Beeman, William O. 2010. Music at the Margins: Performance and Ideology in the Persianate World. pp. 141-154.

Music and Conflict

Edited by

JOHN MORGAN O'CONNELL

AND

SALWA EL-SHAWAN CASTELO-BRANCO

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS PRESS

URBANA, CHICAGO, AND SPRINGFIELD

FCT Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia
MINISTÉRIO DA CIÊNCIA, TECNOLOGIA E ENSINO SUPERIOR Portugal

inet[MD]
instituto de etnomusicologia
centro de estudos de música e dança

This publication was funded in part by the Portuguese Foundation for Scientific Research and Institute for Ethnomusicology, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, New University of Lisbon; John O'Connell.

Manufactured in the United States of America
1 2 3 4 5 C P 5 4 3 2 1
This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
<To Come>

S___
N___
L___

CS

CHAPTER 7

Music at the Margins: Performance and Ideology in the Persianate World

William O. Beeman

Music, Conflict, and Islam

The Islamic world has long had an ambiguous attitude toward music and musical instruments. Though there is no Qur'anic prohibition against music, most severe Islamic theologians nevertheless enforce a blanket prohibition. They then allow exceptions based on special conditions occasioned by various hadith, or traditions of the Prophet. More-modern interpreters of Islamic law have extended these views to cover modern situations such as the use of electronic instruments and activities involving music as a secondary concomitant, for instance, the music accompanying films or television programs. More-liberal theologians not only allow musical performance; they encourage it in many situations. In this essay, I show how music making helps clarify seemingly contradictory and apparently conflicting attitudes toward music in the Persianate world. As a point of departure, I consider a number of representative examples concerning music and censorship in the region.

In Iran, the Islamic Revolution (1978–79) featured many changes in official attitudes toward music. During the first postrevolutionary years, raids were conducted on private households where gatherings with music were being held. Radios and stereo equipment were destroyed. Musical performance was banned from weddings, and the public broadcast of music was limited to martial music. In Afghanistan, too, during a period of religious conservatism under the Taliban in the late 1990s, similar prohibitions were in effect. Afghan musical artists were persecuted or executed. Musical instruments were burned, and public broadcasts of music were banned.

In recent years, these struggles have abated considerably as the political landscape for these nations has changed. In conjunction with an increasing trend toward liberalization, these restrictions continue today in a more nuanced manner. In Iran, for instance, classical Persian music and traditional Persian music are now allowed. However, "lascivious" music is still prohibited. Often this revolves

around the presence of female artists. Women are not allowed to sing as soloists. However, they are allowed to sing in ensembles where their presence as individual female voices is not distinguishable.

In Afghanistan, following the American-led deposition of the Taliban (in 2001–2), musical performance of all kinds is undergoing a renaissance. In the rest of the Persianate world too—in countries such as Uzbekistan and Tajikistan—no official restrictions are placed on music. Here popular Persian music produced both locally and abroad (in places like Los Angeles) is immensely popular. Solo female artists, such as the Iranian pop singer Googoosh, are wildly and widely embraced. Even there, however, a recent trend toward religious conservatism is creating different pockets of community disapproval for these forms of music. Because the religious suitability of music is an ambiguous matter, the performance and consumption of music itself has often been at the forefront of conflict between traditional religionists and secular modernists, groups that are trying to establish a broader set of living parameters for citizens in a religious world. In this context, music becomes symbolic of the divide between liberal and conservative; as such it has become a veritable battleground issue.

It goes without saying that despite these restrictions on music, elaborate classical and popular music traditions have arisen throughout the Islamic world. They have been a part of Islamic traditional civilization for centuries and are likewise a concurrent fact of life in the Islamic world alongside the religious prohibitions. Although the most conservative Muslims enforce the general prohibition against music, no Islamic society in the world lacks a musical tradition, and none where musical performance cannot be heard.

These simultaneous strains of cultural practice are fascinating since they show the tension between generalized Islamic law and local cultural practice. Nowhere is this tension seen more clearly than in the Persianate world—particularly the area of the world influenced by Shi'a cultural traditions. This is the world dominated historically by Persian cultural traditions spreading from Baghdad to China and extending in part to cover present-day Iran, Afghanistan, the Tajik areas of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, and also to the Shi'a areas of Iraq, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon. Of all these traditions, Persian classical music constitutes the greatest challenge to conservative Islamic opinions about the suitability of musical performance in general society. This phenomenon is especially relevant with regard to the prevailing ideological attitude toward the epic musical-dramatic form *ta'ziyeh* (discussed at length later in this chapter).

Persian musical practices throughout history (along with the musical traditions of Islamic Southeast Asia; see Rasmussen, chap. 8) constitute the most liberal musical performance conventions in the Islamic world. Nevertheless, to frame the following discussion, we must consider commentary on music deriving more generally from the Islamic world. In this respect, the Persianate world is particularly interesting as a way of understanding the conservative/liberal conflict in

the Islamic world because of the rich and ancient musical traditions that exist among Persian-speaking peoples. Music is, in fact, such an essential part of greater Persianate civilization that outright prohibition against this art form is almost unthinkable. Therefore, a conflict exists around the boundary between the acceptability and nonacceptability of musical practice. The question of acceptability becomes particularly acute when considering "approved" forms of performance and practice.

Music, Qur'an, and Hadith

As mentioned earlier, there is no specific prohibition against music in Islam. The basic prohibition against music derives from three verses from the Qur'an, none of which specifically mentions music.[1] Reading these three verses, most Islamic commentators agree that it is straining credulity to interpret them as prohibiting music. It should also be noted that there are no Qur'anic verses that can be unambiguously interpreted as allowing music. In fact, prohibitions against music—and the exceptions to those prohibitions—are not based on the authority of the Qur'an but rather are derived primarily from the hadith. This fact was reported most prominently by Al-Ghazzali in the eleventh century (see Braune 1994; also Engel 1986) and is accepted today. Most religious argumentation revolves around the authenticity of these hadith. Some claim that all hadith relating to the prohibition of music are flawed; others claim that only some of them are authentic. It is a matter of continued debate.

