

# Approaches to the Qur'an in Contemporary Iran

EDITED BY

**Alessandro Cancian**

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## Notes on Contributors

**Alice Bombardier** is a Research Associate at the Centre d'Analyse et d'Intervention Sociologiques (CNRS–EHESS Paris). In 2012, she received her PhD in Persian-Arabic Studies from Geneva University and in Sociology from EHESS-Paris. She holds an 'agrégation' in Geography and is a specialist in modern and contemporary Iranian painting. Her latest publications include *Les pionniers de la Nouvelle peinture en Iran: Oeuvres méconnues, activités novatrices et scandales au tournant des années 1940* (Bern, 2017).

**Nicholas Boylston** is currently College Fellow of the Committee on the Study of Religion at Harvard University. He received his PhD in Theological and Religious Studies from Georgetown University in 2017, his MA in Islamic Philosophy from the University of Tehran in 2011, and his BA from Harvard College in 2007. His research focuses on literary and philosophical approaches to pluralism in pre-modern Islam.

**Rainer Brunner** has been Directeur de Recherche at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), Paris, since 2005. Before that he was Assistant Professor at the Orientalisches Seminar of Freiburg University (1998–2004), Directeur d'Études Invité at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, Section Sciences Religieuses at the Sorbonne (2002), Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (2002–2003), and was a member of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton (2004/2005 and 2013/2014). His main research interests are modern Muslim intellectual history, especially the history and theology of the Shi'a, the relationship between the Sunni and the Shi'a, Muslim modernism since the nineteenth century, and the history of Oriental Studies.

**Alessandro Cancian** is a Research Associate in the Qur'anic Studies unit at the Institute of Ismaili Studies, London. Dr Cancian's areas of interest and expertise are the intellectual history of Shi'ism, Shi'i

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Sufism in early modern times and the anthropology of Islam, Shi'ism and modern Iran. His monograph *Sufism, Shi'ism and Qur'anic Exegesis in Early Modern Iran: Sulṭān 'Alī Shāh Gunābādī and his Tafṣīr Bayān al-Sa'āda* (Qur'anic Studies Series) is due to be published soon. He is co-editing (with Nuha Alshaar) a volume on ethics for *An Anthology of Qur'anic Commentaries* (Qur'anic Studies Series). He holds a PhD in Anthropology, with a concentration on the Cultural Anthropology of Muslim Societies and the Anthropology of Religion, from the University of Siena. His dissertation was on the Shi'i theological colleges (*hawza 'ilmiyya*) in Syria. Among his recent publications is the monograph *Alla scuola dell'Imam: Storia dell'educazione religiosa nell'Islam sciita* (*At the Imam's School: History of Religious Education in Shi'i Islam*; Rome, 2016).

**Giovanni De Zorzi** is Associate Professor of Ethnomusicology at the Ca' Foscari University of Venice (<https://www.unive.it/data/persona/5590760>). His main research areas are the Ottoman and Central Asian traditions of classical and Sufi music. Among his many publications is his monograph *Musiche di Turchia: Tradizioni e Transiti tra Oriente ed Occidente* (Milan, 2010). He is also a musician (*ney* flute player), and performs both as a soloist and with his Ensemble Marāghī (<http://www.ensemblemaraghi.it/>).

**Ingvild Flakerud** is Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo. Holding a PhD in Religious Studies from the University of Bergen, her field of speciality is ethnographic research into Twelver Shi'ism in Iran and Norway. Her work focuses on the visual and material culture of Twelver Shi'ism in Iran (*Visualizing Belief and Piety in Iranian Shiism*; London, 2010), women and ritual performance, the religious theatre, local pilgrimage, the transfer of religion and cultural formation in Western migrancy, religious authority and the vernacular production of contextual theology. Among her latest publications is the co-edited anthology *Muslim Pilgrimage in Europe* (London, 2017). In 2018 she was a guest editor (with Oddbjørn Leirvik) for the journal *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, on the topic *The Study of Islam between University Theology and Lived Religion*. She has also produced an ethnographic film about women as ritual performers in Iran (2005).

*Notes on Contributors*

**Niloofer Haeri** is Professor and Chair of the Department of Anthropology at Johns Hopkins University and the Director of the Program in Islamic Studies. Her first book examined the roles of gender and class as causes of language change in Egypt. Her second major project on Egypt examined the layered ramifications of the ambiguity of classical Arabic as the sacred language of the Qur'an and as the official state language used in almost all non-religious domains. The examination of that ambiguity also entailed a historical analysis of the reasons for the rejection of vernacular Arabic as the language of writing by almost all strands of Islamist and (secular) nationalist movements. More recently, she has been doing research in Iran on how classical poetry and different kinds of prayer serve as grounds for debate on what is true Islam. Her forthcoming book is tentatively titled *In the Presence of the Divine: Women, Prayer and Poetry in Iran*.

