheysar*. He was among the composers who did not have academic knowledge in music but because of the many popular pieces and songs for famous singers of that time, he had gained much fame and credit.

Hormoz Farhat used a completely different approach to write the score for *The Cow*. Farhat was a graduate of Milles college in composition and musicology from UCLA. Much like Hannaneh, he introduced the colors of eastern music to the rules of western music in *The Cow*.

2. *Iranian Traditional Music*

Some composers preferred to use only the traditional Iranian music in their compositions for films. This kind of composition is rarely seen in the history of film music because the structure of Iranian traditional music is more inclined toward songwriting and more or less, they mixed them with western forms, harmony, and orchestration.

3. *Sound, a Musical Element:*

The intellectual generation of filmmakers in Iran believed that any sound including effects, environment sounds, and even voices of the actors were part of the film music. Some even went further and believed music is itself a storyteller and instead of serving the picture, complements it. Mohammadreza Aslani, was among such Iranian filmmakers. One of the unique examples of using sound as a musical element is in his film *The Hassanlou Chalice*. In this movie, close-ups of the shapes drawn on the Hassanlou Chalice (a relic of 1200 B.C.) about the stories of the three gods (god of the earth, god of the sea, and god of the sun), while the storyteller is telling the story of Mansur Al-Hallaj (a 858-922 A.D. Persian mystic, poet and teacher of Sufism), from his book *Tazkirat al-Awliya*, while there are sounds from modern era such as the sound of a train, a car, a

telephone ringing, a clock, and even the voice of Hitler giving a speech and music that was broadcast on the radio during world war 2. In the movie we sometimes hear The Monolog of Time, the first scene of the Opera of The Soul and the Body, by de' Cavalieri (16th century). The filmmaker frees the film from any specific time and location and with just one picture, tells many stories and extends the story of those shapes to the story of humanity.

Aslani believes that any sound can be music and we can see this view in many of his works. The expression of dialog in his works is also musical. He believes that we don't need to hear the environment sounds in synchronization with the picture and sometimes a discrepancy between them can become a new expression.

Many of the intellectual filmmakers don't use music in their work except music that is part of environment such as a travelling musician playing or a radio or television. They believe that music, in its general form, takes the picture away from its realistic atmosphere, while any sound in their movie is in fact music that they use.

H. Islamic Revolution:

Revolutions have always had their influence on art and culture in history but since the Iranian revolution of 1979 was also intertwined with religion, the effect it had on art and culture was deeper. The new regime coined a new term "Cultural Revolution", which in essence, was a means to remove all cultural aspects of human life in Iran that did not agree with their interpretation of Islam. This led to a 3-year shutdown of all universities and the dissolution of many cultural and art centers.

Music and cinema were impacted the worst among arts by this phenomenon. Music is considered forbidden by Islam, so it was confined to only revolutionary songs and religious ceremonies. Many limitations were imposed on musicians and music producers. In the early years after the revolution, there were no written rules of conduct for filmmakers and they were in a disarray. The rules were gradually created according to the ideology of the new regime. They removed concepts such as sex and aggression and essentially, made cinema a means for the propaganda of the regime. They confiscated many theaters and production companies and put strict monitoring on those that were left. As a result, the industry became less and less profitable. Government imposed censorship became a new norm in the wake of the new system and cinema went through its lowest

times in terms of quality and quantity. Film production plummeted because of political instability and the constant change of rules and consequently, investment insecurity. In this period, we observe a government cinema. Removal or immigration of many professionals and actors, dimmed presence of women, prohibition of screening of foreign movies, and shutdown of film stores, created a cultural and financial crisis for the cinema industry.

1. New Rules for Cinema

Three years after the revolution, after reopening of the universities and cultural centers, the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance was formed to systematically monitor and control every cultural aspect of the country under new Islamic laws. Therefore, every piece of art had to be approved by this ministry before publication and cinema was not an exception. Every script had to be revised and approved before the start of production.

Some filmmakers of the new intellectual wave such as Bahram Beyzai, Abbas Kiarostami, and Masoud Kimiai, were able to produce films with private funding under Kanoon and outside the rule of the ministry, but their movies could not receive approval for public screening.

In 1983 Farabi cinema foundation was created as a non-profit organization monitored by the ministry to impose the policies and the cultural directions of the government.

2. Rebirth of Cinema:

In the eight-year war between Iran and Iraq that began a year after the revolution, Farabi foundation created a phenomenon called cinema of the war, which focused on the different aspects of the war. This new concept allowed many cinema professionals to start working again and created a better understanding between politicians and filmmakers. They created films that were well received by critics and the public and reopened the position of Iranian cinema in the international scene. In fact, late 80s and the 90s is considered the golden age of Iranian cinema after the revolution. The policy makers try to improve the quality of filmmaking in this period and gradually newer filmmakers were introduced to the industry who brought about their own ideas and views. By this time, Iranian cinema started paying attention to subjects other than politics and propaganda, such as family melodrama.

3. *Intellectual Cinema after the Revolution:*

In 1985, Amir Naderi created the film *The Runner*, which attracted the attention of the international community to Iranian cinema. This attention was further consolidated with films created by Bahram Beyzai, Abbas Kiarostami, and Dariush Mehrjui, who had a deep positive impact on filmmaking in Iran and were highly acclaimed by international critics.

4. *Film Music after the Revolution:*

With the immigration and strict prohibition of work by the government for songwriters and singers, songs that were a key part of cinema before the revolution were removed entirely from cinema. With the reopening of universities and music institutions and the limited possibility of work for composers and musicians in both traditional Iranian music as well as western classic music, composition for the screen was resumed. Ahmad Pejman, Farhad Fakhreddini, Majid Entezami, Hossein Alizadeh, Loris Tjeknavorian, and Kambiz Roshanravan were among the busiest composers of this period. The use of electronic processing and synthesizers in the creation of music for film became common among these composers and was introduced as a genre in music for film. Composers such as Ahmad Pejman and Mohammadreza Darvishi were among those who used this method.