In Islamic jurisprudence, when the Qur'an does not provide unambiguous guidance to believers, religious guidance is provided by the hadith. These observations of the life and words of the Prophet were compiled more than 150 years after his death and require a chain of testimony linking the tradition to people who could have seen or known the Prophet directly. In medieval Baghdad, a "science" of hadith evolved that required three separate attested lines of transmission of hadith for them to be pronounced "good." Other hadith with questionable lines are considered weak or doubtful. There is no general consensus among religious scholars on all these hadith. Therefore, the ambiguity surrounding the question of music creates a special cultural space in Islam in which music is accepted by some as religiously legitimate and by others as religiously prohibited. Since obedience to the principles of Islam is ultimately a matter of personal decision, this allows for a wide range of interpretation. Even today, both religious officials and individual Muslims express vastly different attitudes toward the production and consumption of music. Nevertheless, the particular arguments in this religious debate have shaped the nature and course of music making and music production in the Islamic world.

A complete discussion of theological interpretations on restrictions relating to music and musical performance is beyond the scope of this study, but the re-

ligious prescriptions deriving from the hadith have themselves formed a rough tradition surrounding the use of music that has achieved a kind of folk status among believers. Some of the most important points for general consensus on the production of music are the following:[2]

1. All musical instruments are questionable, with the exception of *daf* (a frame drum specifically exempted in hadith).[3] Of the other musical instruments, only flutes are specifically mentioned in one hadith, which describes them as the "devil's wind."
2. Clapping of the hands along with the playing of the frame drum *daf* is allowed for women at celebrations.
3. Singing without instrumental accompaniment is allowed provided it falls under the following conditions:
    i. It consists of the chanting of religious texts, such as the Qur'an.
    ii. It is otherwise of a spiritual or uplifting nature, and in no way lascivious, as in the case of a *marthiya* (elegy) or *maddah* (panegyric).
    iii. It is sung to one's self as a means of relieving tension, boredom, or emotional strain; it is sung in groups to relieve monotonous work; it is sung to hasten the progress of an animal or to amuse or quiet a child.[4]
    iv. It is done to inspire loyalty or action, as in the case of national anthems or military marches.
    v. It is sung by groups in public, preferably women, as part of a religious celebration such as *'eid-al-fitr,* a wedding or a circumcision ceremony to express joy and praise with no lascivious intent.

The most conservative commentators make a distinction between "listening" and "hearing." Listening to music—meaning actively attending to the music—is restricted to listening to these forms of musical production. In fact, merely hearing the Qur'an without listening to it is actually regarded as sinful. In general, the distinction between performing, hearing, and listening forms a kind of scale against which religious conservatism can be measured. The most liberal theologians allow all three. The more conservative might allow listening and hearing but not performing. The most conservative would admit that it is impossible not to engage in hearing music inadvertently in areas where it is being performed, but active listening would be prohibited. Al-Kanadi (1986) adds the following opinions, which reflect general practice in most conservative circles regarding "hearing" music:

1. Inadvertent hearing of music, such as music one may hear in a public place, or on the radio of a neighbor is not forbidden, so long as it is not the focus of one's activity.
2. Music that accompanies a documentary film or edifying television programs may be heard as long as it is not the principal focus of the listener.

In this matter, the Shi'a community has a different approach to legal scholarship than the Sunni community. Each grand ayatollah (Ayatollah al-'Ozma) essentially has his own interpretation of Islamic law, based of course on a long precedent. Thus for the Shi'a community, there is additional flexibility in the interpretation of the prohibitions against music. A poll of the nine living grand ayatollahs shortly before the Iranian Islamic Revolution saw them widely divided on the general question of music production and the manufacturing and playing of musical instruments. They all made distinctions based on content. For instance, "lewd" or "lascivious" uses of music were forbidden by all; this classification included most popular musics. Those who approved of music in general restricted it to the forms listed above, as well as to Persian classical music.

"Twelver" Shi'ism is the state religion of Iran. It is also predominant in southern Iraq, southern Lebanon, Bahrain, and eastern Saudi Arabia. Other Persianate societies, such as the bulk of the population of Afghanistan and the Tajik populations of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, are Sunni Muslims. The Isma'ilis of the Pamir region are Shi'a Muslims, but of a different sect than the "Twelver" sect.

Accommodating Tradition: Minority Communities

The tension between the desire for music as part of human life and the doubts raised by conservative religionists is palpable for the general public. For most ordinary citizens, problems arise at the time of celebration. Weddings, circumcision ceremonies, and times of secular and religious celebration all call for the use of music in celebration (see Albright-Farr 1976; Beeman 1976, 1981a, 1981b; Blum 1972, 1978; Massoudieh 1973, 1978; Mehraban 1978; Moradi and Moradi 1994; Nettl 1978). Of course, some families and some entire communities take the most conservative stance and forbid the use of music on these occasions. However, throughout the Persianate world, for sincere believers some accommodation for the use of music on such occasions is the usual practice. In the multicultural Persianate world, one of the easiest ways to make this accommodation was to allow the tasks of professional music making to be undertaken by people for whom the Islamic prohibitions could not apply, namely, by members of other religious communities.

The principal musical culture bearers outside the Islamic community have been the Jewish communities of the Persian-speaking world. The Jewish community in Iran and Central Asia is thought to be the longest continuously resident Jewish population in the world, dating back to the removal from Babylon. The purported tomb of Queen Esther is located in Iran in the city of Hamadan, which was the ancient Achamenian city of Ecbatana. Groups of Jewish musicians were well established in Iran. In Central Asia, they have been resident in the city of Bukhara for many centuries. These groups supplied weddings, circumcision ceremonies,

and other celebrations with musical entertainment on a regular basis. This function has been documented extensively by Laurence Loeb (1972, 1976, 1977, 1978) and for Bukhara and Dushanbeh in Tajikistan by Nizam Nurjanov (1985, 2002). (See also Slobin 1982; Zand 1989.)