**Seyfeddin Kara** is an Assistant Professor of Shi'i Studies and Relations between Islamic Schools of Thought and Holder of the Imam Ali Chair for Shi'i Studies and Dialogue among Islamic Legal Schools at Hartford Seminary. He is the author of *In Search of Ali Ibn Abi Talib's Codex: History and Traditions of the Earliest Copy of the Qur'an* (Berlin, 2018).

**Leonard Lewisohn** was a Senior Lecturer in Persian and Iran Heritage Foundation Fellow in Classical Persian and Sufi Literature at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies of the University of Exeter, where he taught Persian language, Sufism, the history of Iran, as well as courses on Persian texts and Persian poetry in translation. He specialised in the translation of Persian Sufi poetry and prose. He was the author of *Beyond Faith and Infidelity: The Sufi Poetry and Teachings of Mahmud Shabistari* (London, 1995) and the editor of three volumes on *The Heritage of Sufism* (Oxford, 1999). He was editor of the *Mawlana Rumi Review*, an annual journal devoted to Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī. He was also editor (with Christopher Shackle) of *'Aṭṭār and the Persian Sufi Tradition: The Art of Spiritual Flight* (London, 2006), co-translator with Robert Bly of *The Angels Knocking on the Tavern Door: Thirty Poems of Hafez* (New York, 2008), and editor of *Hafiz and the Religion of Love in*



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*Classical Persian Poetry* (London, 2010). He had contributed articles to several encyclopaedias and journals. Dr Lewisohn sadly passed away on 6 August 2018.

**Banafsheh Madaninejad** is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Southwestern University where she focuses on critical race theory, feminist ethics and activism. She has written about Islamic New Theology and racialisation of Muslims, and is currently working on a collection of phenomenological essays about solidarity in the age of Donald Trump. She is also in the process of translating Mohsen Kadivar's *Hukūmat-i wilā'ī* (*Governance by Guardianship*) into English.

**Yaser Mirdamadi** is currently a PhD candidate in Islamic Studies at the University of Edinburgh and is the current recipient of the IIS Mohammad Arkoun Doctoral Scholarship. He spent eight years in an Islamic seminary. His main areas of research are modern Islam and the philosophy of religion. He is a Visiting Teaching Fellow at al-Maktoum College, Dundee, and a Research Assistant at the Institute of Ismaili Studies, London.

**Nacim Pak-Shiraz** is the Head of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies and Senior Lecturer in Film and Persian Studies at the University of Edinburgh. She has published widely on Iranian visual culture, particularly on Iranian cinema. These include her monograph, *Shi'i Islam in Iranian Cinema: Religion and Spirituality in Film* (London, 2011), and *Visualizing Iran: From Antiquity to the Present* (2017), a special issue edition of the *Iranian Studies* journal. Dr Pak-Shiraz is also active on the cultural scene and engages with international film festivals both within and outside the UK.

**Sajjad Rizvi** is an Associate Professor of Islamic Intellectual History at the University of Exeter. Trained as a historian at Oxford and then Cambridge, he specialises in Islamic thought in the post-classical period and has published on the philosophers of the Safavid and Qajar periods in particular. His other main interest lies in exegesis and Qur'anic hermeneutics. He is the co-editor with Feras Hamza (and Farhana Mayer) of *An Anthology of Qur'anic Commentaries, Volume One: The Nature of the Divine* (Oxford,

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2008; Qur'anic Studies Series 5), and co-editor with Annabel Keeler of *The Spirit and the Letter: Approaches to the Esoteric Interpretation of the Qur'an* (Oxford, 2016; Qur'anic Studies Series 15). He is currently writing a number of studies on Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā'ī, investigating the nature of hermeneutics and metaphysics in contemporary Islamic thought in the Twelver Shi'i context.

**Reza Tabandeh** holds a PhD in Islamic Studies from the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies at the University of Exeter, with a specialisation in the revival of Ni'matullāhī Sufism in Iran. His research interest lies in Islamic mystical philosophies in contemporary Iran. His doctoral work focused on the second generation of Ni'matullāhī masters, during the period following the return of the order to Iran from India. He is currently undertaking post-doctoral research at Brock University, Canada, on the interaction between the Sufis and the 'ulamā' in the Persianate World.