Ahmad Pejman in the film *Actor* made by Mohsen Makhmalbaf, removed the barrier between sound design and music composition and by using features of electronic music and a combination of acoustic and electronic sounds, introduced a new atmosphere in Iranian cinema.

Darvishi in his collaboration with Makhmalbaf, invented a new type of music for the screen in Iran where he used instruments and songs, mostly from folklore music, without any manipulation, combined with electronic music. Use of folklore music which is one category of film music in Iran was also introduced in this period.

Regional music is a type of music including melodies, instruments and tunes from different regions of Iran. Darvishi and Fouzieh Majd were among the researchers who scientifically analyzed and gathered these pieces and recorded and kept a considerable collection. Following this research, some filmmakers were interested in using these pieces and with the help of these two musicians, recreated these pieces in their work. Good

examples of recreating the regional music of Iran are *Green Fire* and *Chigh* by Mohammadreza Aslani, and *The Day I Became a Woman* by Marzieh Meshkini.

Although use of songs in Iranian cinema after the revolution was replaced by instrumental music, but the musical style of composers that was originated from Iranian traditional music caused a vivid presence of melody in their work. There are many film music pieces with memorable persistent melodies that we will discuss in coming chapters.

I. Today's Cinema of Iran :

Iranian cinema is revitalized and finds its strength and the different directions form up different categories. Mass production of low value films and the relentless flow of young non-academic filmmakers begins. But fortunately, intellectual filmmakers also continue their work alongside these flows and train a new generation of filmmakers. Political pressure and censorship which have always been a part of Iranian cinema is still a major challenge that prohibits growth. There are many films produced in recent years that received international recognition and awards but were not allowed to screen in domestic theaters. Many world-renowned filmmakers are forbidden to work indefinitely, but even with all the pressure, Iranian cinema is still able to keep its place in the international film communities.

1. Film Music in Today's Cinema of Iran :

With the waiver of some strict rules about songs and singing, and the prevalence of different genres of film, songs are being reintroduced in Iranian cinema to some extent. The new generation of film composers have created extraordinary pieces by using the experiences of the older generations.

The combination of traditional music with electronic music is a result of the work of this generation which is a category of film scoring in Iran. Incorporation of classic western music using computer software with sound banks is also very common recently which extremely lowers music budgets and attracts filmmakers with low budgets.

Unfortunately, there are still many filmmakers who don't have the necessary knowledge about film music so many crucial decisions on timing, style, and even the basic presence of music is all made by the composer. On the other hand, in recent decades, many Iranian films have been produced that do not have any original soundtrack. This is often due to

the filmmaker's lack of knowledge about music. Deciding not to have music in a scene is also something that should be done in consultation with the film composer. Another issue is that the first solution to financial problems, especially in low-budget projects, is to disregard the influence of music on the film and fire the film composer. This lack of knowledge is observed not only in the new generation, but also in the older generation of filmmakers. This has also made a situation where a few opportunists that don't even have much musical knowledge introduce themselves as film composers. Since there are no copyright laws in Iran and no organization to considerably support musicians, these so-called composers have shamelessly copied the works of Hollywood composers and gained fame and recognition.

Music for the film in Iran has always been in turmoil along with cinema itself, and the issues in cinema were so grave that there has been little time to attend to the problems of music in cinema.

J. Conclusion :

In this chapter, we presented an overview of the history of cinema in Iran and how it was formed. We showed how music was used in the early years of cinema before the production of the first sound film. We then elaborated on how music was used in the early years of sound films. The expansion of Iranian cinema along with its music was also introduced. We presented the intellectual directions of cinema before the revolution. Then we discussed how the revolution brought the Iranian cinema to its lowest years and how music for the film was changed afterwards. The revitalization of Iranian cinema and music for the screen were also presented. We showed the fundamental problems and issues that hindered the growth of music in cinema in different periods of Iranian cinema. We briefly discussed the current trends in Iranian music for the film and how they are growing in each direction.

II. Ahmad Pejman:

A. A short brief of his Life and educational background :

Ahmad Pejman is an Iranian film composer and three times award winner of Fajr International Film Festival of Tehran. He was born in 1936, Tehran, Iran. In high school he started violin lessons with Iranian musician Heshmat Sanjari, and as a young violinist of Tehran symphony orchestra he won a scholarship to study in Vienna Music Academy where he perfected himself in composition.

In his third year as a student, he was commissioned to write the first Persian Opera *Rustic Festival* for the opening of the Tehran Opera house, Rudaki Hall. Upon graduation from the Academy of Music in Vienna, Pejman returned to Iran in 1968, where he was commissioned to write the opera *Hero of Sahand*, which was based on the life of a legendary Persian hero Babak Khorramdin. The opera was premiered at Roudaki Hall in 1968. Between 1969 and 1978, Pejman continued to compose symphonic works, operas, ballets, and wrote many scores for motion pictures and television programs.

In 1976, three years before the Iranian revolution, Pejman moved to New York, where he entered Columbia University's Doctorate of Music program where he had the opportunity to approach electronic music and continued his studies with Buelant Arel, Vladimir Ushachevsky and Jack Beeson.

B. Film scoring:

Pejman had numerous experiences of writing music for ballet, operas and poem symphonics which need a good understanding of image, storytelling and movements. His experience for writing music specifically for the film was by writing an orchestral piece of music for an Iranian documentary film. Also, the collaborating with the institution for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, "Kanoon" for writing songs for children was a huge beginning for his career as a film composer.

In the late 60s and early 1970s Kanoon was at the center of the vanguard of cultural production. Within the walls of this organization there was an unprecedented amount of freedom and support which turned this organization into a sort of quasi-utopian hub, or incubator or laboratory for an incredible group of artists and filmmakers like Bahram Beyzai, Abbas Kiarostami, Mohammadreza Aslani, Khosrow Sinai, Dariush Mehrjui, Nasser Taghvai, Ali Hatami, Amir Naderi and Kamran Shirdel.

