

Singing the Nation

Words of the People, Music for Iran

For all of the distinctions of structure and performance between the music of the *radif-dastgah* tradition and the twelve-*maqam* system, the sung texts were initially similar in many respects. While the role of systematic modality appeared in early documentation largely as an imposition upon the initial *dastgah* practice, this modality was imposed on top of music structured around long-form poetry recitation. In the earliest documentation of the system, poetry stood at the heart of the practice, and the poetry that structured the *dastgah* tradition relied heavily on pre-seventeenth-century Persian poetry, mainly the genre of poetry known as *ghazal*.¹ Whatever approach to pitch organization the seven *dastgah* originally had, it related to how music was used to present sequences of poetry as a single, continuous musical performance.

While not composed specifically for musical performance, *ghazal* poetry appears to have a long history in the music performance of Central and South Asia. *Ghazal* appear in Maraghi's song text collections and he did mention it as a genre with its own song form.² Yet *ghazal* poetry had a much longer polyglot history. It began as an Arabic genre of poetry, and was eventually adopted by poets writing in many other languages. But the form thrived in Persian, where it took on some new structural features. The Persian form of *ghazal* became the basis for Urdu *ghazal*, and these two languages would ultimately define many of its various uses in music over centuries. The specific Persian *ghazal* of the *radif-dastgah* tradition were part of the era that many Iranian came to define as the golden era of Iranian music and literature, between the time of Safi al-Din and Maraghi. Yet the choice to use very little contemporary poetry, and to reach so far back in history as to find the tradition's poetic focus, distinguished the *radif-*

dastgah tradition's poetry choices from those of the twelve-maqam system. For all appearances, Maraghi's song text collections focused on poetry proximate to the possible timeframe of performance. The later Safavid song texts often named the contemporary composer who wrote the song and the specific ruler for whom it was composed. The twelve-maqam system depended on the wisdom of the ancient past to legitimate its musical logic, but its song texts clearly had a large degree of temporal proximity to its musical practice. Conversely, the radif-dastgah tradition skipped over several centuries to go back in time and find its core poetic voice.

The radif-dastgah tradition's structural dependence on demonstrably ancient poetry contextualized the music within the project of Iranian nationalization. The sung texts of the tradition embodied the ancient poetry of Iran's great Persian past. This alone, however, was not sufficient to make the tradition a proper contributor to the building and maintenance of modern Iran. The *tasnif* thus developed as an addendum to the poetic procedural model of the dastgah. *Tasnif* came to be defined by their fully metered structure and their use of contemporary poetry. The poetry of the *tasnif* could directly address the Iranian people, their current experiences, struggles, and hopes for the future.

Initially both the original seven dastgah and additional metered song compositions relied heavily on ghazal. While the term *tasnif* was not mentioned in the earliest writings about the tradition, Forsat did mention *kar* and *'amal* (*kār o 'amal*). These two terms had referred to various types of metered songs at different points in premodern Persian writings on music, and Forsat listed them together a few times, suggesting that the phrase referenced a metered song framework associated with the dastgah.³ What began as a metered song setting for ancient poetry more in keeping with compositional forms of the twelve-maqam system developed into the *tasnif* tradition with its own modern poetic themes. Though borrowing from the symbolic imagery of the ancient poetry remained a feature of *tasnif*, their poetry came to focus on topics and symbolism more relevant to urban society in early-twentieth-century Iran.

Initially, the dastgah appear to have been a musical framing for poetry recitation, which focused on ghazal, but generally involved poetry being sung and improvised upon in short sections. Couplets from ghazal and some other types of poetry were parsed out into individual melodies (*gusheh*) that were interspersed with various types of musical interludes, such as *tahrir* or *chahar mezrab*. Poetry constituted the core of the *avaz* and the question of how the *gusheh* of a dastgah were organized related in part to how the couplets would be presented in the *avaz*: what order they would be sung in, which ones would be improvised upon, which ones were dominant versus those that were secondary. How melody was constructed in a dastgah involved a complex dialectical relationship between poetry and pitch. Choices about melody needed to provide an appropriate frame for the poetic foot of specific couplets, but also a sense of logical progression from one

section of poetry to the next: a sense of beginning, ongoing development, and eventual finality at the end of a performance.

The ghazals of the dastgah focused on the poetry tradition that developed after the Mongol Invasion and with the rise of Persian as the lingua franca of Islamic empire in place of Arabic. Two prolific Persian ghazal writers of this era, Hafez (1315–1390) and Sa’di (d. c. 1291), were thus the focus of dastgah performance. Other poetic repertoire from outside the ghazal that consistently appeared included specific sections of the *Masnavi* of Rumi (1207–1273) and a few poems from the short *dobayt* genre, usually taken from the oeuvre of Baba Taher Orian, who lived no later than the thirteenth century. One short excerpt from the Ferdowsi’s *Book of Kings* (*Shāhnāmeḥ*) also regularly appears, though Forsat did not document this particular poem as having a place in the seven dastgah of the Qajar court.

Regardless of how new or old the poetry used in the performance, the focus of topics shifted far away from the shah, sultan, or king, and strongly toward love poetry and the mystical allegories of Sufism. Indeed, while writers like Maraghi and Amir Khan Gorji compiled song texts as part of their duties within dynastic courts, the *radif-dastgah* tradition was defined by the disintegration of the court and court musicians’ movement into modern spaces both public and private. The first people to record texts used by court musicians were not affiliated with the Qajar court as either servants or courtiers: they were outsiders to the Qajar ruling class.

In this context, the Qajars initially patronized musical expression in keeping with the general practices of previous dynastic eras, yet the texts used for singing in the *radif-dastgah* tradition did not honor this patronage as music slipped away from dynastic control and moved into the citizenry of the nation. Like the Safavids, the Qajars had their own works of art depicting themselves in their dynastic glory, including depictions of musicians and dancers as part of the Qajar display of their courtly majesty. Yet as dynastic patronage ended altogether, the ruling dynasty did not find favor in song, and even became a subject of sung disdain from the citizenry. While the premodern poetry used in the dastgah largely eliminated kingship as a theme for musical expression, *tasnif* eventually came to actively reject kingship and anything else that impeded the agency of the Iranian nation. *Tasnif* sang of Iran as an entity unto itself, a nation distinct from any dynast, in need of cultural revitalization and government reform.

THE POETICS OF IRANIAN HISTORY—THE GHAZAL, THE TASNIF, AND THE DASTGAH

The stylistic features of ghazal from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were typically encompassed within between five and fifteen couplets. They used a monorhyming scheme, and the opening couplet (*moṭlaʿ*) was distinguished by the rhyming of its sequential hemistiches. After the first couplet, only the second

hemistich of each couplet rhymed with the second hemistich of each succeeding couplet. One possible variation on this structure would be for a ghazal to have a repeated word, phrase, or suffix involved in each rhyme, which is referred to as *radif*, referencing the refrain quality of the repetition.