**Liyakat Takim** is the Sharjah Chair in Global Islam at McMaster University, Canada. A native of Zanzibar, Tanzania, he has spoken at more than eighty academic conferences and authored 100 scholarly works on diverse topics such as reformation in the Islamic world, the treatment of women in Islamic law, Islam in America, the indigenisation of the Muslim community in America, dialogue in post-9/11 America, war and peace in the Islamic tradition, Islamic law, Islamic biographical literature, the charisma of the holy man and shrine culture, and Islamic mystical traditions. He teaches a wide range of courses on Islam and offers a course on comparative religions. Professor Takim's publications include *Shi'ism in America* (New York, 2009) and *The Heirs of the Prophet: Charisma and Religious Authority in Shi'ite Islam* (Albany, NY, 2006). He is working on his third book, 'Ijtihad and Reformation in Islam'. Professor Takim has taught at several American and Canadian universities and is actively engaged in dialogue with different faith communities.

**Anna Vanzan** teaches History and Culture of the Middle East at the University of Pavia. She holds a PhD in Near Eastern Studies

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from New York University and works on gender studies with a particular focus on Asian Muslim societies. Her latest book, *L'Islam Visuale. Immagini e potere dagli Omayyadi ai giorni nostri* (Rome, 2018), is a reflection on how the rhetoric of image has been used for political purposes by many leaders in the Muslim Middle East.

**Negin Yavari** studied medieval history at Columbia University and is currently a Senior Research Fellow at The Humanities Centre for Advanced Studies “Multiple Secularities – Beyond the West, Beyond Modernities”, University of Leipzig. Her book on the rhetoric of advice in medieval political thought, *Advice for the Sultan: Prophetic Voices and Secular Politics in Medieval Islam* (London, 2014), is a comparative study of mirrors for princes from the European and Islamic worlds. Mirrors for princes across political and spatial divides is the subject of her co-edited volume, *Global Medieval: Mirrors for Princes Reconsidered* (Cambridge, MA, 2015). Her latest book, entitled *The Future of Iran's Past: Nizām al-Mulk Remembered* (London, 2018), is a biography of Nizām al-Mulk, the prominent eleventh-century Seljuk vizier.

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The Qur'an as an Aesthetical  
Model in Music? The Case of  
Muḥammad Riḍā Shajariyān between  
the Qur'an and *radīf*

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GIOVANNI DE ZORZI  
*For Leonard and Jane*

ANY READER who has ever been immersed in the soundscape of any given region of the Muslim world, crossed as it is five times a day by the call to prayer (*adhān*) and other defining sounds of Muslim devotion, will be well aware of the sonic nature of the Qur'an. In order to fully appreciate the meaning of the following remarks, the reader should ideally be able to stop the inner and outer dialogue, to be silent (a requirement stated in Q. 7:204<sup>1</sup>) and to listen. In the following pages, I will look at how the 'sonic nature' of the Qur'an may have influenced, even unconsciously, poetry, singing and instrumental music. This will prepare the ground for a discussion of the situation in twentieth- and twenty-first-century Iran, particularly regarding our focus on the key figure of the Iranian singer Muḥammad Riḍā Shajariyān (b. 1940), who was at ease with both art repertory (*radīf*) and Qur'anic cantillation.

#### Notes on the Sonic Nature of the Qur'an

In Islam, more than in other spiritual cultures, the sonic, vibrational, nature of the Qur'an is fundamental. In fact, this is immanent in the very term itself, for, as is well known, '*qur'ān*' means 'recitation' or 'reading', and not at all 'scripture'.<sup>2</sup> Apart from the term

itself, the Qur'an's sonic nature is evident if we meditate on the history of its transmission: according to Islamic belief, the Qur'an had been revealed orally, sonically, through the archangel Gabriel to the Prophet, who received it mostly aurally, through listening.<sup>3</sup> In a second phase, the Prophet recited the revelations to his followers and Companions, who memorised it. Only in a third phase did the period of oral/aural transmission come to an end when the revelation was fixed in a written form and canonised c. 26/647.<sup>4</sup> Afterwards, the Qur'an was transmitted to the next generations both verbally and in script form, but, in fact, the oral form had superseded the written one because all the written texts of the scripture were compiled from the oral transmissions passed down by the transmitters (sing. *ḥāfiẓ*) and reciters (sing. *qārī*) of the Qur'an.

### 'Giving Voice to the Sacred Text': On Some Technical Terms

The centrality of the Qur'an in the intellectual activity of the early Muslims gave rise to a range of Qur'anic sciences which attempted to cover the multiple ways and modes of understanding the holy Book. Among them is *'ilm al-tajwīd* (the science of Qur'anic recitation),<sup>5</sup> a term that derives from the verb *jawwada*, which, very significantly, means 'to make better', 'to embellish', 'to beautify'. Yet, as F.M. Denny points out, *tajwīd* is a general umbrella term for the 'art of reciting the Qur'an', and encompasses more specific terms like *qirā'a* (recitation, recital) or *tilāwa* (to follow, to read/to read out loud).