The dual role played by Jewish musicians in Iran, Afghanistan, and the Tajik areas of the former Soviet Union was one of necessity, on the one hand, and stigmatization, on the other. Jewish musicians were masterful culture bearers in these areas. We will probably never know the degree to which they contributed to the great classical music traditions—the *dastgah* system of Iran and the *shesh-maqam* system of Central Asia. However, there is an overlap between identifiably traditional Jewish music and these classical traditions.[5] Further, Jewish traditions spread into popular music. In this respect, the eminent singer Youna Dardashti was immensely popular in Iran before the Islamic Revolution. The artist had regular broadcasts on National Iranian Radio Television.

Likewise Armenian musicians, also not subject to the restrictions of Islam, have played an essential role in Iranian music culture. In the late Qajar period in the early twentieth century, Armenian performers were essential. Music theater and operetta were popular stage entertainments in the second and third decade of the twentieth century. The performers were frequently Islamic men and Armenian women, performers who could appear on stage without violating community standards of Islamic modesty. Many Armenian musicians have become popular throughout Iran. The popular singer Vigen Derderien, the "King of Jazz" in Iran, who died in 2004 in California, was greatly admired during the prerevolutionary period in Iran, and afterward in the Iranian diaspora. Loris Cheknavarian (also spelled Tjeknavorian) is one of Iran's premier composers, musicians, and ethnomusicologists. He composed the Persian opera *Rostam and Sohrab* and hundreds of other works that have been performed worldwide. After the revolution, when music performance became more restricted, this composer emigrated to the Republic of Armenia, where he currently lives in Yerevan. He still travels frequently to Iran.

The Gypsy community has also been important in the development of Iranian music, functioning as a source for performers of celebrations in rural areas. The famous hourglass drum, or *dombak,* player Hossein Tehrani in autobiographical interviews claims to have been influenced by Gypsy drum technique and rhythms.[6] Far less research has been carried out on Gypsy communities in Iran, where they are known as *kowli* or *dowreh-gard,* "peripatetics."[7] Nevertheless, recent studies by Afshar-Sistani (1998) and Baghbidi (2003) document the importance of Gypsy artists as itinerant musicians in rural areas. One of the chief legacies of the gypsy tradition among musicians (even Muslim musicians) is the "secret" language Zargari.[8] This language is used even today by musicians to communicate with one another in performance situations so that their patrons and guests cannot understand.

It is of interest to note that Zoroastrian and Christian minorities aside from Armenians (for instance, the Assyrians) never developed into culture bearers of the musical traditions in the Persianate world. However, they functioned in other important roles as a means of circumventing Islamic law, notably as manufacturers and purveyors of alcoholic beverages. It may be that the use of non-Muslim minorities as performing musicians is a clear observation of the religious distinction between performing, listening, and hearing established by religious conservatives. Of these three, performing music is clearly the most disapproved activity. Listening is likewise more disapproved than merely hearing music as ancillary to some other activity in life. Therefore, a Jewish or Gypsy musician can take on the onus of performance, and if the music is performed in conjunction with a celebration, it can be seen as minimally problematic for a believer, who may be "inadvertently hearing" the music and thus escaping blame.

Approved Forms of Performance: The Case of *Ta'ziyeh*

The conservative religious restrictions on music likewise shape the kinds of public performance that can be undertaken by Muslims. Aside from blatantly secular popular music performance in public venues, which is disapproved by all religious officials, other forms can be rationalized in terms of the religious guidelines set out by religious officials. In this regard, the Persianate world has been exceptionally facile in devising performance forms that can be interpreted as being acceptable

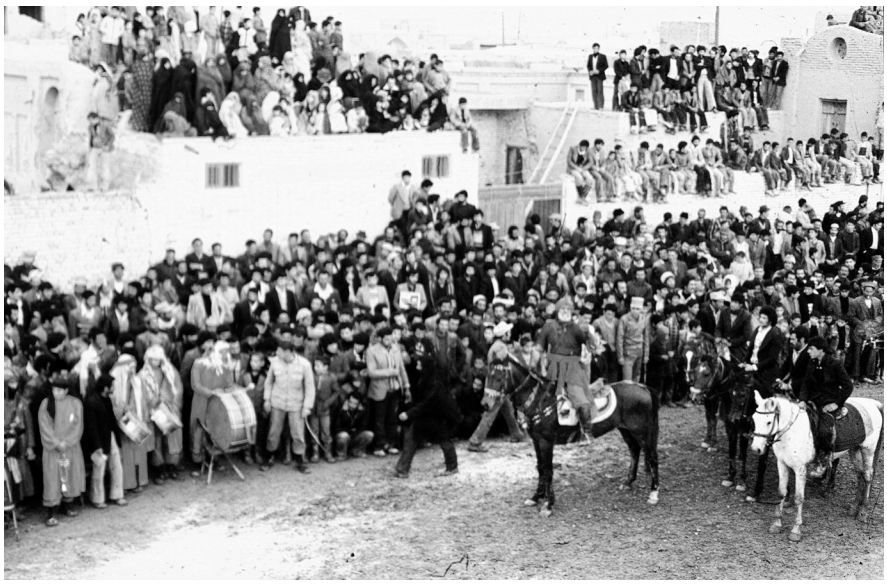

Figure 7.1: Shemr represented on a village street. Photo: William O. Beeman.

to one degree or another. In any case, both performers and listeners can argue a case for the acceptability of certain forms of music in the face of criticism. Among the most prominent approved forms of musical performance, *ta'ziyeh* has special prominence.