Ghazal could be set in many different poetic meters (*buhūr*) from the defined rules of poetry that Persian inherited from Arabic (*ʿarūḏ*). The ghazals' variations in poetic meter were a contributing factor to the rhythmic aesthetic in the *radif-dastgah* tradition, specifically in the *avaz* portion of the performance, where the ghazal dominated. As the core poetic repertoire of the *avaz*, the musically unmeasured feeling of these *gusheh* related in part to their accommodation of the variety of poetic meters used in ghazal. Conversely, the *gusheh* in the *avaz* that derived from other poetic forms often contained more rhythmic consistency. For instance, two other genres of poetry that most commonly supplemented the ghazal in the *avaz* were Rumi's *Masnavi* and the *dobayt*, both of which were usually organized around eleven-syllable poetic meters. With a consistent count of syllables in every poem, *gusheh* could have a greater amount of rhythmic consistency while still adhering to poetic meter over musical meter. The ghazal *gusheh* were also much more likely to be the subject of improvisation in performance, although some were more likely to be used as a source of improvisation than others.⁴

The focus of ghazal in the *dastgah* was romantic or erotic love and Islamic mysticism, the latter of which could be addressed through double entendre with the former. Ghazal took a series of common tropes used to describe the beloved in Persian poetry and developed them into a complex symbolic representation that could relate to aspects of human love and the pain of separation from the beloved. These tropes could also address mystical themes, including the pain of humanity's separation from God and the ecstatic experience of divine reunion. Ghazal also adopted poetic references to wine and wine-drinking, which could also be taken either literally in reference to drunkenness or as a symbolic reference to romantic infatuation or the ecstasy of unity with the divine.

The types of symbols and themes found in ghazal were not unique to this specific genre of poetry. Much more unique to ghazal was the ongoing mixing of these two themes with other points of focus, and the complexity of metaphor involved with thematic reflection. The ghazal genre of Persian poetry developed into an esoteric literary form, with statements that often embodied many different possible interpretations well beyond the double entendre of human and divine love. Another issue that could add to the complexity of interpreting the meaning of ghazal is the way its couplets often represent complete, independent thoughts and thus could be separated and rearranged. Oral versions of ghazal used in the *dastgah* did not always match modern edited editions, with variations in the number of couplets and the couplet ordering, as well as some differences in actual text.

In the performance of a *dastgah* and later the *avaz-dastgah*, couplets taken from a single ghazal could be the primary organizing factor for *gusheh* in the first part

of the performance, with other poetry delineating the second portion of the performance. Yet the use of the ghazal did not necessitate narrating a single ghazal in a set order before moving on to other poetry, nor did a single ghazal have to be used. Most of the gusheh of the radif were designed to accommodate only one or two couplets of poetry at a time. Thus couplets of multiple ghazal could be variously arranged in a dastgah's gusheh sequence. Other gusheh based on other poetic forms could also intervene earlier in the performance, in between couplets of ghazal.

Forsat provided a detailed listing of specific ghazal in his text the *Buhur al-Alhan*, including which melodic framework he would use to perform the specific ghazal he listed. The ghazal take up most of the text's presentation of poetry he associated with the seven dastgah. In describing other types of poetry associated with the seven dastgah, he had much less to say and spoke in generalities about several other genres of poetry and what their melodic framing would be. In listing which melodic aspects of the seven dastgah could be used to perform specific ghazal, Forsat noted that he was simply trying to account for what the musicians of the Qajar court most commonly did in practice and thus often lists more than one melodic possibility at the top of each ghazal poem, accounting for some possible variations in practice.

By the late twentieth century, the poetry of the radif-dastgah tradition appears to have become more narrowly defined. While Forsat's listing of poetry provided a limited perspective on how the poetry would be rendered in the dastgah, the vocal radifs of the twentieth century provide some significant insight, as the vocal versions of radif matched specific poetry to specific melodic progressions. The most important vocal radif historically is that of Abdollah Davami (1891–1980). Davami's radif is one of the oldest available radifs to be recorded by the originator, Davami himself. Davami's late-nineteenth-century birth places his initial performance career in the early to mid-twentieth century and he recorded his radif as well as tasnif he knew later in the twentieth century. Davami organized his radif to account for the dastgah vs. avaz-dastgah distinction, and he did not use one set of poetry for each dastgah or avaz: the radif he recorded encompassed multiple possibilities for what poetry could be sung. Indeed, the other vocal radif from Davami's student Karimi (1927–1984) came later in the twentieth century and provided a larger vocal radif, which included poetry options that Davami's recorded radif did not. Though both radifs use far less poetry than Forsat suggested, they both demonstrate some consistent aspects of structure, and specific variations that demonstrate how poetry created much of the basis for the dastgah's original structure.

Forsat presented ghazal as the core poetry of the tradition, and the vocal radifs confirm the centrality of the ghazal from its earliest practice. One key difference between the vocal radifs and those from instrumental performers was their focus on the melodies that had poetic texts. The two vocal radifs were smaller than the instrumental radifs assigned to early musicians such as Mirza Abdullah and Hossein Qoli, and much smaller than radifs of the later twentieth century. Yet the overlap between basic core gusheh organization in the vocal radifs and instrumen-

tal versions—as well as similarities between the modern radif and Forsat’s charting of each dastgah’s melodic progression—places the poetry in general and the ghazal specifically as the organizing factor of the basic melodic organization of any dastgah performance.

The poetry of the dastgah demonstrates both the ultimate origins of the procedural nature of the dastgah and the extent to which the tradition avoided themes of kingship while also fostering a Persian musical tradition distinct from dynastic authority. Literal, figurative, and symbolic reference to kingship can be found throughout the ghazal of Hafez and Sa’di, as well as the collections of other ghazal writers. These themes also make prominent appearances in other poetic genres found in the radif-dastgah tradition. But in the specific poems used in practice for the radif-dastgah tradition, kings and references to kingship are very rare, and when they occur, they are metaphors to describe a beloved person or otherwise frame the existence of a beloved person. The tasnif tradition took this move away from kingship one step further, reframing Iran as a freestanding nation independent from dynastic authority, a type of government that could actually harm the Iranian nation.

ANCIENT POETRY AND MELODIC STRUCTURES OF THE DASTGAH

Forsat’s listing of poetry indicates that, while he saw a focus on the ghazal of Sa’di and Hafez, he saw no rules for which ghazal were performed with which dastgah. He specified which melodic entities associated with the seven dastgah were likely to be used to perform specific, individual ghazal in practice, while describing other types of poetry in generalities. For instance, he did not list different sections of the Masnavi as being customarily performed in any specific dastgah. Instead, he generally stated that any poetry from the Masnavi would be best performed in Dashti, Bakhtiari, and Quchani, which were cast as melodic entities that belonged to the dastgah.⁵ Though the specific poems and parameters for poetry Forsat outlined do not always specifically align with poetry in Davami’s radif, Forsat did indicate the general model of poetry’s relationship with dastgah in practice. The couplets of one specific ghazal would dominate the structure of dastgah performance, with the addition of shorter melodic sections based on excerpts from other poetic genres.

