A Sociological Analysis of the Space of Popular Music Production in Iran [1]

Using the Data Collected from Two Interviews with the Official and Unofficial Producers of Music in Tehran

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Abstract: *Different research and theoretical approaches have been adopted in the study of the space of music production. In the present study, which relies on the ethnographic/sociological research approach in the study of cultural producers, because of the impossibility of conducting a structural research on the space of popular music production in Iran due to lack of reliable statistics on the space of production, We have tried to analyze this space with the aid of a sociological conceptualization at a micro level, using the data collected from two interviews with the official and unofficial producers of popular music in Tehran. In order to collect qualitative data to answer the question as to whether the action among the producers of popular music in Iran, as the main constructors of the space of music production, is an ideological action, the focus group technique has been used. The data was collected through five sessions of discussion with two eight-member groups, and was analyzed using the reflective analysis method. The data analysis shows that since the producers of the discussed genres, as the actors of this space, are ideological, the space of production of popular music in Iran is a controversial space where no hybrid of cognitive music is possible. From the viewpoint of the authors of the present article the hybrid of cognitive music seems to be the only way to overcome the cultural dismorphy existing in the space of music production in Iran.*

Keywords: *space of production; Iranian popular music; official popular music; unofficial popular music; cultural producers;*

1. Introduction: A Historical Study of the Problem

 For many years, especially since the Constitutional Revolution of 1906, there have always been ideological conflicts among the supporters of traditional and modern culture in different cultural spaces. The conflict between the traditional and modern culture in social and cultural spaces escalated with the establishment of Pahlavi dynasty and Reza Shah's authoritative modernization policy. One important domain of conflict in that era was the space of production of music. Cultural modernization in this domain was carried out seriously as a result of enacting and implementing special cultural policies. Due to these policies, the space of production of music, like other cultural spaces, became entangled with a kind of discursive conflict. As a principal policy of that era, modern western genres were supported in the production of music; this policy that marginalized the traditional musical productions and developed an ideological resistance in them. The same policy was implemented in the era of Mohammad Reza Shah, and it reached its highest point in the 1960s because of the economic boom and the dominance of the middle class. In this period popular music was produced more than other musical genres and influenced the space of the production of music.

Iranian popular music started to develop in the years 1945 to 1955, on the basis of foundations laid for it some years before. Gradually, with the development of the media and the economic growth in the mid 1960s, like its

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counterparts in other countries, it became the most important and the most popular kind of music in Iran (Fatemi, 2004, p.30).

In the 1960s the space of music production in Iran was replete with musical genres formerly non-existent. Most of these genres were popular music produced and consumed by the urban middle class people who were in the minority. As mentioned earlier, the growth of the urban middle class, the development of the market economy and the growth of the mass media such radio, television and popular magazines played a key role in the general tendency towards popular music; this trend continued into the mid 1970s. The space of music production in Iran experienced an unprecedented diversity of genres due to the production of popular music. Since this diversity owed much to the productions of the urban middle class, as the minority group, it led to monopolistic behavior and ideological conflicts among the more traditional classes, who were in the majority. Although the traditional taste was not supported by the dominant cultural policies, the space of music production, as a result of these conflicts, was full of tension.