Iranian *ta'ziyeh* is a passion drama described extensively by Peter Chelkowski and other researchers (Chelkowski 1979a, 1979b; Chelkowski and Gaffary 1979).[9] The drama most often depicts the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, grandson of the prophet Muhammad on the plains of Karbala, located in present-day Iraq. *Ta'ziyeh* has both instrumental music, consisting of drums and trumpets, and vocal music; the sympathetic characters, allied with Imam Hussein, chant their lines using poetic texts in classical Persian musical modes (see Shahidi 1979). The antipathetic characters declaim their lines in stentorian spoken voices.[10]

Ta'ziyeh has been controversial for many years. Conservative religious leaders do not like the fact that the drama seems to depict living beings (and is thus possibly idolatrous), and they are not sure about the music. It is quite clear that the nonvillainous *ta'ziyeh* performers sing using the modes of classical Persian music. In rehearsal they identify the melodic structures in which they sing by the classic names of the *dastgahs* and their submelodies, the *gushehs*, that constitute the *radif*, or compendium of the classical music tradition.

The entire performance tradition of *ta'ziyeh* seems purposely designed to avoid possible religious criticism. *Ta'ziyeh* performers hold "sides" (scripts containing just their own cues and lines), which they glance at from time to time, allowing

Figure 7.2: *Ta'ziyeh* street. Photo: William O. Beeman.

them to claim that they are merely "reading" the story of Imam Hussein, not "depicting" the characters of the drama. This allows them to avoid criticisms that they are engaged in idolatrous representation. The musical performance is also constructed in an exceptionally clever manner, equally designed to avoid religious restrictions against music performance.

First, drums and trumpets are used to accompany physical motion on stage, such as entrances, horseback riding, and battles. This is technically allowed in Islam, because such music is martial music, which is allowed by the conservative commentators. Second, whenever anyone begins to sing, the instruments cease. Thus all singing is a cappella, as prescribed by conservative religionists. It further takes the same forms as the *marsiyya* or *maddah,* genres that are used for mourning. Thus it falls under the general rubric of religious music that is specifically allowed.[11] Finally, it is singing that is clearly edifying and expressive of religious values—also allowed by conservative Islam. The antipathetic characters do not sing, and so their less-than-edifying sentiments are not given musical expression. In this way, *ta'ziyeh* performers skirt the restrictions on music perfectly. Although the origins of *ta'ziyeh* as a form are obscure, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that some extremely clever artists designed the conventions of the form in order to avoid religious restriction.

Ta'ziyeh has one other virtue. Because the musical expression is carried out in

Figure 7.3: *Ta'ziyeh* musicians. Photo: William O. Beeman.

classical Persian musical modes, which is likewise considered edifying by most religious officials, the music itself is less objectionable than popular secular music. Moreover, it is performed in the service of a religious ritual considered edifying for the general public. In these ways, *ta'ziyeh* has protected itself for centuries from strict religious prohibition.

Other Approved Forms of Performance

At the Center: The Classical Substratum

In contrast to *ta'ziyeh,* the performance of classical Persian music in the *dastgah* system of Iran and the *sheshmaqam* system of Central Asia does not present the same variety of arguments against the Islamic musical restrictions. However, the general principle of judging musical performance by its content rather than by its form applies here. The texts in traditional classical musical performance in the Persianate world are drawn from classic poetry, most of which have spiritual or mystical significance. The poetry of Hafez, Sa'adi, and Rumi are greatly favored. The work of these poets is used in religious instruction, especially that espoused by Sufis.

The edifying nature of this music has apparently convinced the leaders of Iran to allow its performance. Since the Islamic Revolution, classical and religious music have been allowed on radio, on television, and in concerts. However, only male artists have been allowed to perform before mixed audiences. Women have been allowed to perform for female audiences. By contrast, there was never any difficulty in the performance of *sheshmaqam* in Central Asia. Under the secular Soviet Union, this music was actively cultivated, and in the post-Soviet era it continues to be revered and widely performed. However, Afghanistan has not been so fortunate under the Taliban. The extraordinary musical traditions of Afghanistan underwent severe decline in the 1990s (see Baily 1988, 1997, 2001) due to conservative religious pressure. These traditions are just now beginning to recover. The Taliban were not to be swayed by equivocation in arguing the virtues of edifying musical performance. They simply repressed musicians and burned musical instruments.

Music at the Margins

With respect to musical sanction, the folk traditions of fringe regions in the Persianate world are especially interesting. Tribal and remote mountain regions are of particular note. The tradition of *Köroğlu/Gorogli* is one such epic form (see Chodzko and Latimer 1842; Reichl 1992, 2000). There are both Persian/Tajik and Turkic forms of this epic, accompanied usually by the *dotar,* a two-stringed lute. Since this is an epic form, it escapes the disapproval of religious officials. The same is true of other epic forms in Central Asia, such as the recitation of the *Manas* epic in Kyrgyzstan.

The Pamir region of Tajikistan is likewise an area with a special musical tradition that has escaped general disapproval by religious authorities. The dominant religious tradition of the region is Isma'ili Shi'ism, which differs from the dominant Iranian Shi'ite tradition in calculating the line of succession of imams. Acknowledging the spiritual leadership of the Aga Khan, Isma'ilis live in the river valleys of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region of Tajikistan in the Pamir Mountains. There they have always incorporated music and dance into their religious celebrations. Despite a seemingly liberal attitude to music, Isma'ilis perform musical genres that are clearly shaped by generalized religious considerations.

One of the dominant forms of musical expression in the region is the *maddah* (see Van Belle 1994; Van Belle and Van den Berg 1997; Karomatov 1986; Koen 2003; Madadi and Reichow 1974; Sakata 1999). The term *maddah* in the Pamir region is somewhat broader than in the rest of the Islamic world. It is definitely a "panegyric" in the conventional sense of the word, but it is also performed at other religious gatherings. It uses a circumscribed set of instruments. In particular, it employs the *robab,* a three-stringed lute with a very special construction. It resembles both a human when oriented in one direction and a horse's head when oriented in another. The *maddah* uses classical Persian poetry as its text. Given that it is performed in a religious context, it definitely falls within the allowed uses of music.

