

Maqām

Maqām:
Historical Traces and Present Practice
in Southern European Music Traditions

Edited by

Jürgen Elsner, Gisa Jähnichen
and Jasmina Talam

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P U B L I S H I N G

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INTRODUCTION

In previous meetings of the ICTM Study Group Maqām some fundamental problems of the maqām phenomenon as well as many historical aspects of corresponding regional music traditions have been described and discussed. The results of these efforts have considerably extended and deepened the knowledge and understanding of the maqām phenomenon. Nevertheless, it cannot be ignored that multifarious personal, local and regional traditions and their history, constructive foundations and mutual relations as well as the impact on other music traditions are not yet sufficiently investigated and recognized. In spite of all the specified contributions on several topics, many facts are left uncertain, hypothetical, imaginary or even unknown. Even with the continuous evolution and discontinuous practice of personal, local and regional music traditions according to the maqām-principle, the materials of the corresponding music have yet to be studied more precisely. The scientific acquisition shows large gaps of knowledge and understanding due to lack of an intensified actual discussion asking for details. This is true not least for the music cultures of South European countries, especially for the Balkans.

The history of the Balkans since the late Middle Ages, which is strongly characterized by the Ottoman conquest and dominion, consists of manifold cultural indications, especially musical traces, respectively. The influence of the Ottoman Empire, however, varied from region to region and that is manifested in the manner of the adaptation, resistance or even the neglecting of historical influences in recent times.

In view of this fact the Academy of Music in Sarajevo and the Musicological Society of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina offered to organise the 8th Symposium of the ICTM Study Group Maqām in order to focus on this less highlighted scientific area regarding research on maqām related issues. The scientific preparation for the symposium was done by a programme committee consisting of the following members: Jürgen Elsner (Germany), Gisa Jähnichen (Germany/Malaysia) and Jasmina Talam (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

In this way the 8th Symposium of the ICTM Study Group Maqām was held at the Academy of Music in Sarajevo, from 8th to 11th November 2012.

Scholars from Germany, Turkey, Tunisia, Serbia, Malaysia, Finland, Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina contributed to the conference. The symposium lasting four days and comprised of five sessions as well as two concerts, and was framed by a show of traditional costumes from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the presentation of old crafts, including making of folk musical instruments.



Figure 1. Members of the ensemble Etnoakademik performing with the pan

In order to open up our minds and to widen the horizons of discussions on historical traces and present music practices related to the maqām principle in Southern Europe including neighbouring regions, the general topic of the Symposium "Maqām: Historical Traces and Present Practice in South European Music Traditions" was substructured into three special topics:

1. Between maqām and mode: the intermediate realms
2. Historical traces of Ottoman music in the Mediterranean Region
3. Role and revival of religious genres in the Balkans.

It is the nature of a symposium that only has a few specialists that means not all topics could be sufficiently and comprehensively worked out. However, the papers contributed to a deeper understanding of the

questions' complexity. Nevertheless, the contributions offered new insights and knowledge on some aspects of the influence of Ottoman music culture in the Mediterranean region and especially in parts of the Balkans. There exists historical developments and recent occurrences in the realm of music culture which seem to wait for their discovery and investigation.

Gisa Jähnichen (Malaysia/Germany) started a principal approach to the maqām phenomenon in an interregional transfer and use of modern media. Speaking about the "Maqām Principle in Peripheral Cultures" based on her Southeast Asian experiences she aimed at defining various degrees of awareness in music making and elemental understanding of the maqām principle, recognising its distinctiveness under today's social and cultural conditions.



Figure 2. Jürgen Elsner and Gisa Jähnichen during the session

Okan Murat Öztürk's (Turkey) contribution on "The Concept of Şube as a Tetrachordal Classification Method in the 15th Century Ottoman Makam Theory" is based on two treatises: the *Kitab-i Edvar* of Hizir bin Abdullah (1441) and the *Risale-i Musiki* of Kirsehirli Yusuf (1411). Öztürk describes speculative reinterpretation and systematization of historical facts of the four lately developed *shu'bes* Yekgah, Dugah, Sikah and Chargah and the tetrachordal arrangement that he compares with the fourth-based system of the *Musica enchiriadis* stated 500 years ago. He points out that maqām practices may also have changed depending on new theoretical contemplations implemented in the 15th century.

Most of the papers, however, deal with historical facts and deduced developments, with social and economic background studies on regional music traditions in Muslim communities of the Balkans.

Ali Fuat Aydin (Turkey) lectured on "The Melodic Characteristics of Greek Rebetika Music", the music of one and a half million Greek people who have re-migrated from Turkey to Greece since 1850. Their musical heritage that adopted some Turkish appearances such as the use of instruments like the Bouzouki and Baglama or the way of melody construction using the maqām system changed considerably with the application of Western harmonic progressions. Comparing dromos—the theoretical fundament of Rebetika—with maqām, the author tries to outline the corresponding similarities and differences.