Davami’s two different versions of Chahargah demonstrate both the centrality of poetry to performance organization and the variability in how the ghazal were sequenced vis-à-vis the progressions of gusheh that underpinned their performance. In the first version of Chahargah provided by Davami (shown in table 4), the poetry focused on Hafez’s ghazal with the opening couplet of “Know the value of time as much as you can; the fruit of life is this moment, my dear, if you would just notice it” (*vaqt rā ghanīmat dān ān qadar keh betavānī; ḥāṣel az ḥāyat ey jān yek dam ast aḡar dānī*). The genres of poetry occurring later in Chahargah include

TABLE 4. Division of Poetry in Chahargah According to Davami, First Version

Gusheh Name, Section of Poetry	Poetry Translation
1st DARAMAD ** <i>tahrir</i> **	**no poetry**
2nd DARAMAD First couplet	Know the value of time as much as you can The fruit of life is this moment, my dear, if you would just notice it
ZABOL Ninth couplet ** <i>tahrir</i> ** (Muyeh)	Speak not of the ruffian (<i>rendi</i>) in front of the ascetic One cannot tell his secret pain to a stranger physi- cian
HESAR Tenth couplet	As you are walking, your eyelashes are shedding people's blood You are walking too fast, my dear. I fear you will become exhausted
MOKHALEF Third couplet	Gardener, when I pass away for shame if you plant any cypress in my place other than my friend
RAZAJ Shahnameh (Ferdowsi)	A king had one daughter who looked like the moon; It is possible that the moon has two black eyes? In the corner of her eye was a beauty spot That her own eyes also looked after
HODI Masnavi, introduction (Rumi) first and second lines	Listen to the flute made of reed, how it tells a tale, complaining of separation Saying: "Ever since I was parted from the reed-bed, my lament has caused man and woman to moan"
PAHLAVI Masnavi, introduction (Rumi) third, fourth, and fifth lines (order when sung: 3rd, 5th, 4th)	I need a chest burst from the separation To explain the pain of yearning In every group I uttered my wailing notes I consorted with the unhappy and those who rejoice Any one shared pain with me But they did not seek secrets inside me
MANSURI (New Ghazal) First, second, third, and eighth couplets	My heart is the private dwelling of her love My eyes are mirrors held before her face I, who would not bow for the two worlds, Have my neck under the burden of indebtedness to her You and paradise, I and the beloved's stature Each person's thought is as great as his aspiration Majnoon's time has passed, and now it is our turn Each person has her turn for only a few days

a short quatrain associated with Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, and the opening lines of the introduction to Rumi's *Masnavi*. The switch from ghazal to other poetic genres occurs with the gusheh named *Rajaz* where the poetry of Ferdowsi appears, which in turn leads to the gusheh of *Hodi* and *Pahlavi* that each convey sequential lines of the *Masnavi*. After the *Masnavi*, Mansuri introduces more ghazal poetry, this time from a different ghazal of Hafez, with the opening couplet "The heart is the private dwelling of her love, my eyes are mirrors held before her face" (*del sarā pardeh-i maḥabat-i ūst / dīdeh īneh dār-i ṭal'at-i ūst*).

Davami's *radif* provides some interesting insight into how this early poetry-centric model of *dastgah* performance influenced the *radif-dastgah* tradition as the twentieth century progressed. In Bruno Nettl's analysis of Chahargah's performance in the later twentieth century, the multiple gusheh that were built upon the presentation of a specific ghazal still stood as the central defining gusheh of Chahargah: the *Daramad*, *Zabol*, *Hesar*, *Mokhalef*, *Maghlub*, and *Mansuri*.⁶ This was true even when Chahargah was performed instrumentally without a vocalist.

Muyeh was also an important gusheh in Chahargah. But while the other core gusheh appeared consistently as a set sequence, *Muyeh*'s position could change in the melodic sequencing of the *dastgah* or it could be omitted altogether.⁷ *Hodi* and *Pahlavi* were also specific to Chahargah and needed to be performed in succession, but these two gusheh and *Rajaz* were also more optional than the initial progression that carried the multisectional presentation of the ghazal.

The gusheh mentioned by Forsat that also had melodic equivalents in Chahargah in the *radifs* of the late twentieth century were shared across various *dastgah* and not specific to Chahargah or the multisectional presentation of ghazal: *Zanguleh*, *Naghmeh*, *Baste-Negar*, and *Kereshmeh*. Of these gusheh, only *Kereshmeh* had a melody-type typical for singing ghazal. The rest appear to function as secondary melodic sections providing different types of musical interludes to the primary presentation of poetry.

In comparing table 4 with Nettl's observations, Davami's renderings of Chahargah seem to maintain many features Nettl observed. There are also some notable differences. For instance, the position of *Hesar* moves, breaking up the ghazal sequence by placing it after *Rajaz* and *Hodi-Pahlavi*. One larger difference is the use of *Mansuri*. *Mansuri* acted as a foundational gusheh of Chahargah in the late twentieth century, and it was also a ghazal-derived gusheh. In this version of Chahargah, Davami sang it with a fairly long section of a separate ghazal distinct from the initial ghazal, and positioned it after the *Masnavi*. This is distinct from the perspective of practice in the later twentieth century. Even in other parts of Davami's *radif*, or the *dastgah* charts of Forsat, the *Masnavi* and other nonghazal poetry most commonly come after the ghazal poetry in the *avaz*.

Davami's second version of poetry for Chahargah (shown in table 5) further points to complexities of variation in poetry usage. In this poetic variation of Chahargah, the poetry of the *daramad* is based on a love poem from the Ghaznavid

TABLE 5. Division of Poetry in Chahargah According to Davami, Second Version

Gusheh Name, Poetry Section	Poetry Translation
DARAMAD Farrukhi Sistani Unknown poetic genre	I wanted two kisses from the rubies of the sweetheart Raise this mean creature with this kiss She said: One is enough, if you get two You will rebel. This I know from much experience. My kiss is a second life, never has Anyone received another life.
ZABOL 5th couplet	I do not know the reason for no condition of familiarity with sweethearts with black eyes, and moon-like faces
PANJREH MUYEH ** <i>tahrir</i> **	<i>**no poetry**</i>
RAZAJ Shahnameh (Ferdowsi)	A king had one daughter who looked like the moon; It is possible that the moon has two black eyes? In the corner of her eye was a beauty spot That her own eyes also looked after
HODI-PAHLAVI	Listen to the flute made of reed, how it tells a tale, complaining of separation Saying: "Ever since I was parted from the reed-bed, my lament has caused man and woman to moan" In every group I uttered my wailing notes I consorted with the unhappy and those who rejoice
HESAR Last couplet	Nothing wrong can be said about your beauty except for this That there is no foundation of affection and loyalty within your loveliness
MOKHALEF Third couplet First couplet (Saa'di)	Was it the vanity of your beauty, oh rose, that prevented you From inquiring about the lovesick nightingale In reality, I do not know what creature in this world you resemble The world and everything in it is the body, and you are the soul
MAGHLUB First couplet	Gentle breeze, kindly tell the elegant gazelle It was she who made us head toward the mountains and the deserts
NAGHMEH-YE MAGHLUB ** <i>tahrir</i> **	<i>**no poetry**</i>
HUZZAN ** <i>tahrir</i> **	<i>**no poetry**</i>
PANJREH MUYEH ** <i>tahrir</i> **	<i>**no poetry**</i>
MANSURI Second and eight couplets	Why does the sugar-seller, may his life be long Never treat the sugar-eating parrot It is no surprise, if in the heavens the words of Hafez Venus's song cause the Messiah to dance

