



*Pacific Review of*  

---

*Ethnomusicology*

UCLA  
Volume 5  
1989

**Editors-in-Chief**

Wanda Bryant  
Edith Johnson

**Editorial Board**

David Harnish  
Luis Hernandez-Mergal  
Meilu Ho  
John O'Connell

**Computer Graphics  
Coordinator**

Wanda Bryant

The *Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology* is a refereed, annual publication of the UCLA Ethnomusicology Students Association and is funded in part by the UCLA Graduate Student Association. Single issues are available for \$6.00 (individuals) or \$8.00 (institutions). Please address correspondence to:

**Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology**

Ethnomusicology Program  
Schoenberg Hall  
University of California  
Los Angeles, CA 90024  
USA

Standing orders and agencies receive a 20% discount. Subscribers residing outside the U.S.A., Canada, and Mexico, please add \$2.00 per order. Orders are payable in U.S. dollars.

## From the Editors

Here we are again. A cooperative effort, the Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology is published more or less annually by an ever-modulating group of ethnomusicology students at UCLA. As a graduate journal we are especially committed to publishing the work of fellow graduate students. Over the years, as the editorial board has changed, the journal has also evolved, reflecting the concerns and expertise of its different editors.

In this issue we presented ourselves with the challenge of fully exploiting the capabilities of our desk-top publishing system. All but three of the graphics were created using Macintosh hardware and a handful of graphics programs. To design musical examples and modify them to reflect the special needs of ethnomusicological transcription, we used Deluxe Music Construction Set for building the conventional notation, then transferred the graphics to Superpaint to modify the musical notation and add text, and lastly imported the graphics into the articles themselves, which all resided in Microsoft Word 4.0. The diacritics used for the English transliteration of Arabic were designed by configuring MicroSoft Word 4.0 in conjunction with a simple macro program, thus modifying the optional character set. The remaining graphics, some designed by the authors, some designed by our graphics coordinator, were produced using Superpaint and MacDraw II. Using these tools, we have found that pictures no longer cost more than words to produce. Books and journals, traditionally the purveyors of text, can be liberated from that single role by present-day technology. Therefore, why not include more two dimensional forms, which illustrate the points in ways which words cannot. We feel that the considerable extra time and effort required by our new format was well worth the effort.

Four of this year's articles were presented at the Sunday morning panel on Arab music held at the annual Society of Ethnomusicology meetings at Tempe in the fall of 1988. All four, exploiting different topics, examine aspects of change within the context of tradition in music of the Arab world. Dwight Reynolds focuses on the social status of epic singers of Egypt, and shows how the innovative commercial success of recent generations of epic singers results from their manipulation of that traditional social role. Anne Rasmussen, discussing the musical life within the Syrian immigrant community here in the United States, identifies key live music events, then traces their history as a means to investigate the changing aesthetic standards of the community. Scott

Marcus describes the evolution of the concept of *maqām* in the writings of Near Eastern music theorists. Virginia Danielson, writing about a genre of Egyptian singers who are seen as bearers of tradition, shows how their craft informs different layers of modern Egyptian musical life. In the two remaining articles, Paul Humphreys draws parallels between the world view of the Pueblo Indians and the compositional structure of their katchina dance songs, and Sue DeVale gives an in-depth ethnographic description of the sounds and sights of a Sundanese gong smithy.

Conventional forms of acknowledgment are inadequate to express our appreciation, especially to our anonymous referees whose recommendations have contributed substantially to the quality of the journal. In addition, the fledgling Department of Ethnomusicology and Systematic Musicology has contributed moral and financial support. Our faculty advisor, Prof. Jihad Racy, gave us essential advice at crucial times. Eran Fraenkel, managing editor of Ethnomusicology Publications at UCLA, lent technical advice and his professional expertise to the editing process. Finally, we wish to acknowledge the UCLA Graduate Students Association without whose continued financial support this journal would not be possible.