Risto Pekka Pennanen (Finland) draws in his presentation "A Hundred Years of Makams and Modes in Bosnian Commercial Recordings" an interesting picture of features and consequences of keeping and transmitting traditional music by technical media from records from the beginning of the 20th century onwards. Westernization can be observed identified widely with modernization. Since the 1980s, re-orientalization shaped yet another special result of media transmission: note-for-note imitations of recorded pieces, peculiar to taksims, became a relatively common feature in performances replacing traditional creativity.

To some extent, Fatima Hadžić and Lana Pačuka (Bosnia and Herzegovina) follow the problem the other way round. The invasion of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1878 after the Russian-Turkish war confronted the Oriental musical heritage that had grown up in the Ottoman period with the new Western musical culture. Cultural imposition, through the colonizers, took place in various areas, among them through military bands of the Austro-Hungarian army.

Further research looks at the musical influence of the Ottoman Empire on North-African countries. Jürgen Elsner's (Germany) study on "A Turkish Contribution to Algerian Musical Culture: the Bashraf" sheds light upon one aspect of the Ottoman influence in dealing with the relation of the Algerian bashraf to its supposed Turkish model. It concerns a rather intricate problem that cannot be solved easily. Thus the description presents a, so far, complete list of Algerian bashrafs as well as notations and analyses of some pieces emphasizing tonal-melodical characteristics, rhythmic periods and formal construction. Such material elaborated as detailed and as precisely as possible is a necessary prerequisite to a useful reference to the history of Ottoman instrumental music that has been investigated during the last decades in an outstanding way.

Vesna Ivkov's paper "Adhan in the Tradition of Islamic Religious Community in Vojvodina" draws attention especially to the regeneration of religious life strengthened by immigrants of Muslim countries. Oriented to the maqām bound adhan practice of the Egyptian Azhar University, the structure of adhan in Vojvodina and the conditions and methods of its transmission are discussed.

According to Jasmina Huber (Germany) in her paper "Contemporary Maqam Practice in Jewish Community Belgrade Outlined by the Example of the Liturgical Hymn Nishmat Kol Hay" describes and analyses the introduction of a Sephardic Jerusalem rite in Belgrade at the end of the previous century and the musical challenges the performers of the newly installed rite had to face. It is the increasing repertoire of liturgical music based on maqām and its special subtleties that only a very few members of the community can cope with. The case was exemplified by an analysis of the liturgical hymn "Nishmat kol hay" regularly performed during the Shabbat morning prayer.

Jasmina Talam (Bosnia and Herzegovina) evaluates in her paper "From Traditional to Modern: Ilahy in Bosnia and Hercegovina" the recovery and commercialization of the traditional and in general māqam bound Muslim genre ilahy handed down in her country. Originally possessing a personal confessional character, the ilahy as well as the ancient kasida, have been transformed into a Western style using modern technology and presented at concert halls and stadiums for fun to thousands of people, thus remodelling the genre, which is left for diverging evaluation.

Besides these contributions presented as outlines during the 8th Symposium of the ICTM Study Group maqām, this volume consists of a further two papers submitted by researchers who could not attend the Symposium.

Fikret Karakaya heavily criticizes in his paper "Theory of Ottoman Music of the Modern Period" the 20th century Turkish maqām theory based on scale systems. He proposes a more practical approach to maqām descriptions considering melodic features as equally essential.

Another very interesting paper of Georgui Harizanov "The Makam System as a Metatheory for Interpreting Bulgarian Traditional Songs" interprets maqām as a "multilayered modal framework or system governed by a set of rules". Based upon voluminous collections of folklore he suggests a combination of modal theory and maqām system to better analyse Bulgarian traditional songs.

The present publication continues with the promotion of the international academic discourse regarding subjects related to the maqām. We hope that it may contribute to a better comprehension of this interesting cultural

phenomenon and will serve as an invitation to further reflections and research on maqam, and also to the history of Ottoman music and its legacy in the Mediterranean region.

Prof. Dr. Jürgen Elsner

PART I:

**BETWEEN MAQĀM AND MODE:
THE INTERMEDIATE REALMS**

MAQAM IN PERIPHERAL CULTURES

GISA JÄHNICHEN
MALAYSIA/GERMANY

The Case of *Ghazal* in Malaysia

First, I want to introduce a music practice that is continuously moving throughout the region and permanently changing: *ghazal* performances as observed between India and Indonesia. However, local differences are elemental to their popularity. Taking *ghazal Johor* and the appearance of *ghazal parti* as an example, I want to draw your attention to the multilayered meaning of music traditions and the possible re-interpretation of adopted elements.