poet Farrukhi Sistani (c. 980–1037), which opens with the phrase “I wanted two kisses from the rubies (the beloved’s lips)” (*khāstam az delbārī do būseh*). Subsequent gusheh were organized around all but two couplets from Hafez’s ghazal with the opening couplet “Gentle breeze, kindly tell the elegant gazelle; it was she who made us head toward the mountains and the deserts” (*ṣabā beh loṭf begū ān ghazāl-i ra’nā rā / ke sar be kūh o biyābān to dādeh-i mā rā*). There is also one couplet from a Sa’di ghazal.

The ordering of the gusheh in this version of Chahargah is also somewhat different. The nonghazal poems of Rajaz, Hodi, and Pahlavi appear in the middle of the ghazal, separating Zabol from Hesar and Mokhalef and splitting the ghazal into two sections instead of making it one continuous narration. In this version, Davami also provided more gusheh consisting of just the vocalization of tahrir. One of these gusheh, called Panjreh Muye, appears in two different places, first after the gusheh of Zabol and before Rajaz and then again at the end of an extended tahrir section divided between three gusheh not included in the first version of Chahargah: Naghmeh-ye Maghlub, Huzzan, and finally Panjreh Muyeh. In this version of Chahargah Mansuri still ends the dastgah after this tahrir section, yet this version of Mansuri does not use a separate ghazal, but instead continues using couplets from the ghazal upon which most of the dastgah is based.

These two different versions of Chahargah’s poetry demonstrate the extent to which a dastgah’s overall melodic organization relied on its poetry, the way the poetry was parsed out into smaller sections as well as degrees of poetry variation permitted. While it was possible for one ghazal to dominate in any poetic conception of a dastgah, the organization of its presentation could vary considerably. Its couplets might begin the dastgah and proceed in a progression of gusheh that allowed it to be presented uninterrupted by other poetic forms, which appear mostly after the dominant ghazal. A ghazal that would dominate the first part of performance would start the dastgah in or close to the daramad, but not always. While the different versions of Chahargah demonstrate a major shift in the presentation of poetry within the same dastgah, the addition of the gusheh Kereshmeh to either of Davami’s versions of Chahargah could introduce a smaller change. As another gusheh that would facilitate a couplet of ghazal, Kereshmeh could be used to begin the narration of a ghazal that would go on to dominate a performance, or it could introduce a couplet from a separate ghazal that preceded or interrupted a dominant ghazal.

POETIC THEMES AND SYMBOLISM IN THE POETRY OF THE DASTGAH

The poetry used in both of Davami’s versions of Chahargah also provides a strong sampling of the themes that dominate the poetry of the dastgah overall. While the

ghazal used in the first version of Chahargah opens with a couplet reflecting on the passing nature of time, it quickly moves on to references of mysticism and tropes of the beloved. Mystical references include Hafez's signature contradictory alignment of a truly pious ascetic who rejects the hypocrisies of orthodoxy with a rufian who also rejects orthodoxy and is hence more pious than the orthodox. The tropes of eyelashes and the cypress tree invoke the beauty of the beloved's eyes and stature, even as the narrator is ignored or otherwise separated from the beloved. This focus of the narrator on the beauty of the beloved and his separation from the beloved is also the focus of the couplets used for Mansuri in Davami's second version of Chahargah. The reference to the ecstasy of wine is both the worldly experience and a reference to the experience of a higher divine reality. The beloved is both a human trope of unattainable communion and a symbol of humanity's ongoing, painful separation from God that the narrator wishes to bridge.

The short passage attributed to Ferdowsi continues with the common tropes of the beloved, using black eyes, a moon-like face, and a beauty spot to demonstrate the beauty of the king's daughter. This short passage is the only poetry used in the radif-dastgah tradition associated with Ferdowsi's *Book of Kings*. While the focus on love and the beloved is notable in the choice of ghazal, it is more prominently displayed in this short passage. Eschewing the primary focus of Ferdowsi's work on the life and works of specific rulers, the poetry of the radif-dastgah tradition focused on a small reference to notions of the beloved. Here the king is a secondary actor, while his daughter without title or specified dynastic standing is the focus for her ability to embody the idealized qualities of the beloved.

The positioning of this short passage in Rajaz ahead of Hodi and Pahlavi creates a separate, sequential representation of love poetry and mysticism. Hodi and Pahlavi present the now famous opening to Rumi's *Masnavi*, which uses the transformation of a reed growing in the ground into a flute (*nay*) to represent the sadness and unnatural state of humanity's separation from divinity. This is one of two passages from Rumi's *Masnavi* found in the texts of the radif-dastgah tradition. The other recounts a story of Moses admonishing a shepherd who engages in blasphemy when he tries to honor the humanity of Moses over and above the divinity of God.⁸ Both texts use parables to describe different aspects of humanity's imperfect state of suffering in their separation of God, with no use of love poetry symbolism.

While the second version of Chahargah kept the poetry of Ferdowsi and Rumi, its focus on Hafez's fourth ghazal highlights additional symbols of the beloved, including rubies representing the beloved's lips and the rose and the gazelle as metaphors for the beloved's beauty. Sugar also references the beloved's lips in the primary ghazal in table 5, focusing more on the ways that the beloved mistreats and ignores the narrator who pays her close attention, as represented by the sugar seller who ignores the sugar-eating parrot. The vain rose surrounded by thorns ignores the lovesick nightingale, further referencing how the beloved ignores the narrator despite his adoration.

In the capacity of the rose, poetry can dwell on both the beauty and the cruelty of the beloved. While the rose represented beauty to be admired, a rose's thorns hurt the admirer and kept him at bay. Thus the thorn itself could reference the hurtful disdain of the beloved, while the nightingale could represent the admirer who sings to the rose but is nevertheless rejected. The suffering of the admirer is a central aspect of love poetry discourse. While the narrator can directly complain about being spurned, the admirer often cries, sometimes a river of tears, sometimes blood and other times jewels, all of which demonstrate the immense suffering of the admirer unable to attain the beloved.