Wanda Bryant  
Edith Johnson

# Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology

---

Volume 5

1989

## Contents

### Articles

- Tradition Replacing Tradition in Egyptian Epic Singing:  
The Creation of a Commercial Image.... Dwight Reynolds 1
- The Music of Arab Americans: Performance Contexts  
and Musical Transformations..... Anne Rasmussen 13
- The Periodization of Modern Arab Music Theory:  
Continuity and Change in the Definition  
of *Maqāmāt* .....Scott Marcus 33
- Cultural Authenticity in Egyptian Musical Expression:  
The Repertory of the *Mashāyikh* ..... Virginia Danielson 49
- Form as Cosmology: An Interpretation of Structure  
in the Ceremonial Songs of the  
Pueblo Indians ..... Paul Humphreys 61
- Gong Forging in Bogor, West Java: The Process  
through Its Soundscape ..... Sue Carole DeVale 89

### Reviews

- Kartomi, Margaret J. *Musical Instruments of Indonesia:  
An Introductory Handbook* ..... David Harnish 126
- Jean During. *La musique traditionnelle de l'Azerbayjan  
et la science des muqāms* ..... John O'Connell 130

## Tradition Replacing Tradition in Egyptian Epic Singing: The Creation of a Commercial Image<sup>1</sup>

Dwight Reynolds

In many traditional societies around the world, performers of various sorts are socially marginalized. As purveyors of music, theater, or dance, as itinerant elements in an otherwise fixed social pattern, performers are often unofficially, and sometimes officially, disenfranchised.<sup>2</sup> In some cases the performer may achieve some measure of respectability through association with a respected art form; in other cases a particularly interesting social tension arises from social sanctioning of the art form but not of the performer. The epic singers of the Egyptian Nile Delta are a clear example of this latter situation—a respected art form transmitted by unrespected performers.<sup>3</sup> The role of these traditional performers is in sharp contrast with that of a handful of singers who were, in the late 1960s and through the 1970s, able to dissociate themselves from the mistrusted qualities of the traditional singers and become commercial stars in the booming cassette industry, thereby achieving a highly ambiguous status as epic singers who were not “really” epic singers.

The great majority of the epic singers of Egypt, both in the Nile Delta in the north and in Upper Egypt to the south, are members of a half-dozen or so marginal social groups referred to in Arabic as *ghajar*, usually translated into English as *Gypsies*. The divisions between these groups—the Nawar, the Jamāsa, the Ṭaṭar, the Ḥalab, and others—and their relationship to each other, is not well understood, but in the Nile Delta, the region focused upon here, the great majority of epic singers are from the Ḥalab group.<sup>4</sup> Their name literally means *Aleppans*, that is, people from the northern Syrian city of Aleppo, but the Egyptian Ḥalab do not seem to have retained any explanation for this appellation.<sup>5</sup>

My own work with the Ḥalab poets of the Nile Delta has centered on a specific village in the province of Kafr al-Shakyh which is home to fourteen households of epic singers. The village, al-Bakātūsh, is known as “the village of the poets” (*balad al-shu‘arā’*) throughout the surrounding provinces. I worked with these fourteen households of Ḥalab epic singers in 1983, for a full year in 1986–1987, and again briefly in 1988, and was also able to

collect information about nearly a dozen other small communities of poets scattered across the Delta.

The Ḥalab are known throughout most of Egypt as blacksmiths, traders, and epic poets. In most cases, families among the Ḥalab specialize in only one of these occupations. In the “poet families” of al-Bakātūsh, every male for at least the last three generations has been an epic singer; some were good, some were not so good, but they have all worked as *rabāb* poets singing the epic of *Sīrat Banī Hilāl*, literally the “history” or “travelling” (*sīrah*) of the Banī Hilāl Bedouins, that recounts their migration from their homeland in the Arabian peninsula to Tunisia which they eventually conquered and ruled.<sup>6</sup>