Ghazal Johor

Johor is a state in the south of Malaysia. There are at least five culturally different areas: Muar, Batu Pahat, Mersing, Kluang and Johor Bahru, the capital of the state and the residence of the Sultan. Johor's Sultans of the late 19th and the early 20th centuries played a key role in attracting performers from abroad, mainly from southern islands sultanates such as Riau Lingga and later Singapore (Matusky & Tan 2004: 351-353), and in developing an urban entertainment culture in their rich market towns. *Ghazal* came with Indian musicians to Malaya's larger cities playing prevalently in the touring Indian Parsi theatre, later in the second half of the 19th century. It was then performed in Bangsawan (Tan 1997), an urban theatre developed parallel to and from Parsi theatre, and different local genres of Chinese, Malay or Western origin. Though Parsi theatre might have operated with *ghazal* as well, there are no reliable sources on how *ghazal* of that time was produced and perceived. Most probably, Parsi theatre performed in a local Indianized style might be the first mediator of *ghazal* in Johor and other places throughout Malaya. In Penang at the beginning of the 20th century, it mixed with Arabian entertainment music brought from the Middle East by Malay scholars and *boria*, an entertaining theatre and dance performance that lost its original religious meaning and

that was developed in the context of a growing entertainment business in Penang. Similar movements could be observed in the states Perak and Kedah where *ghazal* groups became popular not only in urban but also in rural areas.

Over the decades, *ghazal* has found its own performance conditions within the sphere of private music entertainment for weddings and birthday parties, for open house ceremonies and other regular amusements. *Ghazal* groups, as can be observed, play not only *ghazal* but all the favourite instrumental and vocal music. In Penang, Perak and Kedah *ghazal* groups also play for dancing, especially *zapin* (Jähnichen 2009) and *joget*. Cross dressing men performing as female dancers (Sohaimi 2006) is one interesting feature without which a *ghazal parti* seems to be incomplete in the North Peninsula.

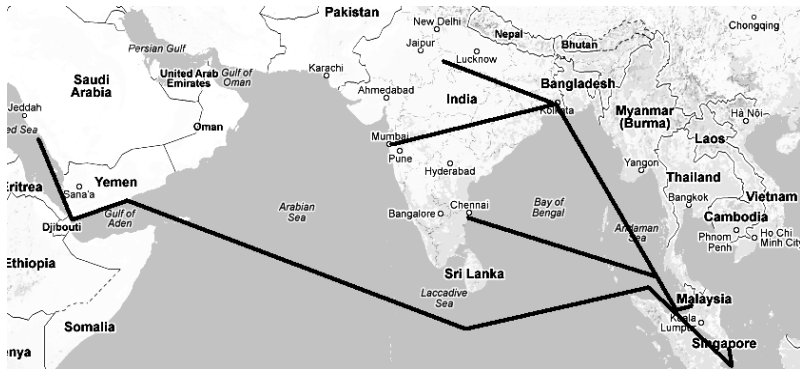


Figure 1: Map showing main routes of cultural exchange with Malaya/Malaysia (scheme by the author).

Though the instruments in *ghazal Johor* point strongly to Indian ensembles, the musical perception is translated into the historically earlier developed framework of a *maqam* based practice that was taken over in the course of Islamisation and adaptation of Arab musical ideas imported by traders and some scholars returning from the Middle East. However, this historically earlier period¹ of development in urban entertainment music is not very deeply rooted and rather an orientation or a loose

¹ Starting not earlier than in the late 18th century, when the southern tip of Peninsular Malaya attracted settlers from various regions to invest in industrial plantations and intense trade between larger ports (Andaya and Andaya 1982: 151–152).

framework of rules in appropriating melodic and rhythmic features. The *Maqam* used are named *Bayati*, *Kurd*, *Nahawand*, but mainly *Hijaz*, which gave its name to the modernized *gambus*, the ud-like instrument making a strongly Malay musical identity (Jähnichen 2009). The same can be said of the application of *raga*-like patterns of melodic treatments and the importance of basic notes throughout the piece.

Malaysian *Ghazal* in Performance

Over time in the early 20th century, *ghazal* playing was developed at least in two quite different appearances, strongly influenced by early media technology, namely movie companies operating in Singapore. Among them are the Shaw Brothers, who controlled most of the young film industry and the later import of Hindi films from India, where *ghazal* played an important role as part of film music. Those film music songs were often independently performed in support of cinema advertisements and for private entertainment.

Interestingly, these film songs contributed to the “tradionalising” of *ghazal* in a more definite way than *ghazal* groups performing elder forms of *ghazal*, such as the classic *ghazal Johor*, that were often radically transformed by creative individuals and in regional competition amongst the mostly wealthier hierarchy. So, we can find a classification of *Johor ghazals* according to their cultural area such as Muar, Mersing, Johor Bahru and Batu Pahat. Siti Rohaya binti Zakaria (2010) describes—though insufficiently—the main differences in both *ghazal* appearances.