Some of the other symbols that appear in the poetry of the *dastgah* that are codified in the premodern lexicon of Persian love poetry include other flowers. While the tulip more commonly referenced the beauty of spring, the narcissus aligns with the beloved's beautiful eyes. The eyes were often the focus of describing the beauty of the beloved, but could also be a source of pain. In the first couplet of a *ghazal* from Foroughi Bastami that Davami used in both *Mahur* and *Rast-Panjgah* the narrator states: "My heart is afflicted by your eyes, which are half closed. . . . Cure the pain of someone who is more helpless than anybody else."⁹

Descriptions of the beloved move back and forth between metaphors for beauty and a concrete description of beauty that has standard features. Black curly hair typically matched the black eyes and eyelashes to create a fully idealized frame of beauty on the beloved's face, which also had a mole. The *gusheh Saqi-nameh* in Davami's *Homayun* and the *gusheh Chekavak* in his version of *Rast-Panjgah* both use the same couplets from *Sa'di* verses about *Leyli* and *Majnun*, a story about the unrequited love of *Qays b. al-Molawwah b. Mozahem* for a woman named *Layla/Layli*, where *Qays* took on the title *majnun* (*majnūn*), connoting his lovesickness. The verses from *Sa'di* used in the *dastgah* begin with an opening statement from *Qays* about *Layli's* beauty: "Oh curls, every one of you is a noose. Your eyes have an amorous look of fascination."

The obsession over the beautiful features of the beloved and the beloved's inability or unwillingness to reciprocate or even acknowledge the feelings of the narrator form the basis of being lovesick. The beloved was both very superior to the admirer and disdainful of him. Within this narrative frame, the beloved could be cast as an idol (*bot* or *ṣanm*), an entity to be worshiped beyond the humanity of the admirer. Because the admirer cannot actually speak to the beloved, he speaks with the morning wind, which acts as a messenger between the lowly admirer and the worshiped beloved.¹⁰

While the pain of separation from the beloved could be a central point of metaphor for separation from God, the ecstatic feeling of infatuation or divine communion aligned with notions of drunkenness and intoxication. The presence of wine and its larger context—the tavern, the goblet or cup, and drunkenness—introduce multiple layers of meaning. These references could simply refer to drinking and

drunkenness. They could also refer to the intoxication of beauty and love, or the ecstatic experiential knowledge of God.

The centrality of specific ghazal to defining the radif-dastgah tradition thus focused attention on a very complex poetic genre that was also much older than the music tradition itself. While thematically esoteric, the structural organization of the radif-dastgah tradition originally deriving from poetry gave the music itself considerations for its organization that were not purely musical. With poetic meter itself being central to rhythmic organization of avaz rather than clearly defined musical rhythm, the poetry was indelibly caught up in defining the melodic contours of music performance.

TASNIF: FROM ESOTERIC GHAZAL TO SONGS OF THE PEOPLE

The metered songs that became known as tasnif were added into a dastgah performance at the end of the avaz and some of the earliest tasnif of the tradition were simply musically metered settings of specific ghazal poetry. From a poetry standpoint, ending the avaz with a gusheh like Mansuri could become redundant once performing a tasnif at the end of the avaz became standard. Yet these metered songs did not remain strictly dedicated to ghazal, though the symbols used in ghazal—and a style of discussing the beloved and romantic love derived from premodern Persian poetry—were an initial starting point for the modern poetry of the tasnif. Davami associated one of the earliest ghazal-based tasnif with Bayat-i Isfahan, a tasnif that derived from four couplets of a ghazal from Hafez:

Oh great shah of the beautiful (*pādshah-i khūbān*), what grief loneliness is
My heart is dying, it is time for you to return

Oh pain, you are a cure, in my bed of discontent
Oh memory you are a companion in my corner of loneliness/illness

Last night I was complaining to the wind about her curls
It said, you make a mistake and give up this melancholic thought

The flowers of the garden are not always lush
Pay attention to the weak when you are young and able.¹¹

The phrase “great shah of the beautiful” provided yet another metaphoric reference to the beloved. The notion of kingship was thus introduced in passing as a representation of the beloved’s privileged position vis-à-vis the isolation, loneliness, and weakness of the onlooking narrator. Once again, kingship framed the beloved rather than being a dominant theme in and of itself.

While *tasnif* initially could simply be a metered setting for a *ghazal*, it was not the only source of metered song texts. New songs were composed referencing similar themes of the beloved from Persian poetry, but with simpler language and representation. While the meaning of a *ghazal*'s progression of couplets did not have to follow a fully logical line of thought throughout, songs composed of similar themes often did follow a single line of reasoning, greatly simplifying the possible readings of the poetry itself.

Musicians often accredit one of the oldest known *tasnif* that is not a *ghazal* to a woman at the Qajar court known as Sultan Khanom. Sultan Khanom worked as a musician in the women's quarters of the Qajar court. She eventually married a member of the Qajar ruling elite, 'Ali Naqi Mirza A'tizab al-Saltana, and Hedayat remembered her after her marriage as a friend to his mother.¹² Whether she composed the song before or after her marriage is unclear, but her *tasnif* for Chahargah used historic metaphors and tropes related to the beloved's beauty:

Oh idol of my affections, oh idol,
I am crazed (*majnūn*) and beguiled from sorrow over you
Oh idol, idol, my eyes are like the river Oxus from sorrow over you
Morning wind, tell the happy elegant youth, don't make me crazy

With me, oh idol, with me, oh idol,
Until when, beloved, will you be far from me (dear one),
Why are you sitting with charlatans (dear one),

Morning wind, go to the dear one, to the dear friend (my dear one),
Deliver a message of happiness.¹³

The symbolism this song shared with *ghazal* and other premodern Persian poetry included references to the beloved as an idol, the Oxus River representing tears flowing from the eyes, the morning wind speaking as a messenger to the beloved, and the reference to *majnūn*, the insanity of infatuation. In the oldest *tasnif*, such references to the literary tradition of the *ghazal* could be direct, or somewhat more removed from older poetic traditions. One early *tasnif* associated with the poet Sheyda (1843–1906) also for Bayat-i Isfahan similarly reflected on the separation from the beloved:

From the sadness of love, Sheyda's heart is broken
As the flask of wine on the darkest night is broken
Since I walked over the thorn of the desert so much
Deserts are all over my feet, dear one of my heart,
We are all eyes and you are light, May the evil eye be far from you

When you scatter your curls across your face
You shatter the peace of so many people

And the worst happens to Sheyda's heart
 I cannot be far from you anymore
 I cannot wait anymore for you¹⁴

The composer that musicians and scholars have most often credited with effectively balancing the elegant symbolism of the ghazal with more simplified, accessible poetic framing for the *radif-dastgah* tradition was Sheyda. While little is known about the details of his life, Sheyda was a poet with a mystical background. He was a follower of Zaher el-Dowleh and a member of the Society of Brotherhood.¹⁵ Some of his *tasnif* compositions related to performances by the Society of Brotherhood, which placed his *tasnif* at the intersection of court music's move out of the court and the development of modern civic organizations both by and for the Iranian people. Songs associated with Sheyda include both ghazal texts set to music and songs composed with Sheyda's own poetry.