Another form that is widely seen in the Pamir region is the *falak,* an individual emotional expression (Kurbonin 1999). *Falak*, meaning "sky" or "heaven," is conventionally described as an outburst of sadness, joy, or anger by an individual in the open.[12] This too falls within the allowed uses of music, since it is an individual expression sung without musical accompaniment, designed to relieve emotional stress. A *lala'ik,* or lullaby, is another form, and it is likewise allowed under the Islamic rules of music. Of great interest are the organized groups of women performing with *daf* (see Van Belle and Van den Berg 1997). These women form ensembles that perform both at weddings and at funerals. Once again, the specific allowances of musical expression under conservative Islam apply. Women are allowed to perform with the only truly sanctioned instrument, the *daf.*

By restricting their musical expression to religious works, the Pamiri Isma'ilis stay well within the forms of allowed musical expression and manage to create an extraordinarily rich musical life for their community. The basic religiosity of musical expression in this region has been somewhat compromised by the commercialization of these traditional musical forms. One now sees performances of *falak* on television and in concerts that bear little resemblance to the ideal of a lone shepherd on the mountain crying to heaven (see Archives internationals de musique populaire 1993; Farrukhkish 1997; Kurobonin 1999). At the opposite end of the Persianate world, it is noteworthy that among numerous mystical sects that exist among the Kurdish populations of Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, and the former Soviet Union, music is a functional element in religious ceremonies. It

is considered not an adjunct to religion but rather central to the act of worship (see Mokri 1969).

Music and Conflict

Looking at the musical forms of the Persianate world in conjunction with the restrictions placed on music by conservative Islamic commentators yields some remarkable insights. Clearly, musical artists over the centuries have taken these religious restrictions into account. The result is a particular set of musical institutions that insert themselves carefully and gingerly into the religious landscape—always surviving but always taking care not to fly totally in the face of cultural or religious sensibility. This is not to deny the lively and irreligious secular traditions that pervade the Middle East. Even these traditions contain as part of their repertoire a tilt to spiritual edification. Outright vulgarity and overt appeal to eroticism are generally avoided in an attempt to maintain some degree of respectability.

As maintained in the preceding discussion, there is no outright prohibition against music in the Islamic world per se. However, there is enough ambiguity about the propriety of music that a lively dialog exists between conservative religionists and secularists regarding what should or should not be allowed. As I have tried to show in this essay, music involved in religious observances is often not even classified as music in order to allow its performance. *Ta'ziyeh* performance is perhaps the most prominent example of this kind of dual identity for music. In *ta'ziyeh,* music becomes ambiguous. Its performers adopt strategies that allow them to escape censure from all but the most conservative religionists.

Other forms of music fall somewhat closer to that which might be prohibited by the strictest Muslim commentators. Dance music at weddings and celebrations is tolerated. Its performance is often aided by using non-Islamic musicians, who gradually have become indispensable to the preservation of a musical tradition. Classical music is considered edifying and is likewise approved by most clerical authorities. Only the most popular musical forms involving secular themes are officially disapproved, especially when performed by solo female vocalists. In Iran such performances are specifically forbidden. In Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, they are tolerated. Iranian popular performers continue to work in exile and are still the most popular musical artists throughout the Persianate region, even though they record and broadcast from other parts of the world, particularly from Los Angeles.

As Islamic sensibilities continue to move in a more conservative direction, music in the Persianate world will certainly face more challenges in the future. The repression of music under the Taliban in Afghanistan was extreme, but it could be repeated elsewhere. The minority communities, such as the Jews and the Gypsies, are no longer present in their previous numbers. They are thus not available to carry out their functions as culture bearers aiding the Islamic major-

ity. It will be fascinating to see if the challenges posed by these changes in the social and ideological fabric of the region can be met as they have been over past centuries.

Even *ta'ziyeh,* which has managed to survive the most conservative assaults over the years, is sometimes questioned by religious authorities. In contemporary Iran, where much popular entertainment has been repressed, *ta'ziyeh* continues to be performed and even protected. Indeed, the Iranian government allowed renowned *ta'ziyeh* director Mohammad Bagher Ghaffari to assemble a troupe to perform at Lincoln Center in New York in 2002 (see Beeman 2003). Thus it seems likely that *ta'ziyeh* for the moment will escape the most extreme conservative repression of musical performance in the Islamic Republic.

Notes

1. See Sura An-Najm 53:59–62, Sura Al-Israa 17:64, Sura Luqmaan 31:7. Those who wish to claim the Qur'anic prohibition against music usually interpret a disdain for "idle talk" (*lahwal hadith*) in the Sura an-Najm to include music, a stretch that is rejected by all but the most conservative commentators. One other Qur'anic verse speaks disdainfully of the purchase of "articles of pleasure," which has been interpreted by conservatives to include musical instruments.

2. It goes without saying that some religious commentators will differ on interpretation of one or more of these points. This list is my judgment of the "rules of thumb" that most pious Muslims follow. I use as one authority the recent publication by Abu Bilal Mustafa al-Kanadi titled *The Islamic Ruling on Music and Singing* (al-Kanadi 1998). A translation can be found at http://oum_abdulaziz.tripod.com/music1.html. Islamic convert al-Kanadi was born in Italy in 1950 and raised and educated in Canada. The author of many commentaries on Islamic thought from a Salafi perspective, he died in 1989. *Salafi* is a term referring to the earliest Muslims (latter day Muslims are referred to as *khalafi*) and is generally used to designate followers of the most conservative schools of Islamic thought.