In Q. 73:4 we find the verse *wa rattil al-Qur'ān tartīlan* (and recite the Qur'an by means of tartīl).<sup>6</sup> The meaning of the term *tartīl* poses many problems for reciters, commentators and translators; however, here, I will adopt the etic/emic dichotomy from the field of anthropology.<sup>7</sup> Using an etic approach, I define *tartīl* as Qur'anic 'cantillation', employing the term ethnomusicologists use for the analogous vocal renditions of other sacred texts; while, from an 'emic' point of view, I refer to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/660), son-in-law of the Prophet and the fourth caliph/first imam, who, in answer to a question about the meaning of our problematic term, replied that *tartīl* means the 'excellent rendering of the consonant

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sounds and knowledge of the pauses' (*tajwīd al-ḥurūf wa ma'rifat al-wuqūf*). This latter, concise definition influenced from its birth 'ilm al-tajwīd, which developed by examining the phonetic 'places of articulation' (*makhārij*) of the consonants and vowels in the human body (the breast, throat, tongue, lips and nose) as well as the art of the pauses (*waqf*, pl. *wuqūf*). The rules of 'ilm al-tajwīd were transmitted orally/aurally among Qur'anic reciters, from master to disciple, as we will see, but, at the same time, were also codified in a written corpus of technical literature.

Through the centuries, particular styles of recitation/cantillation also developed. These were the plain *murattal* (term that derives from *tartil*) style and the slower-paced but highly embellished *mujawwad* style, which often employs musical modes (*maqāmāt*) and a way of reciting the Qur'an melodiously (*taghannī*).<sup>8</sup>

### **Towards a Musicological Description of Qur'anic Cantillation**

Qur'anic cantillation can be described in musicological terms as a succession of variable phrases of unequal length that are separated by eloquent pauses, and in which the declamatory aspect has priority over the melodic one. More particularly, in the embellished styles of cantillation, where the melodic and melismatic aspects acquire greater importance, the reciter tries to cantillate each verse in such a way as to avoid repetition; this is achieved through a more-or-less conscious use of codified secular musical modes (*maqāmāt*) with their characteristic melodic formulae types.

Regarding the elusive topic of the silences and pauses, we must recognise that it is rather difficult to deal with such an enormous theme, which ranges from the basic activity of breathing<sup>9</sup> to the highest peaks of aesthetic.<sup>10</sup> In Qur'anic cantillation, such pauses have an enormous importance – already alluded to in the saying attributed to 'Alī – because they affect the meaning and the balance of the entire Qur'anic verse. Apart from rhetoric, we should note the emotional aspects of such silences and pauses, which can be filled with inexpressible and unutterable meanings and often elicit deep sighs and crying from the audience.

Outside of the strict environment of Qur'anic recitation, the application of 'Alī's *ma'rifat al-wuqūf* had a subtler impact on the aesthetic of all the 'arts of sound' which came to life in the vast world of Islam: the pervasive and omnipresent Qur'anic cantillation, with its eloquent pauses and silences, may have affected singers and musicians, even unconsciously. Such effects are clearly detectable in unmetred vocal (and instrumental) genres.

### The Qur'an as a Base for the Unmetered Genres

In the Arab, Ottoman–Turkish and Persian classical and folk music traditions, there is a clear distinction between genres characterised by ethnomusicologists as being 'unmetered' or having a 'free rhythm' and genres that are 'metered' or 'rhythmed'. As an example, such a distinction is very clear in Turkey, where the folk vocal repertoire is traditionally divided between *uzun hava* ('long air') and *kırık hava* ('broken air'). The *uzun hava* is part of a larger family of 'free-rhythm' vocal genres, which include the *özen küi* among the Tatars, the *uzun küi* among the Bashkiri, the *ut dun* among the Kalmuks and the *urtyn duu* among the Mongols. The 'length' or 'fracture' of singing does not depend on the length or the brevity of the melodic line, but, rather, on the text being 'unmetered' or 'metered', and therefore 'broken' or 'fragmented' into rhythmic modules and based on rhythmic cycles.