Sheyda wrote many songs that kept older symbolism with references to fewer complex metaphors. For example, one song Davami attributed to him, also composed for Bayat-i Isfahan, used many of the standard symbols of beauty for the beloved, but in a much-simplified setting:

The moon is the slave of your lovely face
 The moon is the slave of your lovely face

The cypress tree is your servant, oh my love
 The cypress tree is your servant, oh my love
 All lovesick confused hearts gather around you, oh my dear
 At the curly end of your ringlets oh my dear

Oh luminous moon
 Oh, your lips are sugar
 Continually sugar is the best, oh my beloved, continually sugar, oh my dear
 As are your laughing lips, oh my love, continually sugar, are your lips, oh my love¹⁶

In this song, Sheyda used many of the symbols of beauty cultivated in the ghazal to describe the beloved. Yet Sheyda also reduced the number of thoughts being communicated by the words, even as he limited the possible interpretations that could be applied to symbols he used. By limiting the complications of metaphor in his poetry, Sheyda avoided the complexity of the many layers of comparison, symbolism, and allegory that ghazal espoused as each couplet could introduce new levels of meaning and distinct, independent thoughts.

While this type of simplified reformulation of premodern symbolism was a hallmark of early *tasnif*, the repurposing of older poetic symbolism and the development of new symbolism to engage in reflection on the modern world also became fundamental aspects of *tasnif* poetry early on. The new, modern points to

be made often directly addressed the political problems and aspirations of modern Iran and reflected on the changing political climate at the turn of the twentieth century. Another song that both Davami and Khaleqi attributed to Sheyda appears to be associated with a concert that is generally considered one of the first public concerts given by Iranian citizens rather than the dynastic government, given by the Society of Brotherhood on the birthday of the Shi'a Imam 'Ali.¹⁷ This *tasnif* for the *dastgah Segah* celebrated the unity and commonality of the people at the gathering, focusing on the lack of distinction between the poor and the dynast:

The newborn prophet is God's beloved
This birth is the reason for Sufi celebration

I am proud for such a feast that is put together
It is in the unity of the sultan and the beggar in peace

Oh what a shah! Oh what a moon! Oh what a pleasure! Oh what fidelity!

Lute, drum, and flute are chanting a sufi hymn
Chanting of his holy soul

I am proud for such an event where a king and a dervish
Are sitting together in one heart, one religion, as one.¹⁸

This *tasnif* was a departure from the themes of the *ghazal* upon which the *dastgah* were organized, yet it also was one of the first musical poetic expressions related to the *radif-dastgah* tradition that focused on the image of a dynastic ruler as a central actor. The imagery of the ruler in this *tasnif* reversed the pre-nineteenth-century image of the ruling dynast. It did not invoke the image of the sultan, shah, and king within the historical framework of the ruler's superiority and supremacy over human affairs. To the contrary, this song praised the notion that a dervish and a king could be equal, and that piety was a supreme quality, over and above any special standing of a ruling dynast. The song emphasized the equality and a shared human experience between people on two opposite ends of power. The importance of the celebration was the shared confraternity of many different people, from the greatest to the lowliest.

Though not explicitly political, the song above presented a reframing of power as it had been understood within the dynastic realm. The *tasnif* celebrated the giving of a musical concert to the larger community, who did not have access to such performances historically. The religious framing of the celebration could cast this redistribution of dynastic resources as an act of charity, even as the court did not actually grant the charity. The musicians themselves were able to decide without court consent to give the music to people historically undeserving of such performances.

After Sheyda, *tasnif* that utilized fewer references to the symbolism of premodern Persian poetry, or redefinition of the symbolism to negative ends, became more common. Many *tasnif* spoke strictly in modern terms about the modern improvement of the nation of Iran, often recasting the meaning of premodern poetic symbolism or avoiding it to pursue modern themes. In Safavid song, Iran represented a kingly domain that embodied the power of the shah. Iran appeared in the *tasnif* of the *radif-dastgah* system as a sovereign entity unto itself. Iran was not a prestigious reference to kingly power, or a kingdom subject to dynastic control. Instead, Iran was an independent nation, struggling to maintain itself and survive by itself in the modern world.

Another *tasnif* for Bayat-i Isfahan, with text from the poet Bahar (1886–1951) and music composed by Darvish Khan, pondered the sources and solutions to Iran's suffering and difficulties in the modern world:

Oh Iran! It is time to work! Stand up and watch . . .
 Your fortune is waiting! Do not sit! Iran!
 Martyrs' blood is spent, that is the price of freedom
 Promises were violated, freedom is turned to blood
 God frees us from our pain and sorrow, God liberates the desires of our hearts

Consider what the realm of the world will do with us?
 Consider the love of nation, what tumult it makes!

Oh, what tribulations befall you Iran
 Alas, you did not attain the desire of your heart, Iran you did not see anything
 except sadness

God frees us from our pain and sorrow, God liberates the desires of our hearts
 How long should I not be young at heart, like the elderly
 Give me a cup in the memory of my nation, to the peace of Iran!
 So that I may embrace cries of freedom from the heart
 Oh, what tribulations befall you Iran
 Alas, you did not attain the desire of your heart, Iran, you did not see anything
 except sadness.¹⁹

The *tasnif* above focused on Iran as a nation that was at once a victim of circumstances it could not control, while also being subject to the actions of its people, who could act to its benefit or detriment. The *tasnif* mostly abandoned the symbolism of premodern Persian poetry. Even the one reference to a cup speaks of toasting the peace of Iran, invoking none of its past metaphoric meaning. There was no sultan, shah, or king ruling or conquering Iran, no beloved or adoring admirer experiencing private yearning. Iran, its people, and their terrible situation

are the focus, and only Iran's people or God could improve the nation's situation and determine its proper destiny.

Themes related to modernity and the modern political transformation of Iran, both veiled and explicit, hold a key place in the *tasnif* repertoire and 'Aref Qazvini was a champion for these topics. 'Aref was one of the most active revolutionaries of the *radif-dastgah* tradition and he regularly addressed modern political issues, both with and without the reinterpretation of themes from premodern Persian poetry. 'Aref's belief in the Iranian nature of the *radif-dastgah* tradition stemmed directly from its use of premodern Persian poetry. Initially he complained about the quality of song writing in his own time, stating that songs often had simple themes of no importance compared to the profound complexity of the poetry like the premodern *ghazal*. Yet expressing more important ideas in song also required such ideas to be understandable to the average Iranian, for whom the ancient poetry was still largely inaccessible. He credited Sheyda with finding a balance between worthy poetic subjects and simple yet profound poetic expression for modern Iran.²⁰

In his own *tasnif*, it did not suffice for 'Aref to cast older themes and symbolism into simpler, accessible text. He voiced the opinion that modern Iranian public needed more explicit education on their identity.²¹ He used his *tasnif* to both teach Iranians who they were and educate them on the problems of modern Iran along with possible solutions. 'Aref was aware of the gap between the expectations of modern identity for the nation of Iran and the historical realities of identity. Even as Vaziri saw music as a tool for proper education that would bring the Iranian nation into a prosperous state of modernity, 'Aref used his *tasnif* to the same ends, but focused on specifically calling out the problems facing Iran in the modern world. While 'Aref bemoaned the ignorance of Iranians regarding their great history and lost culture, he called out corrupt rulers and foreign interference in Iranian affairs as the ultimate source of Iran's lack of standing in the modern world. The Iranian people would have to stop the exploitation of Qajar rule and the intervention of foreign powers in order to recover the greatness of ancient Iranian civilization in the modern world.