She says that *ghazal Johor* uses song melodies of the so called Malay *Asli* style such as *Sri Mersing*, *Siti Payung*, *Patah Hati* and *Seri Banang*. Musicians and singers are seated and perform without applying gestures and special facial expressions. *Ghazal Johor* is accompanied by an ensemble of at least seven musicians playing the *harmonium*, *tabla*, *violin*, *gambus*, *guitar*, *tambourin* and *maracas*. *Ghazal Johor* is strictly not for dancing. It is an entertainment genre of the well situated and educated upper and upper middle classes.

Of the other appearance of *ghazal*, called *ghazal parti*, it is said (Siti Rohani binti Zakaria 2010; Omara 2012, Sohaimi 2006) that songs are taken from famous ballads such as *Anawintal Wahdina*, *Ahbabinna*, *Wai Ya, Ya Gamil*, *Istak Na Ya Albi*, *Ah-Yazid* and *Ifrah Ya Albi*, *Ahba Bina Ya Aini*.² Musicians and singers may stand up to perform, showing gestures

² The Arab title names of the repertoire are adopted into the Malay language as quoted. Occasionally, one can find modifications in spelling throughout the country.

and mimicry art. There must be at least eight musicians accompanying the singer that play gambus, accordion, violin, seruling, bongo, maracas, tambourin and double bass³. Ghazal *parti* is performed for the purpose of dancing. Mainly, two men are engaged to dance in womens dresses with elegant movements, circling around the singer (Omara 2012, Sohaimi 2006). This feature became an issue after the reformation of Islam in Malaysia following the model of Iran in the 1970s. Many *ghazal parti* events were cancelled or held only in private settings for selected and invited participants.

The term '*ghazal parti*' means the music played or repertoire as well as the group of musicians and the event itself. Among songs transformed into *ghazal parti* are also modern Arab and Hindustani songs that are taken from movies or live concerts broadcasted via mass media. *Ghazal parti* groups increasingly compose their own *ghazals*.

While observing *ghazal* in Malaysia, one should always be aware of the main differences in appearance and purpose. Another important point is that creating *ghazal* in both main categories, *ghazal Johor* and *ghazal parti*, is a dynamic process that reveals a great part of cultural negotiations within the Malay community as a space open for many inspiring music and dance elements coming from outside, or, to be more precise, established exclusively through migrated individuals. Nevertheless, in discussion with scholars, (Nor 2012) clear statements on adaptations are often neglected or refused while pointing towards the unique attributes of a respective song. Musicians, on the other hand, are less reserved though they likely to create their own views on historical facts (ASWARA 2012) derived from legends and local folklore. Songs, in general, are most of the time seen as carriers of text messages, thus songs-wherever used-are regarded as literature rather than music. The musical mood and feelings aroused are, therefore, justified through hermeneutic means, which might be a result of religious views on singing and music (Jähnichen 2012) in a Muslim society that is drawing on scholars such as Al-Ghazali.⁴

In the following section, I try to analyse how various construction principles, among them the *maqam* principle, are kept or translated in

³ Today, we often find an electric bass guitar instead of a double bass. There can be more than one guitar and an additional harmonium player as well.

⁴ Al-Ghazali's (1058-1111 AD) book "Music and Singing" is still widely propagated. It consists of quite precise instructions on how to appreciate which kind of music and for what reason. As a result, only a very few genres and conditions seem to be acceptable for a conservative Muslim (Jähnichen 2012).

ghazal performances.⁵

Examples of Varying Perception

Ghazal Sri Puteri Ledang
Puteri Ledang-SAAishahGhazal.mp4-MPC-HC 1.3.2121.0
 alap / taksim (tala: keruwala)

pantun

kopak tengah

kopak waenah

Figure 2: First example – Framework transcription of *Ghazal* Sri Puteri Ledang by the author. Notes with stems down illustrate the continuation of the core melody by musical instruments. This melodic part is compulsory for the identification of the *ghazal*, thus *ghazal* definitely is meant as ensemble music rather than solely a sung text.

⁵ The transcriptions given here are an approximation of the melodic framework and cannot represent any maqam or raga for the complexity of both their cultural appearances and the insufficient possibilities using western notations as a tool of description. However, they are a reminder of the sound examples and not their replacement. Definitive statements of how these melodic patterns are "translated" or re-interpreted are taken from quoted sources.

The first example is the *ghazal* 'Tun Mamat - Puteri Gunung Ledang', also called "Ghazal Sri Puteri Ledang", using elements of *Bhairavi* (with the basic scale when starting with C: \underline{C} , Db, E, Gb, Ab and Bb) in melodic phrases.



Figure 3: Basic tone material and sequences of approaching various pitch levels depending on melodic directions in *raga Bhairavi* and *raga Bhairava*.