The Ḥalab poets of the Delta perform exclusively on the *rabāb*, or spike-fiddle. They perform alone or in pairs; in the latter case only one performer sings the epic while the other provides musical accompaniment and, intermittently during the performance, sings shorter vocal genres such as praise songs for the Prophet Muḥammad (*madīḥ*) while the main performer rests. The poets are, for the most part, itinerant performers, often travelling on patronage circuits which their families maintained over several generations, visiting each patron twice a year “once in the wheat and once in the rice” (*marrāh fī 'l-ghallah wa-marrāh fī 'l-ruzz*), that is, at the major spring and fall harvests. Though itinerant, they maintain settled households in al-Bakātūsh. The poets are rarely away from home longer than two weeks at a time, if for no other reason than that they are often paid with grain and other agricultural produces which must be hauled home and stored before continuing on. Traditionally, these poets have also performed at weddings, cafes, local saints’ festivals, circumcision celebrations, and at private evening gatherings (*sahrāt*). For poets who are not gifted enough to attract significant patronage or for any poet when economic needs dictate, there are less respected forms of income: playing in town squares (usually praise songs to the Prophet Muḥammad rather than epics) for whatever pennies are given by passersby, riding trains and singing for similar pittances, and even sitting at the edges of fields to entertain villagers as they harvest or plant in return for a meal and some small payment. These latter activities are viewed as vagrancy (*tasawwul*) by many people;<sup>7</sup> they are admitted to reluctantly by the poets and referred to pejoratively by other villagers.

These traditional contexts for the singing of epic poetry, however, are rapidly disappearing. The urban areas rejected the epic tradition some time ago as rural, “hick,” and provincial.

Though performances in Cairo were common in the nineteenth century, the performance of *Sirat Banī Hilāl* has been almost entirely a rural phenomenon in the twentieth century.<sup>8</sup> Now, even in the countryside, things are changing. According to the poets of al-Bakātūsh, the cafes were the first performance context to disappear; the arrival of battery-powered radios, then cassette recorders, and now televisions, have pushed out the poets and their stories.<sup>9</sup> At weddings it is no longer considered chic to bring in a poet of poets. Not more than fifteen years ago a wedding was hardly a wedding if there was no poet to sing the deeds of the heroes of the Banī Hilāl tribe after the traditional wedding songs and rituals had taken place—and the performance had to go on till the dawn call to prayer to be a good one. Now the villagers bring in a singer who has an amplified band and who sings a mixture of traditional rural wedding and religious songs along with renditions of songs by famous urban singers such as Umm Kulthūm and ‘Abd al-Ḥālim Ḥafiz. An interesting set of circumstances can, however, conspire to promote poets at weddings, at least temporarily. When there has been a recent death in the village where a wedding is planned, and family members are still sitting the first seven days of mourning, it is considered disrespectful and inappropriate to have loud amplified music. In this case people often bring in the epic poets as a substitute form of entertainment. Even if they are less chic, they are traditional, and, since they do not use loud-speakers, the wedding may take place as planned.

Private parties featuring poets, a major source of income in the past, are also becoming rarer as the elder generation, those who still most appreciate the epic, passes on. The poets of al-Bakātūsh now live mostly from their circuits of patrons, a few weddings, private gatherings, and vagrancy.

### Poets and Villagers

The poets and their families exist in the village of al-Bakātūsh neither as complete insiders nor complete outsiders, not truly strangers and not truly friends. Both villagers and poets are quick to note that they are separate groups coexisting, though the villagers are perhaps quicker to point this out than the poets.<sup>10</sup> The question of the identity, ethnicity, and historical origins of the epic poets of the Nile Delta is complex, sensitive, and at times highly ambiguous. The villagers refer to the poets as *shu‘arā’* (poets), as *‘arab* (Arabs), and, more rarely, as *ghajar* (Gypsies), since this latter term has strongly pejorative connotations. Each of these terms maps a

particular set of social ambiguities and tensions between the villagers and the poets resident in their village. (The term Ḥalab is an in-group term in al-Bakātūsh used by the poets to refer to themselves; it is not used by or with other villagers.)