In one of his most popular *tasnif*, "From the Blood of the Youth of the Country," composed for *Dashti*, the nightingale becomes an observer of the sad state of the nation. Thus the chorus sang:

From the blood of the youth of the country, the tulips bloom
As the cypress tree mourns their eminence, the cypress bends
In the shadow of the flower, the nightingale sits hidden from this grief
The flower in its sadness, like me, rends its garment.²²

Here a flower of spring, the tulip, represented the new day that would dawn from the long-fought struggles of youth. The cypress tree stood as a witness to their sacrifices, even as the nightingale was too grief stricken to sing. 'Aref used multiple symbols of the beloved's beauty and the narrator's admiration in this *tasnif* to represent

the modern struggles of the nation. In this *tasnif*, 'Aref also eventually abandoned symbolism to directly address a particular problem of the nation:

The ministers sleep, and the governors sleep
 They steal all of Iran's silver and gold
 They do not allow us one ruined house
 Oh God, take justice from the rulers and give it to the poor.²³

This verse framed the sacrifices of the youth as occurring against a backdrop of government corruption that robbed Iran of its riches, even as the Iranian people suffered and sacrificed to better the nation. The glory of the Iranian nation 'Aref saw being destroyed came from pre-Islamic times. 'Aref's conception of Iran's national history positioned notions of pre-Islamic Iran as the golden age of the nation, while positioning later impositions of control from forces outside of Iran as leading to its downfall. Nations coming from the outside to divide, conquer, and exploit Iran were a recurring theme in his *tasnif*, along with complaints that the Qajars did nothing to stop this foreign exploitation in modern times. In another *tasnif* for Dashti that 'Aref wrote while in exile in Istanbul, he specifically complained about attempts to make Azerbaijan an independent Turkic nation with more connections to Turkey than Iran:

The temporary government, what does it do? Who do you listen to?
 The house of Jamshid is conquered by a foreign face
 The palace and the royal court went to the wind, the dirt
 Silence comes from Behistun, because the palace is destroyed
 (It becomes a wheel of Turkey, it becomes a wheel of Turkey)
 The women of the shah in front of the women and powerful people said:
 Where are the leaders of Iran, the heroes of Iran?
 What happened so that not even one brave individual remained from the warriors
 of Iran?²⁴

While 'Aref had changing ideas about the shah as a figure of praise or disdain, pre-Islamic rulers do appear in some of the *tasnif* of 'Aref as figures to be praised. Here the mythical pre-Islamic king Jamshid represents the greatness of Iran that has been lost to foreign intervention. 'Aref references the ruins of long-abandoned palaces as evidence that Iran had fallen to foreign invasion and control. In referencing Behistun, a mountain just south of Kurdistan, 'Aref refers to the ruins of a palace complex that included a multilingual cuneiform rock relief recounting the exploits of the Achamedid ruler Dariush the Great from the era of his rule (522 BC–486 BC). He attributed its abandonment to Turkey's influence in the region, and the Qajar government's inability to assert control over Iranian territory. 'Aref contrasted the temporary government of his time with the eternal greatness of Iran's past glory, even as he complained that heroic rulers like Jamshid could no longer be found in Iran.

'Aref's problematic relationship with kingship stemmed from his opposition to dynastic rule in his lifetime. While Sheyda offered hope that equality in society was imminent, 'Aref saw nothing but corruption in the rulers of his time, corruption that hurt the Iranian people. In a *tasnif* for Afshari titled "Crown of the Great King's Head" he wrote:

Oh, Crown, you, the Crown of the Great King's Head
 Seeing your drunken eyes, the world drowns
 What can you ask about the poor?
 What do you know of how the sufferers' pain sounds?²⁵

'Aref did at times mention the Qajars by name in his poetic criticism of Iran's modern demise, a practice that eventually led him to seek exile in Istanbul for a time. 'Aref was appalled not only by the Qajars' simple denial to the Iranian people of the power and resources they deserved, but also by the amount of foreign control the Qajars gave over to the British and the Russians, resulting in foreign intervention that could only be to Iran's detriment. In his *divan*, he recorded a *tasnif* that actually spoke in favor of foreign intervention to the extent that it helped the Iranian people against Great Britain and Russia. The *tasnif* was about William Morgan Shuster (1877–1960), an American lawyer hired by the newly formed constitutional government to help with its finances after the Constitutional Revolution in 1906. The new parliament brought Shuster in to help them learn how to fund the constitutional government, which included trying to resolve the Qajars' debts and to curtail the financial demands of Great Britain and Russia. Shuster was ousted in 1911, when Russia shelled the Iranian parliament in direct response to Shuster's appointment and financial management.

In this *tasnif* for Dashti, 'Aref begged and pleaded with Iran not to let Shuster go. 'Aref cast Shuster as the only person who had the Iranian people's interests at heart: the only person standing against the corrupt Qajars, the Russians, and Great Britain. Rather than a foreign intruder, 'Aref cast Shuster as a guest:

Shame on the house from whose table a guest leaves
 Sacrifice your life for him, do not let the guest leave (leave)
 Iran will go with the wind if Shuster leaves
 Oh youths! Do not let Iran go
 You are life in a dead body, you are the life of the world
 You are eternal life, you are a treasure like gold
 Let's hope you hold on, hold on, hold on, hold on.²⁶

The *tasnif* went on to alternately blame the government for corruption and appeal to Iranians to not give up on Shuster:

Our goblet is now full of impatience
 The thief intends to burgle our home with violence
 It will be a historic world catastrophe, this occurrence

If we let Shuster leave Iran
 You are life in a dead body, you are the life of the world
 You are eternal life, you are a treasure like gold
 Let's hope you hold on, hold on, hold on, hold on.²⁷

'Aref fully transformed the goblet, which had been meant to represent the container of ecstatic experience and intoxication of beauty, into a new metaphor unattached to the older symbolism. The thief burgling the home provided a modern metaphor for both the Qajars and foreign interests making off with Iran's riches. While the nation of Iran was itself a treasure like gold, it would have to fight to keep Shuster and avert tragedy.