In any given unmetred piece, performers are free from formal constraints and rhythmic rules: they can take their time, using *rallentando*, or go faster, using *accelerando*, and employ all the expressive devices to render their feelings related to the text without time constraints. Yet, the fact that performers are free from rhythmic constraints does not mean that they are free from the text's formal constraints: if a piece is unmetred, this does not mean that it does not have its own set of inner rhythmic rules of development, which basically derive from the versification. In Arab, Persian, Ottoman–Turkish and Central Asian classical traditions, poetry is measured according to a system (*arūḍ*) considered 'quantitative' because it is composed of syllables of unequal length – brief and long.<sup>11</sup>

### *The Qur'an as an Aesthetical Model in Music?*

As is well known, the Qur'an is not poetry, yet its rhymed prose (*saj'*) constitutes the above-quoted 'set of inner rhythmic rules of development' that influence vocal performance. The pauses, silences, spaces and modulations are the tools that Qur'an reciters or readers use in order to translate the inner rhythmic values of the text. Apart from such values, the argument in the text and the meanings of the text influence the performer: for example, a passage that contains a reflection on Hell cannot be rendered in a joyous way. In short, the Qur'an in itself influences the vocalists during their unmetered performances. It is not unusual to see reciters having to stop because they have become overwhelmed by the emotion that the Qur'an provokes in them.

The unmetered vocal genres of sung poetry have a central place in all Islamic music cultures; such genres are paralleled by unmetered, free-rhythm, mostly improvised instrumental genres. It suffices to reflect on the examples of the classical vocal genres, such as the Persian *ghazal*, the Ottoman *gazel* or the Uzbek-Tajik *katta ashula* and their instrumental counterparts in the suite of unmetered *gushes* in Persian classical repertoire (*radif*) or the *taqsim* for the Arab and Ottoman-Turkish traditions: for all these vocal and instrumental genres we can suppose a common aesthetical root, that is, the pervasive cantillation of the Qur'an.

Apart from the formal considerations, many singers and musicians knew by heart large tracts of the Qur'an and its rhyme resulting from *saj'*. In the Persian *radif*, which is modelled on poetry, many pure melodies cannot be understood if separated from the text that inspired the composer. The poems of Sa'di (d. 691/1292), Rumi (672/1273) and Hafiz (791/1389 or 792/1390), for example, have deeply influenced the rhythmic sense of Persian musicians. At the same time, on the topic of the aesthetical proximity between the instrumental and the vocal, we should remember that a good performance is said to have made the instrument 'speak' or 'sing'.

### **The Art of the *Hāfiẓ* and the *Qārī***

Through the centuries, there emerged key figures who were experts in the cantillation of the Qur'an. These were called *qārī*, and when



they knew by heart all the text, *ḥāfiẓ* (preserver): the *qārī* and the *ḥāfiẓ* were from the very first times key figures in the transmission of the Qur'an, before it was fixed in written form. But, from our musical perspective, they were, and are, first and foremost trained *mujawwids* who know how to use the voice with great technical artistry due to their understanding of the highly elaborate rules of *'ilm al-tajwīd*.

Many of the great singers from the world of Islam had a solid upbringing as religious singers and often were, at the same time, great repositories for and transmitters of the huge oral repertoire of classical music which, though secular, was very often based on mystical poetry. Such an upbringing in religious singing, which was simultaneously musical and spiritual, was common among many great stars of the Islamic world. The Egyptian diva Umm Kulthum (d. 1975), the Turkish *ḥāfiẓ* and Mevlevi dervish Kani Karaca (d. 2004) and the standard bearer of the Uzbek–Tajik art music tradition (*shash maqom*), Jurabeg Nabiev (b. 1941), all come to mind. As far as early modern Iran is concerned, we should remember the examples of Iqbāl Sulṭān Ādhar (d. 1971), Ghulām-Ḥusayn Banān (d. 1986) and the great Muḥammad Riḍā Shajariyān (b. 1940), who is universally acclaimed as Iran's greatest living singer.

### **Muḥammad Riḍā Shajariyān between Qur'an and Radīf**

Muḥammad Riḍā Shajariyān seems representative of the tradition of great vocalists of *radīf* who received an upbringing as religious singers. In the following pages, I will outline episodes from his life and works; these are intended just as a small sample of this musical tradition in twentieth-century Iran, yet are capable of reflecting the whole tradition that preceded him.

Shajariyān was born 23 September 1940 in Mashhad and started singing at the age of five under the supervision of his father, himself a *qārī*.<sup>12</sup> At the age of twelve, unbeknownst to his father, he began studying *radīf*. He launched his singing career in 1959 at the local radio station in Mashhad, and by 1966 he had moved to the National Iranian Radio Organisation in Tehran, where he rose to prominence with his distinctively rich vocal timbre and technical mastery.