“That collaboration with Kanoon caused two filmmakers to come to me to write music for their film, one of them was Bahman Farmanara” Pejman says in an exclusive interview with www.artebox.ir. “I told him (Bahman Farmanara) I have never written music for films, I don’t know anything about it, I don’t have any experience or knowledge, I just listen to film music”.

For about 40 years, Pejman composed music for more than 20 feature films and television series. And his masterpieces in history of film music in Iran made him one of greatest film composers in this country.

C. Music characteristic:

Although the foundation of Pejman’s music comes from western orchestral music, Iranian folklore music and traditional Iranian modes are heard in his work. He maintains that he always thinks about traditional Iranian music in his works, but he does not forget modern music. His works are neither western nor traditional Iranian music, but a layer in between those two that he has created and is considered a new genre. In most of his works, Pejman uses traditional Iranian instruments with a modern view and western orchestration. He pays more attention to the musical color of these instruments rather than their special playing techniques.

Harmony and orchestration in his works color the motifs which greatly helps create the atmosphere in films. He uses western harmony, but we can not ignore the modal degrees of Iranian Dastgah music. Emphasis and repetition of these notes in many chord combinations helps the music become more modal. Hence, although there is no direct use of these modes, he tries to use a tempered version of them. In many moments, the melodies and how they are developed are also reminiscent of traditional Iranian music.

In the works of Pejman, use of quartal harmony is very common. This harmony is produced when the chords are formed by the fourth interval. The fourth interval and its inverse the fifth, are the primary intervals, and the second interval and its inverse the seventh, are the secondary. Examples of the quartal harmony are given below (Figure 4).

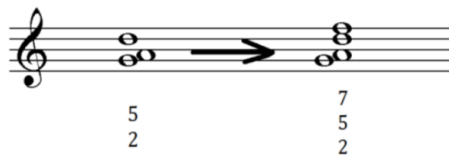


Figure 4 : An example for quartal harmony

Appropriate use of the quartal harmony has made the music less similar to old western classic music and more like a modern one. At the same time, this harmony can well accompany themes from Iranian music without sounding too much like western classic.

Rhythm and melody in the works of Pejman are simple and have an emotional texture and are intertwined so much that they are difficult to separate. He makes a form of music most appropriate for contemplative films. He believes that making music for action scenes is very easy, what is hard is writing music for calm scenes about a psychological epiphany of a character.

The works of Pejman are mostly about developments on motifs implemented from regional music of Iran. Maybe that is why he uses complex rhythms which are quite common in Iranian music. Use of these rhythms in his western classic compositions is also one of the parameters that set him apart. For example, the music of the series *Braves of Tangestan* is a development of small rhythmic motifs which are in many occasions, accompanied by traditional southern Iranian percussion.

In many of Pejman's works we can find traces of polyphonic texture which are produced by stacking small melody lines on top of each other. His work is under influence of the works of Beethoven, where he develops and extends very small motifs derived from Iranian regional music, which then find a new identity after development to the extent where it is not recognizable anymore. In the next section, take a look at his music in the movie *Tall Shadows of the Wind*, made by Bahman Famanara in 1979.

D. *Tall Shadows of the Wind* (Drama 1979, Bahman Farmanara) :

1. Brief story :

A scarecrow with a white face and wooden hands on which two birds are sitting, is in a field. Abdollah, the village's only driver, paints a mouth and a nose and a set of eyes for it and puts his hat on it's head. The morning after, an old lady faints after encountering the scarecrow. The villagers take her to town for medical attention. One night, Taghi sees

the scarecrow and he too faints, and again, he is taken to town for medical attention. Another night, Narges, Abdollah's betrothed, leaves the house and the next morning her body is found near the scarecrow in white clothes. Finally, Abdollah decides to take on the scarecrow but he suffers a fatal wound in his leg and dies. His body is then buried next to the scarecrow.

This film is about a scarecrow made by the people of a village but as time passes, it finds a new identity and gradually becomes the owner of the village. The movie is an intellectual movie of the late 70s in Iran, bringing a philosophical and social view of the Iranian society to picture. Farmanara talks about symbols and superstitions of some villagers who are waiting for a savior to come and free the village.

Unfortunately, due to the content and the political crisis of the time, neither before nor after the revolution, it did not find adequate screening, despite being one of the best movies of the intellectual cinema.

2. *Score Analysis:*

The music of this film is recorded with the orchestral symphony of London by John Steffensen. Pejman joined the team when the photography was finished and the film was in editing stage and he could manually calculate the timings for synchronization before composition.

a) Main themes:

The music of this film has three main themes which are constantly changing with the story. The first theme which we call theme A, is about the atmosphere of the village and the villagers. The second theme, theme B, represents the evil force of the scarecrow. And theme C, shows the inner emotions of Abdullah.

(1) THEME A:

Theme A is based on a small rhythmic motif which is heard throughout the film in different forms of melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic variations with different instrumental groups. (Figure 5 - 7)



Figure 5 : Motif for theme A

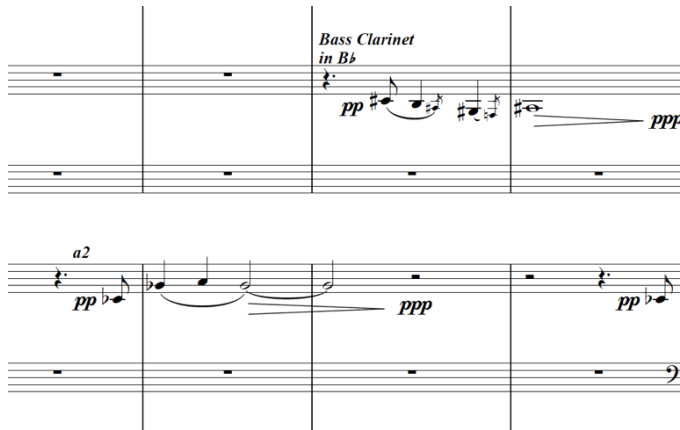


Figure 6 : Theme A which is played by brass



Figure 7 : A variation of theme A which is played by strings

Theme A is heard for the first time in minute 17 of the film in the form of question and answer between brass, woodwinds, and strings, which are merged in a cadence and end in the moment where Abdullah meets the scarecrow, on a closeup of the scarecrow. (Figure 8&9)