After the Iranian Revolution in 1979, the space of cultural production was revised seriously, especially, the space of production of music. The Islamic Revolution of Iran, which according to its founders was more of a cultural revolution than a political one, embarked on the process of removing the elements of modern western culture, as symbols of the former regime. One major domain which required a fundamental transformation was the space of music production. What, more than anything else, had made the space of music production problematic to the cultural policy-makers of the Islamic Republic, was the presence of musical genres which belonged to modern western musical culture. Popular music was the major representative of these genres, which was at odds with some Islamic values. As a result, traditional musical cultures were supported, the production of western musical genres, especially popular music, was banned, and many producers of the popular musical genres abandoned the space of music production in Iran, either voluntarily or compulsorily. Since these producers continued to produce music outside of the space of the production of music in Iran[2], the space of music production in Iran, in the absence of popular musical genres, was exclusively dominated by Iranian classical music. This monopoly could, to a large extent, solve the challenges resulting from the diversity of musical genres. However, soon after the end of the Iran-Iraq War, and as a result of the post-war economic boom, the removal of some limitations, and the cultural policies which were aimed at holding out against the imported phenomena of the western culture, this monopoly was broken. As a result of the new cultural policies and in order to prevent the negative cultural outcomes of the consumption of Iranian popular music produced outside Iran, the production of domestic popular music was supported. Also in the early 1990s the mass media started to promote domestically produced popular music. The space of music production included both classical and popular genres, and the foundations for the diversity of genres were laid. At this time, the urban youth, especially those living in Tehran, embarked on the unofficial production of popular musical genres which were not supported by the cultural policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This trend developed noticeably in the late 1990s when the reformist government, which adopted a flexible approach in the cultural domain, came to power. Although these genres were never officially supported by the cultural policy-makers, as a result of the relatively large-scale production and consumption of them by the youth, they played a large part in the space of music production in Iran (Nooshin, 2005, p.464). With the increase in the number of official and unofficial popular music groups and concerts, and the increase in the popularity of satellite channels, some of which merely broadcast the domestically produced official and unofficial popular music, the space of music production in Iran in the 2000s was practically changed into a space of popular music production. Other than the unique capacity of this space for producing economic added value, the discursive and ideological conflicts and challenges among the producers of different genres, as the major actors, can be regarded as the major factors attracting attention to the space of popular music production in Iran. It can be claimed that in the new space of the music production in Iran, discursive conflicts among the supporters of the traditional and modern musical cultures were replaced by ideological challenges among the official and unofficial producers of music and the subcultures which were formed on the basis of the production and consumption of these genres. These challenges changed the space of the popular music production in Iran into an unpredictable ambiguous space. No comprehensive study has been carried out to describe this space; however, a deep understanding and a thick description of elements, relationships, and the structure of the space of popular music production in Iran can help us understand and describe the process of the construction of the identity of the youth in Iran. This article aims to describe the form of action among the official and unofficial producers of popular music in Iran, as the main actors in the space of music production. Using the data collected from interviews with two groups of producers of the aforesaid genres in Tehran, we try to answer the question as to whether, in the action among the official and unofficial producers of music,

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[2] Most of these producers immigrated to the US and continued to produce music at lower levels of quality than before the revolution. Their productions are known as *Losanjelesi* Music.

there are still signs of the ideological conflict remaining from long-running conflict among the supporters of the traditional and modern musical culture. And if this conflict still dominates the space of the music production in Iran, can we still hope to create a hybrid between the cognitive music of the producers of these genres? The authors of this article believe that this hybrid is the only method to find way out of the unconstructive challenges in the space of popular music production in Iran and the cultural dismorphy dominating this space.

2. Research Background: Research on Production in the Popular Music Studies

The field of popular music studies is a multi-disciplinary field where researchers with methodological and theoretical approaches from different academic disciplines, conduct studies on a single topic, i.e. popular music. The researchers in this field, regardless of the different multi-disciplinary approaches to popular music deal with music as an important phenomenon which entails potential socio-political meanings. That is why, first and foremost, the relationship of the production and the consumption of music with concepts such as identity, globalization, resistance, subjectivity, gender, race and the like, which all have social and political implications, is of great importance to these researchers (Hesmonhalgh & Negus, 2002, pp. 6-10). The musicological, ethnomusicological and sociological approaches play an important role in popular music studies.