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His main teachers were *radif* masters 'Abd Allāh Dawāmī (d. 1981), Ismā'il Mihrtāsh (d. 1980), Nūr 'Alī Būrūmand (d. 1977), Aḥmad 'Ibādī (d. 1993) and Farāmarz Pāywar (d. 2009). He also learned the vocal styles of singers from previous generations, Riḍā Qulī Mīrzā Zillī (dates unknown), Fariburz Manūchīhrī (dates unknown), Qamar Mulūk Wazīrī (d. 1959), Iqbāl Ādhar (d. 1971) and Tāj Iṣfahānī (d. 1981), though he always declared his love for the style of Ghulām-Ḥusayn Banān (d. 1986).

As an example of the proximity between instrumental and vocal styles discussed above, it seems worthy of note that Shajariyān was not only influenced by vocalists, but also by instrumentalists. In a lecture he gave on 2 March 2012 at California State University, Sacramento, Shajariyān said that the playing style he tried to mimic the most with his own singing style was that of Jalīl Shāhnāz (d. 2013), the legendary musician whose instrument was the Iranian long-necked lute (*tār*). Shajariyān performed regularly on Iranian Radio between 1966 and 1986, and many of the broadcasts were subsequently released as commercial recordings. He also appeared frequently on national television between 1971 and 1976. Since 1977, he has performed with many ensembles, giving concerts in Europe, North America and Asia, and has recorded albums with them. His work as a singer reflects his extensive knowledge of classical Iranian poetry.

A man of many talents, Shajariyān as well as being a singer is also a musician (he plays the hammered zither known as the *sanṭūr*), calligrapher and, recently, creator of new musical instruments.<sup>13</sup> He also taught at the University of Tehran from 1977 to 1979, and then returned there in 1990. His interest in the regional music of Iran dates from his earliest musical experiences in Khorasan, the region where he was born and raised, and he has carried out much research into the various types of folk music in Iran. He is very popular and commands great respect in Iran where he is generally regarded as the foremost classical vocalist of the post-revolutionary period.

To illustrate Shajariyān's ease in performing both Persian art music (*radif*) and Qur'an cantillation, I would now like to discuss here just one recording among Shajariyān's vast collection of secular art music recordings which merges the two. It is his beautiful

unmetered singing of a *ghazal* of Ḥāfīz, performed in duo with the *santūr* maestro Parviz Meshkatian (d. 2009). It is found on the CD titled *Iran. Mohammad Reza Shadjarian: Musique classique persane*,<sup>14</sup> which was recorded live at the Théâtre de la Ville, Paris, 30 October 1989. The vocal, free-rhythm episode is found on track 2 at the heart of the suite based on the mode *āwāz-i Afshārī*.<sup>15</sup> After a long, composed and metered instrumental prelude (*pīsh darāmad*), brilliantly and lively performed by the ensemble composed of the *santūr* (hammered zither), *barbat* (short-necked lute), *tār* (long-necked lute), *ney haftband* (rim-blown flute) and *zarb* (goblet drum, also called *tumbak*), there is a carefully spaced long solo introduction on the *santūr* by the late Meshkatian. Shajariyān enters the performance (with great inspiration) only at 2'53", and there begins an intense dialogue between the voice and the accompanying instrument on three traditional *gushes* (corners) selected from the vast repertoire of the traditional suite in *āwāz-i Afshārī*; these *gushes* are known by their evocative titles, *Jameh darān* (heart rending), *Dād* (lamentation) and *Mūyeh* (wailing). Operatively, in a suite, the singer himself chooses the poem, normally from the masterworks of Persian poets. Here, Shajariyān sings the verses he has chosen from Ḥāfīz in a way that makes use of the expressive devices of traditional Persian classical singing, above all the ornamental vocal technique *tahrīr* of the *bulbulī* type, which requires rapid alternation between vocal registers resonating in the breast and the head. It is very important to note that in Persian classical music, the difference between a classical singer and a non-classical singer lies precisely in his/her capability to interpret unmetered genres, which are often based on classical poetry, and to be able to freely interpret the text using improvised embellishments, melismas, pauses and – crucially – *tahrīr*. The expressive devices used in traditional singing could be compared to the tools of the art of rhetoric, which allows the orator to improvise; in this light, then, Shajariyān's use of long and eloquent pauses filled by the comments and the 'answers' of the *santūr* add a deep resonance to the passionate verses of Ḥāfīz's *ghazal*. After this unmetered episode, the suite starts again with a *chahār mezzāb* performed by the ensemble, but we will leave it here to its

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pursuance and to the closing enthusiastic applause of the Théâtre de la Ville's audience.