3. Al-Kanadi, covering all bases, writes: "As for instruments like the synthesizer or other electronic gadgets which simulate the sounds of conventional musical instruments, the ruling regarding them is precisely the ruling established regarding the instruments they imitate—namely, prohibition. The same ruling applies to the human voice if it is able to simulate an instrument from any one of the foregoing categories" (1998, 65). One assumes that performances by Bobby McFerrin would not be allowed in strict Islamic circles.

4. Al-Kanadi summarizes the commentaries of many scholars as follows: "[Music is allowed] in order to give one strength in carrying heavy loads or doing laborious, monotonous work, pure songs with clean lyrics may be resorted to individually or in chorus, as was done by the Prophet and his companions in digging the trench around Madeenah. During long travels by horse, camel or other riding animals, one may sing or chant rhythmically to relieve boredom and to quicken the animal's pace, as was done by the Arabs during their travels by caravan. The Prophet's camel driver, Anjashah, was known to do this as a way of getting the beasts to move at faster pace. In addition to this, innocent singing to one's self during loneliness or boredom is allowed, as well as a parent's singing to a baby or small child in order to amuse it, to quiet it or to put it to sleep. In conclusion,

songs whose lyrics heighten spiritual consciousness and encourage people to pious works, such as prayer, charity, *jihad*, etc. are all praiseworthy, but these should be resorted to in moderation, on appropriate occasions and according to proper decorum" (1998, 70).

5. Several examples showing this overlap can be found on Willy Schwarz's CD *Jewish Music around the World* (2003). Nettl and Shiloah (1978) also note the persistence of Persian classical music among the Iranian Jews of Israel, although these scholars maintain that Jewish musicians in Iran have had less influence on classical traditions than on more popular forms of music. See Seroussi and Davidoff (1999) for a study of the music of Afghan Jews.

6. See http://www.iranchamber.com/music/htehrani/hossein_tehrani.php (accessed October 20, 2009).

7. Baghbidi writes: "The migrations of Gypsies in Iran have been so extensive that at present they can be found in almost all Iranian provinces, where they are given various names, such *as Čegini, Čingāna, Foyuj, Harāmi, Jugi, Kowli, Lavand, Luli, Luri, Pāpati, Qarači, Qarbālband, Qerešmāl, Qorbati, Suzmāni, Zangi, Zot,* and so on. The word *Kowli,* which is more commonly used in Iran, is sometimes thought to be a distortion of *Kāboli* (i.e. coming from Kabul, Afghanistan), but its derivation from the Gypsy word *kālā* or *kāūlā* (cf. Hindi *kālā,* Zargari *kālo/qālo*), meaning 'black, dark,' seems more logical" (2003, 124). See Margarian (2001) and Voskanian (2002) for more on Gypsies in Armenian and Caucasian regions.

8. *Zargar* means "goldsmith," and this seems appropriate for a Gypsy dialect, but in fact, Zargari is spoken primarily in the village of Zargar near Qazvin in north central Iran. It may be that the village was named for its inhabitants, in which case the name for the language would be derived from the ethnic identification of its residents. One story claims that three goldsmith brothers were brought from India by Nader Shah; thus the appellation derived from this event (Baghbidi 2003). Note that "secret languages" used by musicians are often *called* "Zargari" by musicians themselves, even though they may not actually be based on Romany. Frequently such codes are akin to pig latin or other simply disguised speech.

9. It should be mentioned that Shi'ism, for which *ta'ziyeh* and other mourning practices for Imam Hossein are premier dramatic and musical observances, is only practiced in the Persianate world in Iran, among the Hazara minority community in Afghanistan and among the Isma'ilis of the Pamir region of Tajikistan. The Persian speakers of Central Asia are Sunni. By and large, music is not practiced at all in Sunni observances.

10. For more literature on *ta'ziyeh,* see Beeman (1979, 2003) and Chelkowski and Gaffary (1979) among others.

11. It should be noted that some performances of *ta'ziyeh* in recent years have begun to relax this tradition. Flutes have been observed, and such classical music techniques as call and response, with some overlap between the flute and the voice, have been employed. This is a recent innovation, not part of traditional practice.

12. The ideal is one being alone on a mountainside engaging in an emotional musical outburst.

List of References: Beeman

Afshar Sistani, Iraj

1998. *Kawli'ha : Pizhuhishi Dar Zaminah-'I Zindagi-I Kawliyan-I Iran Va Jahan*, Chap-i 1 edition. Tehran: Rawzanah, 1377 [1998].

Albright Farr, Charlotte Fey

1976. The Music of Professional Musicians of Northwest Iran (Azerbaijan)Music (Ethnomusicology), Seattle, Washington, University of Washington.

Al-Kanadi, Abu Bilal Mustafa

1986. *The Islamic Ruling on Music and Singing*. Jeddah, Saudi Arabia: Abul-Qasim Bookstore.

And, Metin

1979. "The Muharram Observances in Anatolian Turkey." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 238-254. New York: New York UP.

Anvar, Iraj

1991. A Study of Peripheral Ta'ziyeh in Iran. Ph.D., Near Eastern Studies, New York, New York University.

Archives internationales de musique populaire

1993. Asie Centrale Les Maîtres Du Dotâr = Central Asia : The Masters of the Dotâr (Sound Recording). VDE-Gallo. VDE CD-735.

Baghbidi, Hassan Rezai harezai yahoo co uk

2003. The Zargari Language: An Endangered European Romani in Iran. *Romani Studies* 13:123-149.

Baily, John

1988. *Music of Afghanistan: Professional Musicians in the City of Herat*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

1997. The Naghma-Ye Kashâl of Afghanistan. *British journal of ethnomusicology* 6:117-163.

2001. *Can You Stop the Birds Singing? The Censorship of Music in Afghanistan*. Copenhagen, Denmark: Freemuse.

Baktash, Mayel

1979. "Ta'ziyeh and Its Philosophy." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 95-120. New York: New York UP.

Beeman, William O

1976. You Can Take Music out of the Country, But...: The Dynamics of Change in Iranian Musical Tradition. *Asian music*:6-19.