Though basic tone material may point to *raga Bhairava*, the melodic intention and the mood of *raga Bahairavi*, in a mixed way of renditioning, (Parrikar 2002) is far more prominent.

However, easier to associate to is the translation into the *maqam* principle behind this construction consisting of incomplete *Hijaz* sequences in the first and *Nahawand* (ASWARA 2012) in the second tetrachord though only roughly worked out, i.e. the third tone of the lower tetrachord is avoided, throughout the whole piece.⁶

Different versions of this *ghazal* emphasise one or the other musical relationships as it is easily identifiable in the sound examples given: one strictly follows the shifting centres between the tetrachords; the other example focuses on the basic tone and keeps the melody fully related to it, to name only one distinct feature that can be observed.

⁶ This *ghazal* is in the same mode as *Air Mata Hati*, another famous *ghazal*.



Figure 4: Outlines of the pantun melody in "Anawinta" as performed by the Group Ajinda *Ghazal* Parti Kepala Batas in 2006.

The second example shows the Arab ballad *Anawinta* played in a *ghazal parti*. Here, we can barely find a connection to Indian *ghazal*. It seems to be dedicated to its Arab ideal in its treatment of melodic sequences and rhythmic structures. We may find elements of *maqam Hussein*, that combines sequentially tetrachordic material of *Bayati* and *Rast* (ASWARA 2012)⁷ melodically formulated in a unique way typical for popular music migrated from Egypt. Though some musicians may express these ideas, it is not to be taken as proof of really using any essential tonal material—especially in the context of melodic features based on the *maqam* principle—consciously deriving from any definite *maqam*. Therefore, names may not represent what they mean in first place. However, the elements mentioned are used in melodic fragments and possibly with little awareness of tonal relations within the melodic frame.

Yet the third example demonstrates how a Hindustani song is placed within *ghazal parti*. Though being thought of as a clear reminiscence to Indian origins, we might detect some *maqam* traces as well (ASWARA 2012). As understood by the musicians playing in ASWARA, the main feature of a *maqam* is its application of mainly tetrachordic layers that are melodically approached and determined through a hierarchical context in a way typical for each *maqam*. Here we find sequential layers that are then worked out further in the course of the song, based on this rather simple introduction.

⁷ *Bayati* and *Rast* produced in a timely sequence. A fourth part is associated with this type of imported *ghazal* brought to Malaya in the early 20th century, especially to Penang. That, in return, does not touch a more complex definition of the *maqam* principle such as given by Touma (1996: 43) on *maqam Rast*. The question on how Malay musicians intentionally translated and appropriated *maqamat* still remains open, so far.

The typical differentiation between ascending and descending melodic patterns as seen in bar one and six in this *ghazal*-like performance can be read as *maqam* elements as well as the specific movement towards the final tone (D) that translates a glissando from the vocal style within a *raga* applied on a *ghazal*.



Figure 5: Outlines of the Introduction and the first pantun melody in "Lagu Hindustani" performed by the Group Ajinda Ghazal Parti Kepala Batas in 2006.

Maqam* through the Gaze of *Raga

The strong associations of completely different musical systems and principles are caused by emphasising some basic features such as the strict attachment to one single basic tone and a rising development in the course of the '*lagu*', the core melody used for the *pantun*⁸, which is a requirement for any *raga*-like interpretation. On the other hand, some alternating interval relationships and temporary shifting of basic tones within a short phrase fixing tonal hierarchies accommodate the interpretation of an underlying *maqam* principle, which might be interpreted as a local translation of sound appearance de-rooted from its earlier cultural connotations.

Not surprisingly, *maqam* and *raga* as conceptual sources with established rules for performances might be a future field of merging musical ideas in peripheral cultures with an affinity to both directions. This affinity, given through the physical presence of Indian musicians or the personal experience through cultural journeys, such as the Haj, seems to be the deciding precondition for creative transformations. One example is an experiment conducted by Vishwa Mohan Bhatt and Simon Shaheen that started 15 years ago (Saltanah 1997/electronically 2011, Kalhor et al.

⁸ Quartraine, a text consisting of four lines with a typical rhyme scheme.

1997). In a series of well perceived pieces played with a modified guitar and an *ud*, the two musicians combined various elements and melodic rules given through *maqamat*⁹ corresponding with a few points with *ragas* that were, until today, considered to be strictly separated though sharing, for instance, abstract interval relationships. As entries in web-blogs and evaluating websites show, this experiment of double-reading musical cultures is not always well received. Though a mixture between maqam and *raga* with Western classical music elements, namely harmonic progressions, are absolutely common and unchallenged in any discussion, the mixture of Arabian and North Indian perceptions of musical ideas is still an issue due to the familiarity with the context and the symbolic interaction associated with it.