While 'Aref bemoaned the loss of Iran's ancient glory, he had less criticism for the nation of Iran in this regard, and more for its rulers and foreign interventions that he believed caused Iran's downfall. Still, Iranians needed to be educated on their former glory and their shared cultural legacy. His *tasnif* about Azerbaijan provides the stark example of 'Aref specifically reeducating the Iranian population about their identity. In this case, he focused on how the region of Azerbaijan was a key part of Iran, and not a separate national entity. In continuing to voice concerns about Turkey's interest in establishing a separate Turkic Azeri state, 'Aref came out and specifically wrote a *tasnif* for the *dastgah Nava* about Azerbaijan's key position in the Iranian nation:

May life be sacrificed for Azerbaijan
 May the cradle of Zoroaster become the font of tranquility
 Wish his limbs paralyzed, his tongue tied
 A scoundrel who called you limp, paralyzed
 You are Iran's key, Iran's hope, Iran's martyr
 Hail to your spirit from good men's souls, from forefathers
 And lo, may the world and the soul be sacrificed for your soil
 O morning wind, tell the people of Tabriz for me
 [Tell] all who remind us of wild lions, the bold
 Avoid the Turk and the Turkish language
 Do not forget your own language
 As Zoroaster told
 Do not put out the flame with water²⁸

This *tasnif* carried a message about Azerbaijan to the Iranian people and specifically the Azeris. 'Aref used this song to criticize anyone who said Azerbaijan was Turkish or even simply just in the periphery of Iran's cultural identity. In keeping with notions of Iran's pre-Islamic greatness, 'Aref referenced Zoroastrianism, the dominant religion before the rise of the Islam. He invoked the symbolism of Zoroastrianism's prophet and fire temples to argue that Azerbaijan was a key geography within Iran's great pre-Islamic cultural legacy. He referred to the Persian language as "our language," and entreated Azeris to maintain Persian while aban-

doning Azeri Turkish, framing the latter as their real language and the former as an imposter language.

CONCLUSION

The radif-dastgah tradition's basis in long-form musical procedures initially derived from its basis in long-form poetry recitation. The musical structure of a dastgah, or even smaller melodic sections within dastgah, depended first and foremost on the type of poetry performed and the placement of poetry in a performance. This approach to musical structure differed from concepts of applying a particular mode or scale in the course of composing an organized suite. Poetic form determined musical form, rather than musical form accommodating poetic form. This distinction had a significant impact on musical structure. The original seven dastgah were organizations of many smaller melodic sections designed to present sections of poetry in a set order, with customary rules for the progression of melody that accounted for placement of poetry and the timing of purely musical interludes between poetic sections. This was the basis of the gusheh and the performance of avaz, which constituted the core of music performance.

Within this concept, musical sections with no reference to poetry or the voice had a role to play in framing the poetic performance. In his description of the dastgah, Forsat listed fully instrumental sections as occurring either at the very beginning or at the very end of the dastgah. While the solo instrumental *chahar mezbah* would ultimately be placed after the *daramad*, placing larger metered pieces for multiple instruments either before or after the avaz remained the norm.

The proliferation of *tasnif* to perform after the avaz was one factor in the increasing application of systematic modality that came to define the radif-dastgah tradition beyond the seven dastgah. Davami and 'Aref both sang *tasnif* with pitch frameworks that were smaller than the dastgah. Besides *Bayat-i Isfahan* and *Dashti*, older *tasnif* were composed for *Shahnaz* (*Shur*), *Rak*, and 'Iraq (*Mahur*). 'Aref also wrote *tasnif* using *Shushtari* from the dastgah *Homayun* as the melodic basis. Forsat listed *Shahnaz* as being in three sections and Davami described it as being able to accommodate up to four couplets of a *ghazal*, making it quite large for a single *gusheh*. By the late twentieth century *Shahnaz* was still a very large, multisectional *gusheh* of *Shur*. Nettl classified *Shushtari* and 'Iraq as still being used as independent frameworks for performance in some instances, almost threatening to become their own avaz-dastgah. *Rak* also remained quite modally distinct and thus could function as a separate mode.²⁹

The early choices regarding pitch usage in *tasnif* highlight the move toward a conception of distinct pitch modalities even as musicians could have different

ideas about which modalities should be used for frameworks of composition. There were multiple possibilities within the *dastgah* that *tasnif* composers could draw on for their song compositions. Despite these many options, only certain pitch modalities ultimately became distinguished as the separate *avaz-dastgah*. *Tasnif* composed using pitch frameworks that never came into common use in composition were subsumed into the *dastgah* from which they came. Thus a *tasnif* in *Rak* belongs to *Mahur*, while a *tasnif* in *Shushtari* belongs to *Homayun*.

While the song text collections associated with the twelve-*maqam* system were skewed toward kingship, the poetry of the *dastgah* was skewed toward love, beauty, and mystical experience. Indeed, though the poetry of the *radif-dastgah* tradition was initially taken from eras adjacent to the song texts of Maraghi—and though Maraghi had become an important figure in the modern national conception of Iran's music history—the themes represented between the two collections of poetry were quite different. The world of song Maraghi described was vastly different from the world of song created for the *radif-dastgah* tradition.

When practitioners of the *radif-dastgah* tradition started writing new poetry for *tasnif*, the modern reality to which the *radif-dastgah* tradition adapted came into full view. Safavid songs referenced Iran with some regularity, yet Iran was only significant to the extent that it served as a great kingdom over which a great king ruled. Iran was not separable from the dominance of kingship, and it had no place in the world without kingship. In the *tasnif*, Iran became defined by citizenry of the nation, even as kingship became obsolete and even disdained. While dynastic governance focused on managing resources, the nation focused on managing its resources and its citizenry. Who would control the citizenry was a central question of the modern nation. 'Aref disdained the control of the Qajars as corrupt, and supported constitutionalism, which would give the citizenry more control over their own destiny. Poets like Bahar and 'Aref wrote *tasnif* in favor of revolution and democracy, and musicians associated with the *radif-dastgah* tradition sang them long after his death. These ideas were indispensable in modern *tasnif*, yet they had no place in music or poetry even a century earlier.

The premodern and modern song texts of the *radif-dastgah* tradition embodied the Janus-faced reality of a modern nation, pointing backward to various conceptions of a glorious Iranian past, while looking forward for improvement of the nation to retain this past glory in the modern era. These texts spoke not only to the modern conception of the nation, but to the initial logic of the *radif-dastgah* tradition's structure. Without a specific conception of distinct modalities to be used in composition, a customary practice of poetry recitation served as the primary basis for conceiving of the *dastgah's* musical structure. Yet a growing conception of systematic modality produced more opportunities for composition, which facilitated more direct political speech about the modern area. Even with the growth of composition, however, the older poetic texts could not be abandoned, as both

the ancient and the modern needed to be present to foster a proper nationalist narrative of modern Iran. The tension between the music that invoked Iran's great history and the music that invoked its present reality would ultimately frame multiple possibilities for performing in the *radif-dastgah* tradition as musicians made different decisions about how to best negotiate their own artistic identities as well as the larger question of Iranian identity in the modern world.