1979a. "Cultural Dimensions of Performance Conventions in Iranian Ta'ziyeh." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 24-31. New York: New York UP.

1979b. Cultural Dimensions of Performance Conventions in Iranian Ta'ziyeh.

1981a. "A Full Arena: The Development and Meaning of Popular Performance Traditions in Iran." In *Modern Iran: The Dialectics of Continuity and Change*. Edited by Michael Bonine and Nikki R. Keddie, pp. 361-382, notes 440-444. Albany: State University of New York Press. .

1981b. Why Do They Laugh? An Interactional Approach to Humor in Traditional Iranian Improvisatory Theater. *Journal of American Folklore* 94:506-526.

2003. "The Ta'ziyeh of Hor (Review)." In *Theatre Journal*, vol. 55, pp. 359.

Belle, Jan Van (recording)

1994. Badakhshan: Mystical Poetry and Songs from the Pamir Mountains (Sound Recording). PAN-2024.

Belle, Jan Van (recording); and Gabrielle Van Den (comm) Berg

1997. Madahkhani, Ghazalkhani, Dafsaz: Religious Music from Badakhshan (Sound Recording). PAN Records-2036.

Blum, Robert Stephen

1972. Musics in Contact : The Cultivation of Oral Repertoires in Meshed, Iran.

1978. Changing Roles of Performers in Meshhed and Bojnurd." In *Eight Urban Cultures: Tradition and Change Yr - 1985 La - English*. Edited by Bruno Nettl, pp

19-95. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Braune, Gabriele

1994. Die Stellung Des Islams Zur Musik. *Jahrbuch für musikalische Volks und Völkerkunde* 15:153.

Calmard, Jean

1979. "Le Patronage Des Ta'ziyeh: Elements Pour Une Etude Globale." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 121-130. New York: New York UP.

Chelkowski, Peter J

1979a. "Bibliographical Spectrum." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 255-268. New York: New York UP.

1979b. "Ta'ziyeh: Indigenous Avant-Garde Theater of Iran." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 1-11. New York: New York UP.

Chelkowski, Peter J.; and Farrokh Gaffary. Editors

1979. *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran. New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. New York: New York UP.

Chodzko, Alexander; and Frederick P. Latimer

1842. *Specimens of the Popular Poetry of Persia : As Found in the Adventures and Improvisations of Kurroglou, the Bandit-Minstrel of Northern Persia : And in the Songs of the People Inhabiting the Shores of the Caspian Sea*. London: Printed for the Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland and sold by W.H. Allen.

Elwell Sutton, L. P

1979. "The Literary Sources of the Ta'ziyeh." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 167-181. New York: New York UP.

Engel, Hans

1986. Die Stellung Des Musikers Im Arabisch-Islamischen Raum. *Orpheus Schriftenreihe zu Grundfragen der Musik* 49.

Eqbal, Zahra

1979. "Elegy in the Qajar Period." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 193-209. New York: New York UP.

Farrukhkish, Shahzad

1997. *Arghanun Saz-I Falak : Pizhuhishi Dar Musiqi Sunnati-ye-Iran*, Chap-i 1. edition. Isfahan: Mav'ûd.

Floor, Willem

2005 *The History of Theatre in Iran.* Washington, D.C.: Mage Publishers.

Fulchignoni, Enrico

1979. "Quelques Considerations Comparatives Entre Les Rituels Du Taqziyeh Iranien Et Les 'Spectacles De La Passion' Du Moyen-Age Chretien En Occident." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 131-136. New York: New York UP.

Hanaway, William L., Jr

1979. "Stereotyped Imagery in the Ta'ziyeh." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 182-192. New York: New York UP.

Honari, Morteza

2003 [1381]. *Ta'ziyeh Dar Khor [the Passion-Plays of Khor]*. Tehran: Ettela'at Publications.

Humayuni, Sadeq

1979. "An Analysis of the Ta'ziyeh of Qasem." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 12-23. New York: New York UP.

Jaffri, Syed Husain Ali

1979 "Muharram Ceremonies in India." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 222-227. New York: New York UP.

Karomatov, Fajzulla Muzaffarovic (author); and Nizom Habibulloevic (ed) Nurdzanov

1986 *Muzykal'noje Iskusstvo Pamira: Muzykal'nije Predstavlenija I Tanci Pamirskih Tajikov (Musical Arts of the Pamir: Musical Performances and Dances of the Tajik Pamir Region) Volumes 1 and 2*. Moscow: Sovetskij Kompozitor.

Koen, Benjamin D (author)

2003 The Spiritual Aesthetic in Badakhshani Devotional Music. *The world of music: Journal of the Department of Ethnomusicology, Otto-Friedrich University of Bamberg.* XLV:77-90.

Kurbonin, K

1999. Falak: Zanr Tadzikskoj Professional'noj Tradicionnoj Muzyki (Falak as a Genre of Tajik Professionally Played Traditional Music). *Tadzikskaja muzykal'naja kul'tura nacala 21 veka: Prioritety razvitija Number: 1999-03215, Dushanbeh, Tajikistan, 1999*, pp. 89 33, entry 7745.

Loeb, Laurence D

1972. The Jewish Musician and the Music of Fars. *Asian Music* 4:3-14.

1976. Dhimmi Status and Jewish Roles in Iranian Society. *Ethnic Groups* 1:89-105.

1977. *Outcaste : Jewish Life in Southern Iran*. *Library of Anthropology*. New York ; London: Gordon and Breach.

1978. Prestige and Piety in an Iranian Synagogue. *Anthropological Quarterly* 51:155-161.

Madadi, Abdul Wahab (comm); and Jan (comm) Reichow

1974. Afghanistan: A Journey to an Unknown Musical World (Sound Recording). NET. 56986.

Mahjub, Mumammad Ja'far

1979. "The Effect of European Theatre and the Influence of Its Theatrical Methods Upon Ta'ziyeh." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 137-153. New York: New York UP.