Ranade's description of *maqamat* (Ranade 2008: 17-18) underscores the very formal approach to a maqam principle as understood among the learned in North India. He gives the following comparative instructions:

1. Different notes are selected for accentuation and further, the tonal centres thus created are shifted upwards in ascending movements;
2. Repetition is a deliberately employed strategy of creating music;
3. Durational values of notes are frequently changed and often the presentation as a whole may not impart the experience of a regular rhythmic pulse;
4. Changes are effected in Makam presentation through the shifting of emphasis between the lower and the upper half of the octave.

To us, this instructive note may be interesting from the viewpoint of its relatedness to North Indian classical music experiences that are based on a musical understanding of fixed emphasis on one tonal centre and regular rhythmic pulses. Seen from the scholarly viewpoint of Arabian music, Ranade's explanation is weak in many points such as the evaluation of melodic structures purely from their primary sound appearance that deconstruct cultural connectedness and historical meanings given through the performative shaping of essential tonal relations. However, maqam- and *raga*-thinking do not completely exclude each other, at least from the perspective of primary musical sound.

The following *maqamat* were used in relation to their *raga* counterpart by the two musicians named above:

⁹ *Maqamat* is the plural of maqam in the language of the term's origin.

1. Nahawand and Kirwani
2. Hijaz and Basant Mukhari
3. Ajam Mu'addal and Bagashri
4. Ajam and Pahari
5. Kurd and Bhairavi.

The combination of Nos 1, 2 and 5 are also established in Malaysia though in a fragmented way. Obviously, the *maqam* principle can be ignored by those who may listen to the related *raga* and opposite. This phenomenon deserves further study.

Conclusion

It is a question of re-interpretation and the level of consciousness in the process of transformation if principles of generally different systems can be applied in a new joint musical framework that partly depends on tools borrowed from Western musical structures. While most transformations taking place in the course of ongoing traditional music practice can be seen as rather additive and based on an affinity towards various cultural attributes, the merging of musical ideas that lead to a destruction or reconstruction of conceptual sources does not necessarily need to be known to the audience as much as the musicians are aware of it. The separation of music production and perception widely allows for approaches in many individual ways, which is to me the 'good' in the 'bad'. In a globalised world that lives mainly on mass consumption of inevitably arbitrary musical products, creations of this kind cause a discussion of musical roots and rights among scholars and the internally learned that is definitely outdated. However, those discussions on the permissibility of merging expressions through musical sound show the rootedness and the strength of structural identification within music practices that have to be explored through practical applications such as the described experiment by Vishwa Mohan Bhatt and Simon Shaheen.

Peripheral cultures will always work on bridging ideas and mutual understanding. Nowadays, the very space in which this process runs is not as important as in the past due to modern communication technology. However, the cultural periphery of one huge area is determined to a great part by these processes of permeability that may—on the other hand—contribute to the stability of the musical identity within the core area.

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THE CONCEPT OF *ŞUBE* (“BRANCH”) AS A TETRACHORDAL CLASSIFICATION METHOD IN THE 15TH CENTURY OTTOMAN *MAKAM* THEORY

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Introduction

This paper deals with the concept of *şube* ("branch") which is one of the main components of the 15th century Ottoman *makam* theory. In this theory there are four classes with their specific symbolic meanings organizing the melody: (i.) twelve *makams* for the zodiac, (ii.) seven (or in some sources six) *âvâzes* for heavenly bodies, (iii.) four *şubes* for four elements, and (iv.) unlimited (formerly twenty four¹, then forty eight, etc.) *terkibs* for hours. The sources that I used to study the branch concept are the texts of Hızır bin Abdullah² (hereafter HbA) and Kırşehirli Yusuf (hereafter KY) who were leading adwar writers in the Ottoman 15th century. I aim to emphasize the multicultural and even transcultural characteristics and the crucial symbolism of esoteric knowledge which has

¹ In Abd al-Qadir Maraghi's system, twenty four *terkibs* was referred to as *şube*. Therefore it is possible to say in adwar tradition, in terms of *şube* concept, there are two main understandings: the first one relates the *şubes* with the four elements and the second one relates them with the twenty four hours of a day.

² Hızır bin Abdullah's *Kitâbü'l-Edvâr* has copies in different libraries: (i.) Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Diez. A. Oct. 7; (ii.) Paris Bibliothèque Nationale, Turc. 150 R.34.280; (iii.) Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi Revan Yazmaları Böl. No. 1728; (iv.) Konya Mevlana Müzesi Yazma Eserler Kütüphanesi No. 5762. The copies of *Risâle-i Musiki* of Kırşehirli Yusuf is also found in: (i.) Paris Bibliothèque National de France Suppl. Turc. 1424; (ii.) Ankara Milli Kütüphane No. 131/1; (iii.) Çorum Hasan Paşa Kütüphanesi No. 2263. I use the texts of Çelik (2001) and of Özçimi (1989) for translations of HbA and of Sezikli (2000) and of Doğrusöz (2007) for KY.

an important place in the 15th century Ottoman *makam* theory. That's why I want to compare my observations on the branch concept, with some sources and concepts in the history of European modal theory. Among these are the concept of *qualitas* in *Musica Enchiriadis* and *Scolica Enchiriadis* (hereafter ME and SE) and the concepts of *authentic* and the *affinitas* in modal theory. Thus, I also want to emphasize the necessity for reconsideration of the multicultural characteristics of esoteric knowledge in the area of music theory.