The families of the epic singers have been in al-Bakātūsh for a little over one hundred years; the poets therefore state that they are from al-Bakātūsh. The villagers of al-Bakātūsh usually do not agree and point out that, though the poets live in al-Bakātūsh, they are not *from* al-Bakātūsh. As Gypsies, the poets possess no *aṣl*, no origin.<sup>11</sup> In the village, the poets own no agricultural land, that commodity which so strongly symbolizes stability and respectability in agrarian society (though they do own the plots of land on which their houses are built), and there are few, if any, marriages between poets' families and villager families. As one Ḥalab woman put it:

We don't marry peasants (*fallāḥīn*) and they don't marry us. The Ḥalab marry each other—We have our own customs...we don't marry except to each other. That way no one can say "You're the daughter of a such-and-such" (*bint kazā wa-kazā*). (Wife of Shaykh 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Tawfiq, pers. comm., June 3, 1987)

In daily life in the village they take little part in the constant rounds of visits and gatherings. In ten months, I encountered villagers in poets' homes less than a half-dozen times. I never encountered a poet visiting in a villager's home. There are many specific areas of village social life from which the poets and their families are excluded. One aspect which has broad repercussions for the relations of the two communities is that villagers do not perceive the poets to partake in the overall genealogical structure of the village. Whereas all villagers are known by their first name, father's name, grandfather's name, and are attached to a clan linking many families in the village, the poets are referred to only by first name, father's name, and the title "the poet" (*al-shā'ir*). Villagers claim that poets possess no surnames indicating family or clan. The poets do possess such names, but actively withhold them from public use.<sup>12</sup>

Though the scope of this paper does not permit a full delineation of the role of the poets and their families in village life, one anecdote may impart the depth of the social divisions. When a villager dies, it is imperative that every family send at least one male representative to sit in mourning. In October 1987, when Shaykh Muḥammad Aḥmad the Poet died, the only villagers who sat in mourning were the two who accompanied me to the funeral.

As a marginalized social group, the poets have but one source of respectability—the epic itself, the tradition they bear that is in demand by the villagers around them. The poets stress their identification with the epic in many ways, and the villagers do indeed associate the poets with the epic. Both the poets and the epic heroes, for example, are referred to as Arabs. In Egypt, several specific groups are usually referred to as Arabs. First, the desert Bedouin are Arabs; also Arabs from the Arabian Peninsula are referred to as Arabs. Egyptians refer to themselves as Arabs only in the context of world politics, a reference to the pan-Arab ideal of a single Arab nation encompassing all Arabic speakers. Finally, however, Arab is also a term used in referring to marginal social groups within Egypt. It functions as a systematic indicator of “the Other.” Thus, the Gypsy poets of al-Bakātūsh are addressed and referred to in the village as Arabs and the heroes of the epic are referred to as Arabs since they were Bedouin heroes; the poets inside and outside the performance context stress the fact that they are Arabs like the heroes of which they sing.<sup>13</sup>

In addition, the heroes of the epic are not merely heroes but poets as well, and in the epic they play the same instrument, the *rabāb*, that the poets of al-Bakātūsh play. In the equation of epic heroes with poets lies an intended reversal—epic poets somehow partake of the qualities of heroes. Poets in the epic are invariably eloquent, generous, and courteous. A recurring commentary about the relations between the poets and the larger world is brought about each time an epic hero disguises himself as a poet and is badly treated by the characters he meets. In the end, of course, these characters learn that the form of the humble poet conceals not only a master of eloquence but a brave and chivalrous hero. At the moment of performance, these sections provide a unique mirroring of “narrated events” and “narrative event” when an epic poet playing the *rabāb* in front of an Egyptian audience sings of one of the epic heroes disguised as an epic poet playing the *rabāb*, singing in front of an Egyptian audience!<sup>14</sup>

In the social world the poet is sheathed in a mistrusted public persona: the epic singer is usually a Gypsy with no known origin, he owns no agricultural land, he is itinerant, and he is attributed with specific characteristics which differ from those of the *fallāḥīn*, the Egyptian peasants. By association with the epic, the poets seek, but do not fully obtain, higher status in the outside world. In the past twenty-five years, however, several singers have emerged as commercial stars by purveying the *Sīrat Banī Hilāl* epic in the

cassette market and by distancing themselves from the suspect qualities of the traditional singers.