The musicological approach is primarily based on the textual and semiotic analysis of the musical text (Tagg, 1979; 1982). However, some researches in the popular music studies with an ethnomusicological approach have dealt with the local roots of the urban popular music in contemporary societies (Jones, 1963; Keil, 1966; Middleton, 1972). Some other researches with an ethnomusicological approach to non-western popular music have tried to analyze these types of music in their own social and cultural context (Teixeira, 2003; Nooshin, 2005; 2008; 2011). In the earliest studies conducted on the popular music with a sociological approach, this genre of music is regarded either as the production of mass culture in the capitalist society or as the music of deviant subcultures (Riesman, 1950; Adorno, 1976; Horkheimer & Adorno, 1979). The sociological research on the production of popular music can be divided into two groups: the first group studies production with a critical approach and the second group examines the production of popular music from the viewpoint of organizational-industrial sociology. The critical approach is influenced by the Marxist and neo-Marxist approaches. In this approach, the method of popular music production is studied in terms of the social changes and the cognitive aesthetic form (Adorno, 1991). In the organizational-industrial approach, the study of the production of popular music is primarily based on the secondary analysis of statistical data from the popular music industry (Peterson & Berger, 1975). In this approach, analysis is based on the theory of "the production of culture" (Peterson, 1976). In both approaches the study of the production involves both the process of production and the producers. However, because of the structuralism in the organizational-industrial approach it can be claimed that this approach has paid little attention to the study of the producers as intended actors in the space of popular music production. Because of lack of sociological research in the popular music studies, few researches have conducted on the production of this genre of music. Also because of lack of reliable statistics on the productions of popular music industry in Iran, conducting a research with an organizational-industrial approach is impossible. In fact, the structure of music business in Iran, like other economic arenas, is quite ambiguous, which is because of the quality of transition of the Iranian society. Due to the limitations in understanding music business and the structure of music economy in Iran, this article examines the production of popular music from a sociological approach through interviews with the producers of music. In this article the popular music industry in Iran is not analyzed, but the communicative action of the producers in the space of popular music production is studied at a micro level. From the viewpoint of the authors of the present article, the action of the producers is the constructor of the space of popular music production.

3. The Conceptual Framework and the Theoretical Principles

3.1 The Space of Cultural Production: A Sociological Conceptualization at a Micro Level

Although the term "production" is mostly used in economics, it is a key concept in sociology and cultural studies when used with the word "culture". The sociological approach was first used to explicate the concept of cultural products in Marxist analysis. Marxists found an intimate connection between the production of cultural products and events and the economic production. Since this approach, unlike the older aesthetic approach, is based on the belief that the works of art are significantly affected by the socio-economic situation they are created in, it is regarded as sociological-economic approach (Williams, 1977, p. 70). Neo-Marxists, especially the Frankfurt school thinkers, who adopted a critical approach to traditional Marxist ideas, attached great importance to cultural superstructure in their analyses, and consequently