For this quest, everything began when I noticed the hidden connection between the esoteric symbolism of the first four numbers and the concept of branch. I should note that when I first read these Ottoman texts, I understood very little. However the texts have an incredible attractiveness and therefore I felt the need to make successive readings. The topics discussed in the texts, expression styles, the contexts and connections of those gave me new directions in the course of obtaining information. With my intensive effort to understand these texts, I knew I needed to find out more about the fields such as astrology, cosmology and esotericism. This effort of understanding and interpreting these texts has led me to a hermeneutic experience; the process is described as "penetration into the text" by Gadamer. About historical understanding Gadamer says: "If we fail to transpose ourselves into the historical horizon from which the traditionary text speaks, we will misunderstand the significance of what it has said to us". (2006: 302).

In both the sources I mentioned, it was persistently stated that the tones which are qualified as branches corresponded to the four elements, the four natures/qualities, the four humours. The four main tones with these relationships were called "the four authentic branches" (Figure 1).

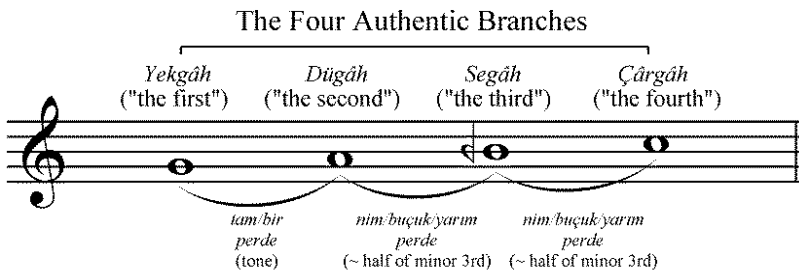


Figure 1: The four authentic branches of HbA and KY. In the notation, reverse flat shows a "neutral" (neither major, nor minor) tone.

This relationship was also taken as the basis for the explanations of *makams* and *âvâzes*. The most striking aspect was that authentic branches were used in a style which will establish an evident affinity, relationship and kinship between the traditional tones.

Musical Symbolism and the Esoteric Tradition

The esoteric tradition is basically an area of occult knowledge. The area of occult knowledge consists of some "hidden sciences" such as alchemy, astrology, witchcraft, white magic, etc. These sciences can't be known by everyone and are not open for all therefore, the esoteric tradition has its own language which is largely based on the symbols and implicit expressions (Guenon 2004). Its mysterious language is only open for and can only be understood by the initiates. Certainly the various beliefs and symbols have an important place and role since ancient times, in particular from Plato and Pythagoras in the source of the esoteric connections and relationships which is established between music and the cosmos, the heavenly bodies and some concepts of nature, time and humanity. In this tradition, the concepts of unity, harmony and interrelationship are the essence of all things.

According to Pythagoreans, the first four numbers create the most harmonious ratios: the octave (2:1), the fifth (3:2), and the fourth (4:3) which are called *tetractys* or *tetrad* (Theon of Smyrna 1979; West 1994; Wellesz 1998; Hailey 2009). For Pythagoreans, cosmos is represented by *tetrad* (Heninger 1961) and *tetractys* symbolizes the musical-numerical order of the cosmos (Ferguson, 2008). It is also known as the "sacred decad" because their addition gives ten and according to famous philosopher Philo of Alexandria: "Both in the world and in man, the decad is all" (quoted by Critchlow, in Waterfield 1988: 21). In his foreword for Waterfields' Iamblicus translation, Keith Critchlow says: "That ten is 'complete at four' is a well-known Pythagorean paradox based on the simple cumulative progression of $1+2+3+4=10$; or, in direct manner of those who had no separate number symbols". (Waterfield 1988: 9) Tetrad and decad, are both symbolized by a triangular form of the ten points. As stated by West: "The earliest Pythagoreans appear to have been entranced by the simple ratios of the octave, fifth and fourth, and to have treated them as an exclusive set with a mystical significance" (West 1994: 235). For Pythagoreans, tetrad and decad are the models of perfection: "They create unity out of multeity, and multeity out of unity. They originate in the unlimited, absolute world, but when they extend into the physical

world, they create a limited, yet perfect, unified system, a universe" (Berghaus 1992: 45).