The image shows a musical score for woodwind instruments. The instruments listed are Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Horns (Hn.), Trumpets (Tpt.), and Trombones (Tbn.). The score is divided into two systems. The first system shows the Flute and Oboe parts with dynamic markings of *p*, *mf*, and *pp*. The second system shows the Horns, Trumpets, and Trombones parts with dynamic markings of *ppp*, *mp*, and *pp*. The music features melodic lines with some chromatic movement and rests.

Figure 8 : Theme A is heard for the first time in minute 17

The image shows a musical score for string instruments. The instruments listed are Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The score is divided into two systems. The first system shows the Violin I and Violin II parts with dynamic markings of *mp*, *f*, and *mf*. The second system shows the Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass parts with dynamic markings of *mf*, *ff*, and *mp*. The music features melodic lines with some chromatic movement and rests.

Figure 9 : A variation of theme A played by strings

Afterwards, with the people’s fear of the scarecrow getting deeper and deeper, and the scarecrow gathering more dark forces, theme A is taken away and replaced by theme B, just as the warm colors of the picture are replaced by cool colors.

(2) Theme B:

A group of small chromatic ascending and descending motifs with unusual rhythms which are played with bass drum, cymbals, gong triangle and side drum. (Figure 10&11)

Figure 10 : Theme B, played by brass

Figure 11 : Theme B, played by percussion

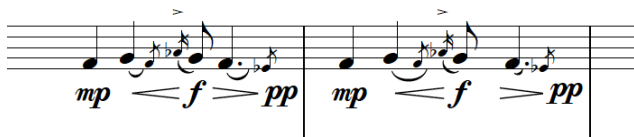
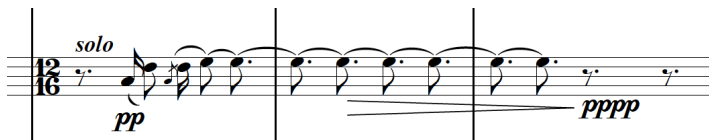
Theme B is heard shortly in the beginning, but it grows gradually in terms of dynamics, volume, and time period.

(3) Theme C:

A very simple flute melody representing the simple inner emotions of Abdullah, despite his disruptive behavior. (Figure 12)

Figure 12 : Theme C

This theme is only heard four times in the movie without any change. Twice when he meets his lover, once when saying goodbye to the old lady, and finally when he decides to face the scarecrow. Rhythmic and melodic variations of this theme (Figure 13-15) with different instruments are heard multiple times, which create a beautiful musical conversation between this theme and themes A and B.

*Figure 13 : A variation of theme C**Figure 14 : A variation of theme C**Figure 15 : A variation of theme C*

b) Instrumentation :

To create a village atmosphere, most melodies are played by the Flute, Oboe, and Harp. Theme A and C are performed by strings when the villagers find courage and bravery against the scarecrow. Percussion on the other hand, are used to give more strength to theme B to instill more fear. The family of flutes (Flute, Flute Alto, Piccolo), are used to represent Abdullah which are heard in the three main themes with his emotional changes (fear, love, and despair) in different sound frequencies.

c) Use of Elements from Traditional Iranian Music :

As mentioned before, although Pejman uses western music rules, and all his pieces are written for orchestra with synthesizer, but he uses some elements from traditional Iranian

music in his work to create an eastern atmosphere in his work. We mention these elements in the following.

d) Non-harmonic tones:

An element of the traditional Iranian music, non-harmonic tones are either written by the composer, or the player plays them on his own. Pejman uses these notes on many occasions to bring his pieces closer to traditional Iranian music even more.

e) Iranian Music Modes :

A very brief passage to a tempered mode close to the Chahargah Dastgah exists in the main title with many consecutive modulations. While this has an acceptable explanation in western music harmony, it introduces a very familiar space for the Iranian audience to make the relation between picture and music.

f) Rhythm:

Complex time signatures are also prevalent in traditional Iranian music and we also see a trend in modern western music that their usage grows. Therefore, by using them, Pejman not only brings his music closer to eastern music, but also emphasizes on its modern aspects. He also uses them to create horror in his themes.

III. Sheyda Gharachedaghi:

A. A short biography :

Sheida Gharachedaghi, born 1941 Tehran, lives in Montreal. She is composer, music educator and founder of the Music Department at Kanoon Institute.

A graduate of the Vienna music academy, Sheida Gharachedaghi is the most influential female in the history of Iran's music due to her work on teaching music to children, foundation of the music department at Kanoon Institute, and her own compositions. In addition to composition of instrumental, opera, and children's music, she also worked on music for film and television series and made music for about 40 films. She is among the artists who were forced to leave the country after the revolution in 1979, now residing in Canada.

B. Film scoring :

Gharachedaghi started film scoring in 1971, writing music for a short film. The next year she teamed up with Bahram Beyzai on *Downpour*. Before her forced migration, in addition to writing music for animations, television series, and short films, scored five other films among which are *The Crow* by Bahram Beyzai and *The Chess Game of the Wind* by Mohammadreza Aslani.

C. Music characteristic:

Gharachedaghi creates music in classic western style. She argues that what we recognize as the classic western music is not separate from traditional and folklore music of other nations, rather a theorization of them. Therefore, even though she derives her music knowledge from classic western style, she is not away from traditional and folklore music. Nevertheless, she does not try to mix traditional Iranian music with classic western music. In her work, she rarely uses Iranian instruments and when she does, it is completely separate from the other parts. This makes her work stand out among many other pieces of that time.