Mamnoun, Parviz

1979. "Ta'ziyeh from the Viewpoint of the Western Theatre." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 154-166. New York: New York UP.

Margarian, Hayrapet

2001. The Nomads and Ethnopolitical Realities of Trnascaucasia in the 11th-14th Centuries. *Iran & The Caucasus* 5:75-79.

Massoudieh, Mohammad Taghi

1981. "Beziehungen Zwischen Persischen Volksmelodien Und Der Persischen Kunst- Und Volksmusik (Relationships between Persian Folk Melodies and Persian Art and Folk Music)." In *Ims Report, Berkeley 1977 Yr - 1981 La - German*, Relationships between Persian folk melodies and Persian art and folk music RT - Main Record PT - as Article in a symposium edition, pp. 612-616. Kassel, Germany: Bärenreiter.

Massoudieh, Mohammed Taghi

1973. "Tradition Und Wandel in Der Persischen Musik Des 19. Jahrhunderts." In *Jahrbuch Für Musikalische Volks-Und Völkerkunde*, Tradition and change in Persian music of the 19th century RT - Main Record PT - ac Article in a collection of essays edition, vol. VII (Musikkulturen Asiens, Afrikas und Ozeaniens im 19. Jahrhundert), pp. 58-60.

Mazzaoui, Michel M

1979. "Shi'ism and Ashura in South Lebanon." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter-J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 228-237. New York: New York UP.

Mehraban, Hossein

1978. Folk Music of Fars Province, Iran: A Selection of Children's Games, Folk Songs. PhD, Music education, Evanston, Illinois, Northwestern University.

Mo'ini, Reza (comm) Moradi, Shahmirza (performer) Moradi, Reza

1994. The Music of Lorestan, Iran (Sound Recording). Nimbus Records. NI5397.

Mokri, Mohammad

1969. "La Musique Sacré Des Kurdes 'Fidèles De Veritá' En Iran." In *Encyclopédie Des Musique Sacrèes Yr - 1969 La - French*, The sacred music of the Kurds 'Faithful to the truth' in Iran RT - Main Record PT - ac Article in a collection of essays edition, vol. 1, pp. 441-453.

Nettl, Bruno

1978. *Eight Urban Musical Cultures : Tradition and Change*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Nettl, Bruno; and Amnon Shiloah

1978. Persian Classical Music in Israel. *Israel Studies in Musicology* 1:142-158.

Nurdzanov (Nurjanov), Nizam

1985. *Drami Khalkii Tojik (Tajik Folk Drama)*. Dushanbeh: Donish.

2002. *Tradizionn Teatr Tadzhikov (Traditions of Tajik Theatre)*. Vol. 1 and 2. Dushanbeh: Aga Khan Humanities Project.

Peterson, Samuel R.

1979. "The Ta'ziyeh and Related Arts." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 64-87. New York: New York UP.

Reichl, Karl

1992. *Turkic Oral Epic Poetry : Tradition, Forms, Poetic Structure*. New York: Garland.

2000. *Singing the Past : Turkic and Medieval Heroic Poetry*. *Myth and Poetics.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Riggio, Milla C

1994. Ta'ziyeh in Exile: Transformations in a Persian Tradition. *Comparative Drama* 28:115-140.

Sakata, Lorraine

1999. Review of Madahkhani, Ghazalkhani, Dafsaz: Religious Music from Badakhshan (Belle, Jan Van [Recording] Berg, Gabrielle Van Den [Comm]). *Yearbook for traditional music* 31:208.

Sayyad, Parviz; and Hamid Dabashi

1993. *Theater of Diaspora : Two Plays: The Ass and the Rex Cinema Trial*. Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda Publishers.

Schimmel, Annemarie

1979. "The Marsiyeh in Sindhi Poetry." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 210-221. New York: New York UP.

Schwartz, Willy

2003. Jewish Music around the World. Radio Bremen. WS2003.

Seroussi, Edwin; and Boaz Davidoff

1999. On the Study of the Musical Traditions of the Jews of Afghanistan. *Pe'amim* 79:159-170.

Shahidi, Anayatullah (In'ayat Allah)
1979. "Literary and Musical Developments in the Ta'ziyeh." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 40-63. New York: New York UP.

Shahidi, In'ayat Allah; and Al i Bulookbashi
2002. *Pezhuheshi Dar Ta'ziyeh Va Ta'ziyeh Khvani : Az Aghaz Ta Payan-I Dawrah-I Qajar Dar Tehran [Research on Ta'ziyeh and Ta'ziyeh-Khani in Tehran Research on the Shia Indigenous Drama of Ta'ziyeh from the Beginning to the End of Qajar Era]*, Chap-i 1. edition. Tihran: Daftar-i Pizhuhish-ha-yi Farhangi : Kumisiyun- i Milli-i Yunisku dar Iran.

Slobin, Mark
1982. Notes on Bukharan Music in Israel. *Yuval Studies of the Jewish Music Research Centre* 4:225-239.

Voskanian, Vardan
2002. The Iranian Loan-Words in Lomavren, the Secret Language of the Armenian Gypsies. *Iran & The Caucasus* 6:169-181.

Wirth, Andrzej
1979. "Semeiological Aspects of the Ta'ziyeh." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter-J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 32-39. New York: New York UP.

Yarshater, Ehsan
1979. "Ta'ziyeh and Pre-Islamic Mourning Rites in Iran." In *Ta'ziyeh: Ritual and Drama in Iran, New York Univ. Studies in near Eastern Civilization; 7*. Edited by Peter- J. Chelkowski and Farrokh Gaffary, pp. 88-94. New York: New York UP.

Zand, Mikhail Isaakovich
1989. "Bukharan Jews." In *Encyclopedia Iranica*. Edited by Ehsan Yarshater, pp. 531-545. London.