paved the way for a more sociological analysis of the concept of cultural production. They explicated cultural production as the subgroup of the concept of "culture industry" (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1979, pp. 97-134). They believed that in the capitalist society, cultural production is not production, but a kind of mechanical reproduction (Benjamin, 1969). In other words, neo-Marxists considered the space of cultural production as nothing more than the space of technological mass production of cultural goods. Neo-Marxists' sociological analyses of the space of cultural production are largely analyses at a macro level. In other words, in neo-Marxist approaches, producers, as individual actors, do not play any role in the construction of space, and the space of cultural production is constructed by the macrostructures and the ideology of the capitalist society. According to them, individual producers are completely dissolved in the structure of the capitalist society and lose their individuality. Another sociological approach, similarly, conceptualized the cultural space at a macro level in the 1960s and 1970s; however, it adopted the neo-Marxist approaches to explicating the concept of cultural production in a different way, and brought about important theoretical achievements for carrying out positive analysis of the space of cultural production. Since Richard Peterson's sociology of culture, as the main representative of this approach, was significantly influenced by the main current of sociology in the US in the late 1960s and early 1970s, i.e. structuralism, it considered cultural production against any individual understanding, as a set of structural processes which encompasses the whole industrial mechanism of production (Tanner, 2003, pp.70-72). To him, the space of production of culture is a set of organizational and institutional processes which imposes the aesthetic choices on consumers as actors of the cultural space (Hirsch & Fees, 2000). In their analysis of the innovative cultural production, Peterson's followers consider the "art worlds", i.e. the sum of all individual actors, organizations, and institutions which constitute the space of cultural production, not the individual producer, as their unit of analysis; however, they create this theoretical possibility in the conceptualization of the space of cultural production that we can give a share to producers as the individual actors in the construction of cultural space. This theoretical possibility, which is rooted in a fully structuralist attitude, paved the way for more micro analyses of the space of cultural production. These analyses were theorized in the 1980s and 1990s by Pierre Bourdieu in his theorization about cultural production. As a reaction to all the structuralist analyses of the past, Bourdieu tried to highlight the role of the social agent. In his theorization, he tried to explicate the role of social structure, and the will and the freedom of choice of the individual actor (Calhoun & et.al, 2002, pp.259-260). In his analysis of the cultural production, Bourdieu attributes the action of production to the producer, or the social agent of production. By an individual action directed to his production, this actor constructs a space around himself which he calls the field of production (Bourdieu, 1993, p.63). Field is a strcuturalist concept which does not make sense except by observing the action of an individual who has willpower. According to Bourdieu, the field of cultural production, which we call the space of cultural production here, exhibits specific characteristics. All fields of cultural production are methodic, are based on capital as source, are in accordance with special habitus, and are controversial (Ibid, p.73). Bourdieu believes that it is the contradiction between the interests of producers, or the actors of the field of cultural production, that makes this field controversial. One example of this contradiction is what we discussed in the analysis of the action between the supporters of the traditional and modern musical culture of the contemporary Iranian history and used in our conceptualization of the problematic space of the production of music. Bourdieu's conceptualization of the space of cultural production enables us to examine this space, which is constructed by the action of the actors, i.e. producers, based on the analysis of the conflict among them. As a result of examining the space of cultural production in this way, the study of cultural producers has gain a lot of importance, and numerous research approaches have been offered in sociology and cultural studies for the study of their action (David, 2009, pp.53-67). One method for studying cultural producers is the ethnographic/sociological approach which involves the observation and documentation of real processes and individuals engaged in the process of cultural production (Ibid, p.58). In this approach qualitative methods are usually employed and research is conducted at a local micro level (Ibid, p.59). The researcher who adopts this approach to the study of cultural producers tries to discover the performance, cognitive processes and, especially, the actions of social actors who are engaged in the process of cultural production in the space of production. In this article, with regard to the sociological conceptualization of the space of cultural production at a micro level, we have dealt with the producers of popular music genres as a form of cultural production, in order to analyze the space of popular music production, as a form of the space of cultural production, in contemporary Iran.

3.2 Popular Music and the Genres Produced in Iran

Popular music cannot be precisely defined. Numerous attempts have been made to define this type of music in the western culture milieu. Many regard it as the music of class societies; a type of music that is in sharp contrast to the music of the elite. Some maintain that popular misc is the music of a society with a relatively advanced division of labor system and a clear distinction between producer and consumer, where cultural products are produced by professionals

on a large scale, sold in a mass market and promoted by the media (Middleton, 1990). Researchers of the field of popular music studies have employed different ways for defining popular music as a Cross-cultural phenomenon (Baily, 1981). In the definition of non-western popular music, some attach little importance to industrialization. Rapid change in the repertoire and close correlation between sound recording and the distributing media are among the important features in the definition of popular music in non-western culture (Ibid, p.107). Iranian popular music, as an example of non-western popular music cannot be defined precisely. Like all kinds of popular music in the world, Iranian popular music is influenced by its western counterpart. The development of this type of music is the result of the growth of middle class and the development of market economy. This kind of music owes it development to the mass media and is based on a planned system of "making stars". Because of lack of proper understanding of the industry and the space of popular music production, a historical perspective is necessary to know the genres produced in Iran as popular music (Breley & Fatemi, 2012). By adopting a historical perspective, we can trace the root of popular music in contemporary Iran in the frivolous types of Iranian classical music, *Motrebi*, i.e. urban folk music, and the imported western popular music (Fatemi, 2004, p.30). Iranian popular music is generally the frivolous altered form of the Iranian classical music. In the mid 1940s, *Tasnif*, which is the rhythmic vocal form of Iranian classical music changed into *Taraneh*, song, to take the form of popular music. This led to a kind of amalgamation between classical and popular music in Iran; the same thing had previously happened in the West in the 19th century. Some genres of popular music which are also supported by the cultural policy-makers of the Islamic Republic are examples of this type. *Motrebi*, which is in fact the ceremonial type of Iranian classical music, has changed into a type of popular music which is produced and consumed by the lower classes of society. Some genres of popular music in Iran, which constitute a major part of the unofficial production in the space of music production in Iran, are the altered forms of imported western popular music which played a great role in the space of popular music production in Iran in the mid 1960s. These genres faced considerable limitations after 1979 Revolution. These limitations, which still exist in Iran, have created an important micro space, i.e. unofficial space of popular music production, alongside the official space of production.