The directors that Gharachedaghi worked with, namely Bahram Beyzai and Mohammadreza Aslani, are among a few who appreciate and understand the relation between music and picture. Beyzai manages music of his work frame by frame and Aslani believes any sound in the film, including environment, dialog, and music are intertwined with the picture.

In the Chess Game of the Wind, which is an avant-garde film, Gharachedaghi creates a modern 20th century music filled with modern sound effects for percussion and wind instruments. An interesting fact about this movie is that in most scenes except three scenes the camera is still, and only when it moves, we hear music. In the last scene which is a view of the city, we hear religious chanting as the music.

In her two collaborations with Beyzai, she also writes modern orchestral western music. She also uses the Taar (Iranian traditional string instrument) in *The Crow*, which is a good example of her use of Iranian instruments.

D. *Downpour* : (Drama/ Romance 1971, Bahram Beyzai) :

Downpour, the first long film of Bahram Beyzai, is one of the most valuable cinema pieces of Iran. It is a romantic melodrama from the intellectual cinema of Iran with many emblems and metaphors that sits on the border between realism and surrealism.

The original negative has been destroyed after revolution, and all that remained was one 35mm print. The print of *Downpour* was restored in 2011 by the World Cinema Foundation at the laboratory of L'Immagine Ritrovato (Bologna) and was screened at the Cinema Ritrovato 2013 festival

Martin Scorsese says about *Downpour*: “The tone of this film puts me in mind of what I love best in the Italian neorealist pictures, and the story has the beauty of an ancient fable – you can feel Beyzai’s background in Persian literature, theater and poetry”



Figure 16 : Mr.Hakimi (Parviz Fannizadeh) and Atefeh (Parvaneh Massoumi) in *Downpour*

1. Brief story :

Mr. Hekmati is the new teacher in a school in a poor region of the city. On his first day at work he kicks a student, Mosayeb, out of the classroom. Atefeh, Mosayeb’s sister, goes

to school to object to this decision and Mr. Hekmati falls in love with her. Rahim is the neighborhood butcher who also loves Atefeh. On the other hand, a school staff member and his wife are keen to marry their daughter to Mr. Hekmati, but he does not show interest. Hekmati decides to fill his spare time by repairing and restoring the abandoned showroom of the school. Rahim tries many times to dissuade Hekmati from his love by threatening him but the love between Hekmati and Atefeh becomes deeper. The showroom gets reopened with a new show program but then, Hekmati receives a relocation order from his superiors and is forced to leave the school and the neighborhood.

2. *Music :*

We could say that the film is both tragic and comic. There are both innocence and childish beauty, as well as brutality and pain. Using a set of melodies, harmonies, rhythms, instrumentations and articulations, the composer has successfully maintained the balance. Staccato of woodwinds with high tempo happy rhythms, use of tremolo and compositional rhythms, and the use of Tonbak (Iranian percussion) create a brisk and lively atmosphere. On the other hand, long notes of the strings and woodwinds on high registers, combined with melodies on the phrygian and minor scales, reflect the love story in the musical language.

a) *Synchronization :*

The music of this film is one of the best examples of film music synchronization in the history of Iranian cinema. The composer has accurately determined the tempo of her music in synchronization with the picture, relative to the speed of movements and timings. For instance, in one of the early scenes, a carriage starts moving spontaneously and accelerates down a slope. The music starts slowly and accelerates exactly with the speed of the carriage. In another example, when Mr. Hekmati is sitting in his office, the arpeggio of the clarinet is heard with the melody of the flute with a tempo exactly matching the motion and sound of his pen hitting the paper and also the students running in the yard which is seen from the window.

b) *Mickey Mousing :*

In some scenes we see rhythmic correspondence of environment sounds and the small rhythmic patterns in the music. For instance, in the first scene of the classroom, one of the students starts clapping out of the blue, and in the music, we hear oboe staccato notes

without any introduction. In another example, when Mosayeb is pounding the door of Mr. Hekmati's house, we hear woodwinds and violins in the high register with the same rhythm as his pounding.

c) Light motif :

In this film, every main character and feelings have their own themes and interestingly, these themes mix together, or are heard in parallel, when characters encounter. Also, themes change when we see changes in the behavior or the spirit of the characters. For example, when Hekmati picks up body building and after long sessions, he thinks he can now beat Rahim, we hear Rahim's theme for Hekmati. In another instance, when Hakimi and Atefeh decide to walk the streets under the rain, childishly and free of all judgements and prying eyes, we hear the famous childish theme of Mosayeb (Figure 17). This theme is also heard when Hakimi and Rahim are both drunk, wandering the streets. This time, the composer uses glissando of the strings and ascending and descending scales regardless of the tonic, to show the drunk status of the characters.

Andante cantabile



Figure 17 : Mosayeb's Theme

IV. Majid Entezami:

Majid entezami , born 9 March 1948, four times award winner for best original soundtrack in Fajr international film festival of Tehran, lives in Tehran, musician, conductor and composer and one of the most active film composers after the Islamic revolution of Iran.

A. Early life :

Entezami learned music by playing the Oboe in Music school, and became the youngest player of the symphonic orchestra of Tehran one year after graduation. When he was forced to travel to Germany for a medical operation, he decided to continue his education in the conservatory of Berlin, which resulted in collaborations with the Berlin symphonic and philharmonic orchestra. After returning to Iran in 1974, he is recruited back into the symphonic orchestra of Tehran, and also begins teaching in the Music school and music department of Tehran university.