In music, Pythagorean tetrad is symbolized by a tetrachord. A tetrachord (literally "four-stringed") consists of four tones and three intervals in a perfect fourth. Historically tetrachords are the building blocks of the Ancient Greek modal theory (Barker 1989). In this sense, the four-stringed lyre has also acquired a character in terms of symbolizing the tetrachord in an esoteric tradition. As a tetrachord, the strings of the lyre correspond to the four elements (Wellesz 1998). It's also remarkable that Hermes is accepted as the inventor of the lyre (Theon of Smyrna 1979) and then he thought Orpheus played it (Mathiesen 1999). Additionally, the lyre is also a mythological instrument which is identified with Orpheus and this is extremely important in terms of musical esotericism and symbolism (West 1994). In Chapter 19 of ME, there is a place given in the Orpheus myth for Neoplatonic knowledge. According to Boynton (1999: 71), this chapter of ME: "expresses pessimism about the possibility of understanding the metaphysical aspect of music".

Looking at the sources of the relationship between music, cosmology, and astrology they also encountered the esoteric traditions such as Hermeticism, Pythagoreanism and the Neoplatonism. Indeed these esoteric traditions and their many symbols were transferred to the Islamic culture by translations and commentaries on these ancient Greek sources starting from the 9th century. Al-Kindi, "the philosopher of the Arabs", is the first representative in Islamic culture in terms of the esoteric knowledge and its musical symbolism. According to Shehadi: "In his theory of knowledge and his move to understand music by its similarities to the non-musical, Kindi is thoroughly Greek, but he is particularly Pythagorean in specifically making the astral connections, and more generally in assuming that there is an affinity (*mushakalah*) among the various aspects of what makes up the *Kosmos*. However, unlike the Pythagoreans, he does not make numbers the universal principle that binds the cosmos.... There are four strings on the ud and there are four elements, but without the cosmology and metaphysical assumptions such similarity between strings and elements by itself has no explanatory force" (Shehadi 1995: 20).

Thus the traces and the effects of these ancient and well-established esoteric traditions can also be clearly seen in the Ottoman sources, which were shaped in Islamic culture from the 9th to 14th centuries by the works of Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, *Ikhwan al-Safâ*, Avicenna, Safi Al-Din al-Urmawi and Abd Al-Qadir al-Maraghi, etc. The most influential representatives of these hermetic/esoteric traditions in Islamic culture were the members of *Ikhwan al-Safâ* ("The Brethren of Purity") fraternity which were active in

the Basra region in 10th century (Shiloah 1993; Wright 2010). Their treatises, in which the knowledge was compiled within an encyclopedic mentality in their period, exist in the most basic sources of the Islamic culture (Kılıç 2010). The main sources of the epistles are associated on a large scale with Neoplatonic and the Pythagorean traditions (Nasr, 1993). As emphasized by Shehadi: "Like Kindi, and in what looks more like retroactive symbolic connecting than a historical account, the *Ikhwan* maintain that the musician philosophers specified the number of strings on the lute to four, no more and no less, so that their creations should emulate the natural order of things that are below the lunar sphere, and this in further emulation of the wisdom of the Creator" (Shehadi 1995: 41).

As Morewedge explains: "...Islamic tradition in its normative dimension participated substantially in Platonic and Neoplatonic structures, both in its concept of the ultimate being and in its instrumental and pragmatic theory of knowledge via the path of self-realization. ...Muslim philosophers were influenced in the same manner in which Pythagoreans influenced Plato and Plato influenced Neoplatonism. Perhaps in the same way that one may look at Neoplatonism as a natural development of the esoteric features of Platonism, many Islamic traditions are mystical developments of Neoplatonic themes ..." (Morewedge 1992: 71).

Of symbolism in Islamic culture, Pacholczyk says: "Islamic art, including music, is deeply symbolic. It contains a code of symbols that reflects and explains the totality of the cosmos and essence of God. The symbols are used as a way of explaining the unexplainable. Much Islamic symbolism was developed under the direct impetus of Greek philosophy and scholarship. Many of its elements, however, can be traced back even further to the beliefs of the ancient Egyptians, Sumerians, Chaldeans, and Manicheans. These beliefs were incorporated into Greek thought and gained authority and acceptance within Islamic philosophy and scholarship" (1996: 145).

Hızır bin Abdullah and His Work

The main source of my study for analyzing the branch concept is HbA's *Kitâbü'l-Edvâr* [c. 1441] (*Book of the Cycles*)³. He was one of the musicians at the Edirne Palace of Sultan Murad II (1404-1451). The very little information given in the introduction of *Kitâbü'l-Edvâr* (KE) represents almost all of what is known about his life. Accordingly, the sultan asked him to write a book about the music. HbA expressed that

³ I use the treatise of KY in order to emphasize some parallels and similarities.