Table 1. Official and unofficial genres of popular music produced in Iran

Official popular music productions in Iran	Influenced by Iranian popular music produced abroad (*Losanjelesi*) (Naser Abdollahi, Mohsen Yeganeh, Mohsen Chavoshi, …)
	Influenced by the altered frivolous forms of Iranian classical music (*Dastgahi* Songs) (Alireza Eftekhari, Mohammad Esfahani, …)
Unofficial Official popular music productions in Iran	Influenced by the main stream of western popular music (MTV) (music clips broadcast by satellite channels devoted to Iranian popular music)
	Influenced by western protest popular music (underground music bands, rap, rock and heavy metal)

4. Research Methodology

As mentioned before, different approaches have been adopted in the research conducted on cultural producers in sociology and cultural studies (Davis, 2009, pp.53-67). In the present study, ethnographic/sociological approach has been utilized. The qualitative data has been collected through interviews or observation, and focus group technique has been used for the collection of accurate information. Focus group can be regarded as one kind of depth interview in which some homogeneous people are directed in discussions about a particular topic (Boswell & Cannon, 2007, p. 196). In the focus group emphasis is put on the interaction among group members who are interviewed.

In the present study two focus groups were formed; the members of each group were producers of one genre of official or unofficial popular music. The first group included the producers of official popular music who were influenced by

Iranian classical music and *dastgahi* songs (which are based on Iranian musical model system). The second group included the producers of unofficial popular music who were influenced by western protest popular music, known as Persian Rapper. Eight people[3] (Burns & Grove, 2006, p.379), who had been active in the production of music as musician, composer or singer, at least for 3 years, were selected as members of each focus group. For the first group 3 sessions and for the second group 2 sessions of 90 minute discussions were held. Some of the ethnographic characteristics of the interviewees are as follows:

Table 2. Characteristics of participant in the group discussion Number 1

Participant code Characteristics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Age	25	24	28	20	28	27	29	29
Education	BA	BA	MA	BA student	MA	MA student	MA	BA
Gender	Male	Male	Male	Female	Female	Male	Male	Female
Birthplace	Shahrood	Kashan	Tehran	Tehran	Tabriz	Tehran	Esfahan	Yasooj
Birthplace of father	Shahrood	Kashan	Kermanshah	Tehran	Maragheh	Tehran	Khomeinishar	Yasooj

Table 3. Characteristics of participant in the group discussion Number 2

Participant code Characteristics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Age	21	28	19	27	23	25	29	24
Education	BA student	BA	BA student	BA	BA student	BA student	BA	BA
Gender	Male	Male	Male	Female	Female	Male	Male	Male
Birthplace	Tehran	Mashhad	Tehran	Esfahan	Tehran	Tehran	Ahvaz	Tehran
Birthplace of father	Sari	Mashhad	Tehran	Esfahan	Khoramabad	Tehran	Dezfool	Tehran

In the group interviews four questions were asked: 1. how resistant are your families to the production of music by you? 2. Do you get in close contact with the governmental institutions in the production of music? 3. Is there mush interaction among you and the producers of other genres? 4. How do you find the atmosphere of the popular music production in Iran? More emphasis has been put on the answers received through group interaction. Reflective analysis has been utilized in the analysis of the answers received through the interviews. In this analysis, the data was analyzed on the basis of the imagination, contemplation and interpretation of the researcher with reliance on his disciplinary insight (Tesch, 1990, p.69).