B. Becoming a Film composer :

Even though his father is Ezzatollah Entezami, one of the most famous Iranian actors with many awards in his career, the story of how his son Majid, enters the cinema industry is completely separate from that fact. In 1977, because of some differences of opinion with the symphonic orchestra of Tehran, he resigned from playing in the orchestra and teaching in the university, and by picking some unrelated job to his expertise, he tried to carry on. At this time, one of his friends who had a position in Kanoon, suggested composing some music for some contemporary poetry. Following this work, he found another position for composition of music for an animation, *Zaal and Simorgh* by Ali Akbar Sadeghi, and then his first cinema work on a movie made by Masoud Kimiaei, who was a famous director of that time.

C. Music characteristic :

Entezami has a profound understanding of the picture and has always tried to penetrate into the story even deeper than what the picture presents, to tell the untold essence of the story. He also tries to experience with a variety of styles which has made his portfolio full of different pieces. From comedies like *Once Upon a Time, Cinema* by Mohsen MakhmalBaf, to creation of epic war stories.

The music of Entezami is orchestral, and based on western classic music rules, but he introduces Iranian instruments with unusual rhythms which make his works sound

eastern. He creates new atmospheres in his music by using synthesizers, creativity in making new sounds by combining sounds from different instruments, or by using a sound range less common in the instruments that he uses. These sounds, albeit new, are close to the mentality of the characters. Using the sound of stones in the film *The Fateful Day*, by Shahram Assadi, is a good example of this.

Every theme and musical color heard in Entezami's work has a rational explanation in the story. He believes that music tells a part of the story that is not already told in picture. Some of his works are so creative and narrative that they seem like a part of the script and the directors wanted such music, but the interesting point is, he maintains that no director ever asked him for such characteristics.

For example we can point to the creative idea of using films' musical ideas in *Once Upon a Time, Cinema*. In this film, parts of the film *Lor Girl* are played for the Shah and his court, but the actress of the main character Golnar, which the Shah has fallen in love with, comes out of the film and becomes real. Instead of creating new music, Entezami uses the main theme of the movie *Lor Girl* in all the scenes that she is present, with variations to the theme that indicate this is not the original *Lor Girl*, but Golnar who has traveled in time and found herself in the Shah's palace. No other piece of music could convey the message so accurately. He also gives a brief hint as to what is going to happen next, before the scenes of *Lor Girl*, by playing the main melody from that film together with a beautiful waltz.

Also, in the last scene of the film, we see the picture of a fetus, which reminds the audience of the movie *2001, A Space Odyssey* by Stanley Kubrick. The composer then writes a piece inspired by *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* by Richard Strauss, 1894, to make a deeper impression of the picture.

In another collaboration with Makhmalbaaf, Entezami shows life in opposition to death, in *The peddler*. In the scene where the old lady is dying, she draws her last breath with the deceleration of the clock, instead of a requiem for her death, Entezami recreates the sound of the stopped clock with piano, Harp, and glockenspiel. This is when a fair girl appears in a carriage and is accompanied by an epic music by choir and orchestra.

During his 50 years of activity, in addition to six symphonies, Entezami has composed for more than 80 films and television series, and has won four Fajr festival awards. In the following, we discuss one of his most famous works : *The Scent of Joseph's Shirt* , 1995 drama by Ebrahim Hatamikia.

D. *The Scent of Joseph's Shirt* (Drama 1995, Ebrahim Hatamikia) :

After two successful works with Ebrahim Hatamikia, Entezami collaborated with him again on the film *The Scent of Joseph's Shirt*, to make one of the most iconic melodies in the genre of war movies of Iran.

1. *Brief story* :

Ghafour is an airport taxi driver in Tehran and although all evidence points to his son, Joseph, being killed in action in the war, he still believes his son is alive. He even denies the testimony of his son in law who was a companion of Joseph. Even though Joseph's army tag has been found in the belly of a shark, he always awaits the return of his son.

Ghafour finds a young girl named Shirin who has returned from France to find her brother Khosro who is missing in action. One of the prisoners of war who has returned home and was a cellmate of Khosro, call up Shirin and wants to give some information. Ghafour and Shirin go to him and he tells them that Khosro is alive and will be released soon, but in secret, he tells Ghafour that he could not tell the truth to Shirin's face. He tells Ghafour that Khosro has been executed in the hands of the Iraqis during a strike.

Asghar, Ghafour's son in law, which is returning from Germany, leaving his medical treatment unfinished, also thinks that Joseph is alive. That's why he goes to the border where prisoners of war are coming back to the country.

Shirin is preparing to receive Khosro when she is informed about the truth. She accuses Ghafour of wanting to keep her in the same false belief as his own. On the night that Shirin wants to go back to Paris, Asghar calls Ghafour on the telephone to tell him he has news about Khosro and he will return to Iran shortly. Ghafour and Shirin go to the border that night. The next morning, while looking for Khosro, Shirin finds Joseph, and tells Ghafour about the return of his son.



Figure 18 : Shirin (Nikki Karimi) in *The Scent of Joseph's Shirt*

2. Music :

The Scent of Joseph's Shirt is a symbolic drama of the Iranian war movie genre. A well-built movie that instills the meaning of patience and anticipation. Entezami has been able to create an epic drama in his work. The story of Ghafour's long wait for his child to return is not just the story of one man, but the story of millions of families who sent their children to the front lines to defend the country. Since most locations are small with very few actors and mostly filmed in the dark, the best choice would have been to compose a melancholy for a small ensemble. But Entezami as usual, steps further than what the picture presents and sees every character as a whole generation of people and wrote music for a nation. That is why the whole movie has just one main theme which is developed in many ways. Figure 19 shows this theme in its simplest form, which is heard throughout the film with rhythmic variations and non-harmonic notes.



Figure 19 : Main theme

a) *Choire and Male Voice:*

One of the important points in this score is the solo male voice. This voice is first heard when we first hear the name of Joseph, which is in fact his voice indicating that he is alive. This voice which is mostly heard with choir, either together or in question and

answer format, is accompanied with another male solo in two scenes. Once when Joseph's sister is talking about his deep friendship with Asghar, and another time when Ghafour hugs Joseph. Therefore, three male characters are represented by male solo voice in the score.