At the end of the 1990s, after a forty-year singing career (twenty of them in the period of the Islamic republic), Shajariyān released a two-volume CD of Qur'anic cantillation dedicated to the memory of his beloved father, who had just passed away, entitled *Bi-yād-i pidar* (In Memory of my Father).<sup>16</sup> Followers and fans knew vaguely that Shajariyān had received a religious education but the liner notes explain how he was trained as a *qārī* by his father, to whom he pays posthumous tribute. Here, Shajariyān, known for his skill in the Persian modal system (*dastgāh*), recites and modulates through the Arab modes (*maqām*) with just as great a degree of mastery and elegance. In *Bi-yād-i pidar*, there is the usual introductory *basmala* formula, always cantillated *recto tono* in the low register (with a long pause, a theme discussed above, between *a'ūdhu bi'llāhi min al-shayṭān al-rajīm* and the *basmala*). Shajariyān selects a single passage from a long sura<sup>17</sup> and cantillates it in a slow *mujawwad* style, with long pauses (even inside a single verse), modulations through the modes, ascensions in the high register – as, for example, in *Sūrat al-An'ām* (Q. 6) from 5'34" to 7'14" arriving between 7'18" and 9'03" to what would be called a peak (*'awj*) in secular music – and descents to the lower register.

Yet, from this same CD, I would like to draw the attention of the reader/listener to the only original and new track entitled 'Dooaye Rabana' ('Du'ā-yi rabbanā'), which is the second track of *Bi-yād-i pidar*, volume II.<sup>18</sup> This is a free invocation (*du'ā*) that Shajariyān composed *ex novo* by assembling different verses from the Qur'an with the word *rabana* (Our Lord). The invocation begins in the high register and displays, throughout the tune, the burning intensity of Shajariyān's feelings. Here, the interpretation does not follow the prescriptions of *qirā'a* but, rather, Shajariyān's inspiration. The result stands as a masterpiece. It seems highly significant that 'Du'ā-yi rabbanā' had enormous success, and that until recently, in Iran it was listened to at the close of the day of fasting (*ṣawm*) during the end of Ramadan until it was prohibited and censored. The reason for this is that, in 2010, Shajariyān openly and frankly criticised the Islamic republic. As stated by the *Guardian*:

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But at sunset on Wednesday, the first day of Ramadan in Iran, the thirsty and hungry faithful waiting for Iftar were disappointed not to hear *Rabana* from the state-owned Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB). In fact, the IRIB stopped airing the prayer when Shajarian made clear he was siding with the Opposition Green Movement and gave an interview to BBC Persian criticising the Islamic republic for its crackdown on music and dissent.<sup>19</sup>

However, eight years after, in a country with millions of private accounts to social media and to the web, the IRIB ban has been bypassed and ‘Dooaye Rabana’ (‘Du‘ā-yi rabbanā’), with its heartfelt invocations from the Qur’an, continues to close Iranian days of Ramadan.

### Conclusions

The term ‘cantillation’, in the terminology of ethnomusicology, seems appropriate for defining the vocal rendering of the Qur’an. Such a vocal rendering can be considered neither music (*musīqī*) nor singing (*ṣawt*, *ghinā*) even if it can be performed ‘melodiously’ (*taghannī*). The Qur’an, then, cannot be adapted to musical modes nor ‘stretched’ to rhythms, as stated many centuries ago by the great al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), and therefore, it should be defined as a practice that is somewhere between singing and recitation, and which is deemed ‘other’ than music. Yet, even if not musical, the cantillation of the Qur’an, so pervasive throughout Iran, embedded itself as an ideal model in the consciousness of musicians, and thereby influenced their performances. Such an influence on vocalists and musicians is clearly detectable in the unmetred forms of music, both vocal (*āwāz*) and instrumental (*taqsim*).

The Qur’an is not poetry at all, but the rhymed nature of its *saj‘* creates a ‘set of inner rhythmic rules of development’ that influence vocal performance, as happens with poetic texts; this, in turn, affects the use of pauses, silences, spaces and modulations. Conversely, all these traits have influenced the performance of poetry in music.

Finally, adopting a more sociocultural approach, it is important

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to note how many great singers were often also specialists in the cantillation of the Qur'an. Comparisons between the executions of classical/secular repertoire and religious/Qur'anic cantillation derive from this human factor.

This is the case, for example, with the great Muḥammad Riḍā Shajariyān, who can be viewed as the present link in a very ancient chain of masters versed both in Qur'anic cantillation and in secular singing.