### Sayyid Ḥawwās

The most famous epic singer in the western Nile Delta of the last quarter century was Sayyid Ḥawwās who died about eight years ago.<sup>15</sup> He was very successful commercially and commanded fees up to fifty times higher than traditional poets for his live appearances. If one asks about the epic *Sīrat Banī Hilāl* in this region, the name of Sayyid Ḥawwās is the first name on everyone's lips. Ḥawwās was not of Gypsy origin, but rather from a peasant background. Here is an account of Ḥawwās's early relationship with the epic as told by a Ḥalab poet from al-Bakātūsh:

Sayyid Ḥawwās was a great poet, but not from a poet's family. His family owned land, fifty *faddāns*.<sup>16</sup> But when he was young, he fell in love with the epic. He used to sit in a cafe and listen to the poets. He heard it from another great poet, Shaykh Sibā'ī from Kafr Ibra (Minufiyya Province) who was educated, an Azhari, who had left his studies to become a poet.<sup>17</sup> Sayyid Ḥawwās's father used to beat him for listening to the poets, because he was neglecting his studies to go listen at the cafe. He fashioned himself a crude *rabāb* but his father broke it. Still he persisted. (Shaykh 'Abd al-Wahhāb Ghāzī, pers. comm., March 17, 1987)

The poets of al-Bakātūsh emphasize in Ḥawwās's life the great power of the epic itself, that caused a comparatively wealthy, purportedly literate man to leave all those things behind to become a poet. The villagers, however, emphasize the idea that Ḥawwās was literate and cultured and therefore that his renditions were better—for his performances were in fact radically different from those of the traditional poets.

A brief list of these differences includes his use of large ensembles of up to eight musicians, his use of amplifiers and loudspeakers, his use of a completely different poetic structure, his reliance on sources other than the oral tradition, and his use of different costume. He also performed the epic on the Western violin rather than the traditional *rabāb* which is the archetypal instrument of the epic.<sup>18</sup> So strong is the presence of the *rabāb* in the poetic tradition, however, that Ḥawwās retained it in his performance texts, often being in the position of singing lines such as, "I will sing

to you on the *rabāb* and entertain you...,” while in fact holding a violin in his hands.

The issues of poetic structure and the content of the stories is an important one. The traditional poets of *Sīrat Banī Hilāl* in the Nile Delta use a mono-end rhyme, medial caesura form with long verses (up to twenty-six and even thirty syllables in length); they often maintain the same rhyme for upwards of one hundred verses. This is the poetic form used throughout most of Arabic literary history and is the form of the earliest of Arabic poetry dating to the sixth century A.D.<sup>19</sup> Sayyid Ḥawwās used short verses in varying rhyme schemes, with uneven and constantly varying patterns. With some justification, the traditional poets look down on Ḥawwās’s poetry as mere ditties or jingles. Ḥawwās’s short verses and the ever-changing rhyme scheme may, however, have appealed to audiences who were no longer well acquainted with the epic stories and poetic form; his verses are simple, easy to listen to, and the rhyme scheme is readily apparent.

Traditional mono-end rhyme schema:

```

-----A
-----A
-----A
-----A

```

Quatrain schema used by Ḥawwās:

```

-----A      -----A
-----A      -----B

-----C      -----C
-----C      -----B

```

The importance of the costume used by Ḥawwās becomes evident in testimonies by villagers and others about the difference between the traditional singers and Ḥawwās. One of the first elements used in making the distinction is that Sayyid Ḥawwās was *bitā’ al-tarbūsh* and the Bakātūsh poets are *bitū’ al-’imma*. In other words, Ḥawwās was a “wearer of the *tarbūsh*” (the red hat often known as a fez in English), whereas the traditional poets are “wearers of turbans”—i.e. lower class and rural. One key association of the *tarbush* headdress and the amplified ensemble style for villagers of al-Bakātūsh is with religious singers known as *munshids*.<sup>20</sup> When asked if Ḥawwās was a *munshid*, villagers invariably

## Egyptian Epic Singing

answered “no,” for, it would be explained, he did not sing the religious repertory of the *munshids*. On further questioning, however, people readily agreed that he “looked like the *munshid*” (*shakluh kān shakl munshid*) and that he sounded “like the *munshids*” (*zayy il-munshidīn*).