5. Findings

In this study five group discussions with two groups of producers of popular music in Iran were held. Here the findings of the interviews are reported and their sociological analysis is presented.

5.1 Interview with the producers of the official genres

In the first session of discussion the issue was discussed from a historical point of and then the questions were asked. In

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[3] The number of participants in each group depends on the topic and the characteristics of phenomenon under discussion, and the sampling and collection of data continues to the theoretical saturation point. The size of the group should also be proportional to our purpose; in a large group some people may not participate in discussion, and in small groups members may feel they cannot participate in the discussions freely. Many consider a focus group of 6 to 10 people appropriate.

answer to question 1, Code 4 stated, "my father always encouraged me to learn music, but my mother didn't like me to pursue my interest in music. However, probably because of my father's support I didn't meet any resistance to music in my family." In reaction to Code 4's answer, Code 2 said, "you have lived in Tehran, and in big cities we usually face fewer problems. In my city, although there are great musicians, music, especially its production, is not warmly welcomed by the people". Code 6 maintained that, "the size of the city plays a much smaller role in building up resistance than the widespread religious feelings. Tehran is an exception in this regard." Code 7 and Code 1 also maintained that if they lived in a city other than Tehran, it would probably be difficult for them to pursue their interest in music. In answer to question 4, Code 8 said, "the dominating spaces in Iran are different, and it is difficult to analyze them as a whole. Popular music, either in large cities, or small towns, in the eyes of ordinary people, or the educated people, is regarded as frivolous and superficial. I started with Iranian classical music, but to tell the truth, economic problems pushed me to select this musical genre". Code 1 commented that, "he probably means that, the music we produce today is not what we wanted in the beginning. The truth is that this type of music does not satisfy me, neither in terms of poetry, nor music." Code 2 remarked that, "I don't agree; it depends on our definition of satisfaction. This music satisfies me, because it has its listeners. The music we started with had no listener." Code 6 said, "Our fans are our true motivation for selecting this type of music, both economically and spiritually. By spiritually I mean that our friends like this kind of music more and this kind of music has guaranteed our presence in larger circles of friends." In answer to question 3, Code 3 stated, "basically interaction does not exist in the space of Iranian music. Although hybrid music is particularly favored by musicians in Iran, no musical cooperation exists between the producers of Iranian classical music and us." Code 6 maintains that, "this not only true in the case of music. In Iran people only values things they know well. One believes that the things he doesn't know are not worth learning". Code 8 said that, "it is very interesting, for example, it is important to me to produce hybrid music, and I have produced some music of this kind, but I haven't been successful." Code 2 remarked that, "the music we have produced is kind of hybrid music, which is the outcome of interaction. We have shown that we like interacting with others." In answer to question 2, Code 1 said that, "I don't know how one can have no contact with the government and continue with his work. We have to have relations with the government." Code 6 said, "I hope musicians won't have to receive permission for holding a concert, someday in the future, they hold concerts when they like, or release their albums; if their music is not really good, people won't buy it or listen to it." Other interviewees had had some contact with government at some stages of their work. And some believed that the government does not always have a negative attitude towards their music.