In the choir, we often hear only female or male voices. Entezami says that the male choir is the voice of all the war captives and the female choir represents all the angels that protect them. When both male and female choirs sing together, it is the voice of a nation with a story similar to Ghafour and his son.

b) Instrumentation :

In this film, Entezami uses trumpet significantly in melodies, Daf (and Iranian percussive instrument), voice, synthesizer, and guitar. This sound composition has somehow removed all the barriers between tradition and modernism, war and friendship, and spiritualism and reason.

c) Heartbeat, music, or sound effect :

As mentioned before, Entezami sometimes recreates the environment sounds and works on the barrier between composition and sound design. In an important scene of the film where Ghafour and Shirin are passing a tunnel, we hear a sound like a heartbeat, created by timpani and large drum. This sound is gradually solved in the solo male voice and joins the choir and orchestra, and the music ends on the peak of spiritual feelings at the end of the tunnel.

Also, in the final scene of the film, for a few moments the film slows down and the environment sounds are heard a little lower. In this scene Entezami plays his theme with low tunes of cello and contrabass, and a bit further, music goes beyond picture and a long high register violin note is giving clues to an incoming event. In that sound texture, in the empty space between high and low notes, a good opportunity appears for the male solo voice to be heard as we see the face of Joseph.

V. Peyman Yazdanian:

A. A short biography:

Peyman Yazdanian, born 1968 pianist and composer who lives Tehran. In about 20 years of his career, he has scored over forty featured films, short films, tv series and documentaries in collaboration with famous Iranian filmmakers including Massoud Kimiaei, Abbas Kiarostami, Asghar Farhadi and Mohammad Rasoulof.

Yazdanian began learning music at the age of 6 by playing the piano. He also learned the basics of composition as a teenager. Apart from his knowledge of music, Yazdanian also knows cinema well. He believes that in order to progress in a profession, one must have knowledge of all aspects of it. Since he was young, he started experimenting writing music for film and animation students. Some of them are successful animators and filmmakers now. He also had the chance to enter this career by collaborating with one of the greatest international Iranian filmmakers, Abbas Kiarostami, first in 1997 in *The Birth of Life* and then in 1999 in the featured film *The Wind Will Carry Us*. After this successful collaboration, in a few years Yazdanian set his position as an international film composer inside as well as outside of Iran.

B. Music characteristic :

The music of Yazdanian is full of color and imagination. His natural talent in recognizing picture, along with his knowledge and experience in composition, has made him such a successful composer which makes it hard to find an unsuccessful piece in his portfolio. In his own words, he always aspires to create a perfect piece, in the sense that the music accompanies the picture in the best way possible. Sometimes he even circumvents the conventions of composition, recording, and mix and mastering, to achieve a result that is out of the ordinary but suits the picture very well.

In addition to using the sound colors of Iranian instruments, Yazdanian experiments with creating new sound colors by combining his music with instruments of other cultures. He believes that both the instrument and the way the musician plays it are important in his decisions. Use of electronic music as well as electronic effects and postprocessing on acoustic sounds are some of his unique music characteristics.

The music style of Yazdanian is minimalistic and based on western classic music rules. He knows modern western music and uses it in his work properly. His music is emotional

and although he is an expert in creating emotional and dramatic melodies, he tries to keep away from writing melodies and uses texture to create an atmosphere appropriate to the picture.

Based on the needs of the picture, he frees his music from normal frameworks and experiments with other styles. One remarkable example of this is in *Portrait of a Lady Far Away* by Ali Mosaffa, where he experiments composition in alternative rock music.

One of the more recent works of Yazdanian is a 2016 drama by Bahman Farmanara, *Tale of the Sea*. Farmanara also has a masterpiece *Tall Shadows of the Wind*, which we discussed in chapter two. This is a good opportunity to compare two different works of music composition for the screen, two films by the same director, one scored by Ahmad Pejman, and the other by Yazdanian. Two composers four decades apart, which give us a better understanding of how two different generations of Iranian composers worked with a director to present his thought space through music.

C. *Tale of the Sea* (Drama 2020, Bahman Farmanara) :

Tale of the sea is a complex melodrama, in which Farmanara plays the first role himself, in a way that many critics believe it is a self portrait of the director, and his most personal work.



Figure 20 : Taher (Bahman Farmanara) in *Tale of the Sea*

1. Brief story:

Taher is a famous writer and intellectual who is suffering from severe depression and is kept in a mental hospital for three years. His doctor, fearing he might develop schizophrenia, asks Taher's wife to take him home so that he may return to life. But Jaleh, Taher's wife, has been through many difficulties in these years and has had a heart transplant. Jaleh wants to divorce Taher but by the recommendation of the doctor, she does not reveal this to Taher. They return to their beach house and Taher starts taking

long walks on the beach and in between his dreams and reality, meets his old friends and acquaintances.

2. Analysis of the Music in Relation to Picture :

Yazdanian only uses string orchestra and very briefly the piano for the music of this film. The music is very emotional and minimalistic at the same time. None of the themes and instruments represent a particular character or an event, on the contrary, the music encompasses all characters and events. As Taher says in the movie, “Life is the story of the sea”, we may interpret that as if each of the characters and the events are droplets in the vast sea, the music reflects the very sea that we see over and over in the film. A sea that has both moments of thunder and calm, darkness and light. Music in this film is the reflection of the life of a writer who is creating his own world, oblivious to the reality around him.

The musical score for the main theme consists of two systems. The first system (measures 1-18) features a melody in the upper staff starting with a forte (f) dynamic. The piano accompaniment in the middle two staves is characterized by repetitive eighth-note patterns, with the right hand playing a more complex figure and the left hand a simpler one. The bass part in the bottom two staves provides a steady, low-frequency accompaniment. The second system (measures 19-22) begins with a measure rest in the upper staff, followed by a melodic phrase that concludes with a ritardando (rit.) marking and a fermata over the final notes.