NOTES

- 1 By virtue of this verse, musicians facing a noisy audience sometimes begin their performance with the recitation of the Qur'an in order to quieten the audience. Oral communication by world-renowned *ney* (flute) soloist, Kudsi Erguner (b. 1952).
- 2 A.T. Welch, R. Paret and J.D. Pearson, 'al-Ḳur'ān', *EI<sup>2</sup>*, vol. V, p. 400.
- 3 For a general survey, see Daniel Madigan, 'Revelation and Inspiration', *EQ*, vol. IV, pp. 437–48. See also Arthur Jeffery, 'The Qur'ān as Scripture', *Muslim World* 40, nos. 1–4 (1950), pp. 41–55, 106–34, 185–206 and 257–75; idem, *The Qur'ān as Scripture* (New York, 1952).
- 4 For a general survey, see John Burton, 'The Collection of the Qur'ān', *EQ*, vol. I, pp. 351–61.
- 5 F.M. Denny, 'Tadjwid', *EI<sup>2</sup>*, vol. 10, pp. 72–5.
- 6 The translations of the Qur'an are my own.
- 7 In anthropology, the terms *etic* and *emic* refer to two kinds of viewpoints: *Etic* is from outside, from the perspective of the observer, while *emic* is from within the social group, from the perspective of the subject.
- 8 *Taghannī* derives from the term *ghinā'* (song, singing), which nowadays has negative connotations among the '*ulamā'*'. Yet the term *ghinā'* has a long and noble history that seems worthy of note: the term *musīqī* (music) arrived in Islamic culture between the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries as a calque from the Greek *mousiké*. In his *Kitāb al-Mūsīqī al-kabīr* (Great Book of Music), Abū Naṣr Muḥammad al-Fārābī (d. 339/950) affirms that before 'music' the original Arabic terms and concepts were rather *ṣawt* (vocal expressions) and *ghinā'* (song, singing), combining poetry and singing. Over time, the term *ghinā'* became a synonym for secular music and, moreover, in nineteenth-century Persia, came to designate a light urban genre of music associated with troupes of dancers. On the process by which *ghinā'* came to be associated with secular music and performances, see Muḥammad Taqī Dānishpazhūh, *Namuna'i az fihrist-i āthār-i dānishmandān-i irānī wa islāmī dar ghinā' wa mūsīqī* (Tehran, 1355 Sh./1976). On the '*ulamā'*'s opposition to *ghinā'*, see Andrew Newman, 'Clerical Perceptions of Sufi Practices in Late Seventeenth-Century Persia: Arguments over the Permissibility of Singing (*Ghinā'*)', in Leonard Lewisohn and David Morgan, eds, *The Heritage of Sufism. Vol. III: Late Classical Persianate Sufism (1501–1750)* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 135–64.
- 9 Both in music and in poetry, the pause is connected with the taking of a breath.

This, of course, is a fundamental issue for the vocalist (Qur'anic or otherwise), the vocal ensemble or the wind instrument player, but is an extremely important feature also in the performance of any given ensemble which has to 'breathe together'. In prosody, we should remember the caesura, which is a break in the flow of sound in the middle of a line of verse, often caused by the ending of a word within a foot.

- 10 It is interesting to note here that in traditional Japanese music it is the *ma* (silence or pause) that gives meaning to sound. See Luciana Galliano and Chie Wada, eds, *Ma: La sensibilità estetica giapponese* (Torino, 2004).
- 11 It seems worthy of note, by the way, that the different combinations of brief and long seem to have given life to the many measured, rhythmic cycles (*iqā't*) that we find in Islamic music cultures.
- 12 Nooshin Laudan, 'Shajariān, Mohammed Rezā', in Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London, 2001–2), vol. XXIII, p. 191; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohammad-Reza\\_Shajarian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohammad-Reza_Shajarian).
- 13 See 'Shajarian Calls Upon Musicians to Create New Instruments', *Payvand*, <http://www.payvand.com/news/11/may/1089.html>.
- 14 Muḥammad Riḍā Shajariyān, *Iran. Mohammad Reza Shadjarian: Musique classique persane* (Paris, Ocora Radio France, 1990, CD: C 559097).
- 15 For more on the *āwāz-i Afshārī* and the use of *āwāz* in general in Shajariyān's work, see Rob Simms and Amir Koushkani, *The Art of Avaz and Mohammad Reza Shajarian: Foundations and Contexts* (Lanham, MD, Lexington Books, 2012). – Ed.
- 16 I would like to thank my friend Mehdi Jaghouri, musicophile and passionate Shajariyān fan, for kindly lending me a copy of the difficult-to-find two-volume CD.
- 17 Much like the singer's selection of a poetic text in a traditional art music suite.
- 18 The tune, with English translation of the text, can be found on YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YCRb92fbMOs>.
- 19 See Saeed Kamali Dehghan, 'Iran Listens for Mohammad-Reza Shajarian, the Lost Voice of Ramadan', 10 July 2013, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/10/ramadan-mohammed-rez-shajarian-iran>.