5.2 A sociological analysis of the answers of Group 1

At first glance, we might consider the members of this group as people who are inclined by social and cultural changes to select a musical genre not very much in accord with their initial musical taste. Although they believe their music is hybrid music and has been produced quite successfully, just the opposite seems to be true. The reasons for their failure in producing hybrid music are rooted in some structural necessities which entangle them in an internal contradiction. They accept that the music they produce is not original. This is the result of their sociability in the space of the music production in which some genres are believed to original in essence. This essentialist attitude derives from the traditionalist conception that the supporters of traditional musical culture have been attributed to. Although this traditionalist attitude was denounced for a time in the contemporary Iranian history, it is now supported by cultural policy-makers; this support results in its reproduction. From this standpoint, any kind of hybrid, either in the cultural-social space or in the musical space is believed to eliminate originality. The lived experience in a space which, in terms of cognitive music, is not considered original, has caused the producers of this genre of popular music to show interest in developing interaction with other genres, even though this interaction seems idealistic and unreachable to them. Tendency towards interaction shows a kind of social tolerance which entices a kind of monopolism and external resistance in others. In the space of popular music production in Iran, the producers that are more influenced by Iranian classical music regard monopolism and external resistance as aspects of musical genres which they have been influenced by, and also as features of genres with worldviews completely different from theirs. The social tolerance of this group facilitates their interaction with the supervising institutions and policy-makers. Almost all of them accept the necessity of supervision; however, in some cases because of the same tolerance, they prefer this supervision to be exercised by the all the society, not the policy-making institutions.

5.3 Interview with the producers of the unofficial genre

In these sessions the issue was briefly discussed, the key concepts of the study were explained, and then the above-

mentioned questions were asked. In answer to the first question, Code 5 stated that, "there's a lot of resistance. There's a family quarrel about it almost every day. My family didn't approve of it. They checked up upon me." Code 7 remarked that, "this resistance is interesting to me. If my family had accepted it willingly, I would have probably been the first person to give it up." In reaction to this answer Code 2 said, "I totally disagree, if there was no resistance, I would play music much better." Others also found the resistance of their family discouraging. This has caused almost all of them either to live independently, or to spend most of their time outside. In answer to question 4, Code 1 said, "it is absolutely awful. The situation has never been favorable. There is a lot of stress. I really envy those friends of mine who have emigrated. They're relieved." Code 3 reacted to this answer and said, "those who have emigrated have their own problems. They're strangers there, and this upsets them. But in terms of music the situation is different. This kind of music is basically incompatible with the situation in our country." Code 4 remarked that, "it doesn't have to be compatible with any culture. This music is basically created in incompatibility." Code 5 maintained, "incompatibility is the result of backwardness. The culture of this music is ahead of the culture of ordinary people." Code 7 said, "our problem is not incompatibility. The problem is we have to make people understand this kind of music is the culture of the youth. If we consider this music incompatible, we consider the culture of the youth incompatible. Iran has a young population, and this culture, is the dominant culture. It music is also dominant; I haven't seen anyone who isn't attracted by this music. Everybody has a stance towards this kind of music; they are usually indifferent to other genres." Code 6 said, "our listeners are engrossed in this music. This is great. When a lot of people like to walk or dress like rap stars, it shows that its culture is attractive. One cannot be indifferent to it." Code 2 said, "our listeners are different from listeners of other genres. Listeners of other genres usually have their normal life. The listeners of this kind of music are closely engaged in it." All answers indicated that the producers of this kind of music believe that it is very influential. In answer to question 3, Code 6 said, "almost not any! Essentially it is impossible." Code 7 remarked, "it is possible, but not in Iran. People either love us, which shows that they like the production or consumption of the same music, or not, which shows that they aren't interested in this music and naturally have no interaction with it." Code 1 said, "you raised this question to know how sociable we are; we live and work among people. Seclusion has no meaning to us. This music is collective. It needs special relationships. Sometimes, we spend a lot of energy creating and maintaining such relationships." In answer to question 2, Code 2 said, "you may not believe it, but sometimes we think that we don't live in this country. We have no relations with governmental institutions, neither relevant institutions, nor irrelevant ones. A short while ago I went to the passport office to renew my passport. I felt like a person who had left his cave after a long time." In reaction to this answer, Code 7 said, "he gave a nice example. It is really true. I didn't watch TV for one year, I didn't listen to any news." In almost all answers there is a tendency towards escaping from official spaces. They believed that what they spiritually gained in their solitude, made interactions with official institutions unnecessary for them.