Figure 21 : Main theme

a) Main theme:

The theme that we hear on the main title (Figure 21) is the main theme of the film, which is heard many times during the film on important scenes either exactly, or with a variation. Using repetitive patterns of one-eighths and tremolos of one-sixteenths, Yazdanian makes

the audience ride the stormy sea, and with dramatic and emotional melodies of the strings, tells the deeply sad and painful story.

In a scene where Taher is extremely mad and is shouting, the same melancholic theme is used with very subtle and smart changes to create a requiem. The changes include the synchronous playing of the main theme by all strings and dynamic changes to forte and fortissimo, not only to create more volume, but to stress on the emotions of the player.

Another interesting fact about the music of this film is that there is a scene where traveling musicians are playing a piece on a major scale. At the same time, the composer has written a minor scale string orchestra that is heard together with their music. This contradiction helps the viewer better feel the pain and suffering of Taher. In this scene, we only hear the musicians and we don't see them in the scene, but in another scene, this time we actually see the musicians in the far back but we don't hear their music, and then again, the melancholy of Yazdanian portrays the contradictions of the bitter ceremony that we see.

Conclusion

In this research, we examined the history of music for the film in Iran, from the very beginning in 1900, to the recent years. We presented a brief history of the early years, from 1900 to 1930, when music was not considered an intrinsic part of films, along with an analysis of how music gradually became widespread in film production. We showed how some of the earliest Iranian films used music to their advantage. The transition from songs and folklore music to original soundtracks produced exclusively for a film was described. Then we discussed four generations of Iranian film composers, each represented by a prominent composer of that generation. These generations belong to different styles and ideas in music. They do not necessarily have different time slots in the history, rather different views. We analyzed their style and work in general, then we specifically analyzed one of their most prominent works. We presented the films they worked on and how they chose to score those films.

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Table of illustrations

Figure 1 : Golnar (Roohangiz Saminejad) in Lor girl	16
Figure 2 : 1/4 pitch up in Persian music, called "Sori"	20
Figure 3 : 1/4 pitch down in Persian music, called "Koron"	20
Figure 4 : An example for quartal harmony	31
Figure 5 : Motif for theme A	33
Figure 6 : Theme A which is played by brass	33
Figure 7 : A variation of theme A which is played by strings.....	33
Figure 8 : Theme A is heard for the first time in minute 17.....	34
Figure 9 : A variation of theme A played by strings	34
Figure 10 : Theme B, played by brass	35
Figure 11 : Theme B, played by percussion	35
Figure 12 : Theme C	36
Figure 13 : A variation of theme C.....	36
Figure 14 : A variation of theme C.....	36
Figure 15 : A variation of theme C.....	36
Figure 16 : Mr.Hakimi (Parviz Fannizadeh) and Atefeh (Parvaneh Massoumi) in Downpour ..	39
Figure 17 : Mosayeb's Theme	41
Figure 18 : Shirin (Nikki Karimi) in The Scent of Joseph's Shirt	45
Figure 19 : Main theme	45
Figure 20 : Taher (Bahman Farmanara) in Tale of the Sea.....	48
Figure 21 : Main theme	49

Research paper of: Sharareh Sheikhan

2nd cycle (Master), 2019-2020

Analysis of Iranian film music (with focus on some contemporary composers)

Abstract:

Music has existed for centuries but composition of music for film is a relatively new art. It involves a delicate balance and critical attention to the relations between what the visual art presents, and how music should accompany the picture to convey a feeling. As this newly formed field of music evolves, so does the research and experimentations around it. All around the world we see musicians as well as music researchers peeking at different aspects of how music can expand the image. In a country like Iran, with a history of cinema almost as old as cinema itself, there is very little knowledge of this field. Only a few of the composers who worked on film scoring in the last century of Iranian cinema had academic knowledge of music, let alone music for the screen. In this research, we examine the history of music for cinema in Iran, from the very beginning in 1900, to the recent years. We present a brief history of the early years along with analysis of how music gradually became widespread in film production. Then we discuss four generations of Iranian film composers, each represented by a prominent composer of that generation. We analyze their style and work, then we specifically analyze one of their most prominent works.

Keywords : Film scoring , Iranian film composers, analysis, Film music in Iran

Résumé:

Analyse de la musique de film Iranien (avec un accent sur certains compositeurs contemporains)

La musique existe depuis des siècles mais la composition de musique pour film est un art relativement nouveau. Cela implique un équilibre délicat et une attention critique aux relations entre ce que l'art visuel présente et comment la musique devrait accompagner l'image pour transmettre un sentiment. Au fur et à mesure que ce nouveau domaine de la musique évolue, les recherches et les expérimentations qui l'entourent évoluent également. Partout dans le monde, nous voyons des musiciens ainsi que des chercheurs en musique jeter un œil à différents aspects de la façon dont la musique peut élargir l'image. Dans un pays comme l'Iran, avec une histoire du cinéma presque aussi vieille que le cinéma lui-même, il y a très peu de connaissances dans ce domaine. Seuls quelques-uns des compositeurs qui ont travaillé sur la musique de films au siècle dernier du cinéma iranien avaient une connaissance académique de la musique, sans parler de la musique pour écran. Dans cette recherche, nous examinons l'histoire de la musique pour le cinéma en Iran, depuis le tout début en 1900 jusqu'à ces dernières années. Nous présentons un bref historique des premières années ainsi qu'une analyse de la façon dont la musique s'est progressivement répandue dans la production cinématographique. Ensuite, nous discutons de quatre générations de compositeurs de films iraniens, chacune représentée par un compositeur éminent de cette génération. Nous analysons leur style et leur travail, puis nous analysons spécifiquement l'une de leurs œuvres les plus marquantes.

Musique de film, Compositeurs de film iranien, Analyse, Musique de film en Iran