5.4 A sociological analysis of the answers of Group 2

The participants in the interview hate the smallest amount of external resistance. They have all left their family environment and attach little importance to traditional family relationships. Families have accepted this separation in most cases. In this group, separation from social institutions starts with the family. They have met the strongest resistance inside these small structures. In other words, this separation is the starting point of their entrance into the space of production and consumption of popular music. The space of popular music production is something more that a professional space; however, for the first group, this space is primarily a professional space. The space of production is mainly a personal domain for the unofficial popular music producers. They form some of their intimate relationships in this space. Although some of the aforesaid actions can be seen among non-Iranian producers, the distinguishing feature of the space of production of this genre is that the seclusion of members of this group is caused supported by the society, not the individual himself. The member of this group demonstrated that they do not tolerate any musical interaction with other producers in the space of popular music production. This unwillingness has created a kind of self-imposed cultural monopolism in them. This group of popular music producers, more than others, likes to distinguish themselves from other groups with the aid of non-musical signs and symbols. This inclination towards social distinctions, which is a sign of the same self-imposed cultural monopolism, eliminates any possibility of creating hybrid cognitive music. Basically, no need for such a hybrid is felt among the producers of this musical genre. Nevertheless, examples of this kind of hybrid music are created in the spaces of non-Iranian popular music production. Monopolism has caused these producers to underestimate the value of other genres, either directly or indirectly. This leads them to consider their music to be original. This essentialist attitude makes them believe that today's culture essentially favors their musical genre.

6. Conclusion

If we study the space of popular music production at a micro level on the basis of a sociological conceptualization, we realize that there has been a controversial space for more than one hundred years. This conflict has broken out between the supporter of popular and modern musical cultures. In this controversial space, cultural policy-makers sometimes supported traditional cultures, and at times they supported modern cultures; however, the space of production, despite this support and probably as a result of it, has always been a problematic space. Since the late 1990s, because of the relatively large-scale production and consumption of popular music by the youth, the growth in the number of official and unofficial popular music groups and the growing popularity of satellite channels in Iran, the micro space of popular music production turned into the main space of music production in Iran. In this space, because of the presence of numerous genres, each belonging to a special culture, the former controversial space was reproduced. To understand this space, two groups of official and unofficial popular music producers were interviewed using the focus group interview technique. A sociological analysis of the data reveals that both groups meet internal contradictions and external ideological resistance. The first group did not consider itself to belong to the musical genre they produced; they had distanced themselves from the space of Iranian classical music, to which they owed much, in such a way that they deemed it impossible to return to it. This contradiction eliminates the possibility any kind of hybrid. They still believed in the originality of some musical genres and placed higher value on them than on different forms of hybrid music. Although they showed an interest in hybrid music, they deemed it devoid of originality. This reveals a hidden essentialism in their evaluation, which results from traditionalist attitudes. Although they have distanced themselves from Iranian classical music and had chosen a non-traditional musical genre and lifestyle, they showed traditional ideological reactions, at the final level of analysis. In the second group the ideological actions were much stronger. These ideological actions are combined with a self-imposed cultural monopolism which is the outcome of obligatory social seclusion; this obligatory seclusion is, in turn, the result of lack of support of social and official institutions for the musical genres they produce. This has turned them into ideological subjects who only negate others ontologically. This ideological action eliminates the possibility of producing any hybrid music.

Different genres of popular music in Iran, either those which are the frivolous forms of non-popular Iranian music, or those which are influenced by western genres, have always met a kid of discursive conflict, which is because of their ontological differences and the ideological reaction of producer to them. This conflict which is engendered in the space of popular music production is the same conflict which previously existed in the more general space of music production in Iran, among the supporters of traditional and modern music cultures. The cognitive hybrids of cognitive music play an important role in the space of music production; nonetheless, the ideological action among the producers of different genres in Iran has eliminated the possibility of producing hybrid music, and innovation and dynamism in the space of production of popular music in Iran. This causes the dynamic space of production to be changed into a static one, and this static space can result in cultural dismorphy in the space of popular music production, and, at a larger level, in the cultural space of Iran.

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