Sayyid Ḥawwās “sounded like” a *munshid* because he chose not only to dress like a religious singer but also to adopt the performance style of the religious singers. Having eschewed the traditional *rabāb* for the violin, he adopted the full amplified ensemble consisting of reed flute(s), violins, sometimes a lute (*‘ūd*), and a variety of percussion instruments such as *ṭablah* and *mazhar*. Since he did not maintain an ensemble of his own, the musicians he performed with were, in all probability, musicians who regularly performed the *munshid* repertory. This difference in performance style was often highlighted in remarks made by villagers in al-Bakātūsh that the traditional poets are not *bitū’ al-mikrofonāt*, they are not “microphone poets,” while Ḥawwās was.

What is clear is that these deviations from the traditional performance style were not random. The changes Ḥawwās effected were explicitly aimed at distancing himself from the low-status, Gypsy-poet associations of the epic, aimed at rendering the performer of the epic respectable. Ḥawwās patterned his performances after these religious singers, the *munshids*, who occupy such a strong position in Egyptian folk culture. These shaykhs, by virtue of the religious material they perform and by virtue of the education and erudition attributed to them (often falsely) by their audiences, are eminently respectable. In patterning his performances on those of the *munshids* by adopting their musical idiom and costume, Ḥawwās succeeded in creating a new style of epic performance which allowed the performer, as well as the material performed, some degree of respectability.

Visually and musically, Ḥawwās’s performances are distinct from those of the traditional poets. This new performance style, however, was not viewed as a break in the tradition by audience members in al-Bakātūsh. All of the various elements used by Ḥawwās are part of the greater musical environment of the region; the music, the instruments and orchestration, the rhyme schemes, the costume, all of these are familiar to the audiences, albeit from other genres of folk music. Since the essential aspect of the epic, that is, the story, the plot itself, remained virtually unchanged, audiences in al-Bakātūsh and elsewhere readily accepted the new patina of respectability and modernity.

Validation of these ideas can be found by examining the careers of other poets who attempted to model themselves on Sayyid Ḥawwās. One such poet, Sa'd Muṣṭafā, succeeded; many others did not. Muṣṭafā was in fact of Gypsy origin, though he did not come from a family of epic singers.<sup>21</sup> By performing on violin instead of *rabāb*, by adopting the ensemble-style performance used by Ḥawwās and the musical idiom of the *munshids* as Ḥawwās had done, and by adopting the *ṭarbūsh* as headdress, Muṣṭafā managed to create an ambiguous public persona. Ḥawwās was known to be a non-Gypsy epic singer; Muṣṭafā performed in the same style as Ḥawwās. As one might expect, confusion regarding Muṣṭafā's origins resulted. I encountered many different opinions about Muṣṭafā; the pattern basically broke down to a division between people who lived close to Muṣṭafā's home near al-Manṣūra, who knew that he was of Gypsy origin, and those who lived further away who were of the opinion that he was not, because he did not perform in the traditional style. In any case, alongside Ḥawwās, he stands as the most famous and most popular of the epic singers in the Nile Delta.

## Conclusion

Two of the fourteen poets in al-Bakātūsh own Western violins and occasionally play them. When asked how and why they came to buy violins they each confessed that they had had dreams of becoming commercial stars like Sayyid Ḥawwās, and one could only do that if one played violin instead of *rabāb*. Their attempts failed. Asked why they did not continue trying to perform like Ḥawwās had done, they fell back on their own sense of ethnicity and tradition and responded with muster: *kalāmuh mish kalāmnā* ("His words are not our words").

Thus, in the Nile Delta we encounter a tradition where the social marginalization of a specific performing group, that of the *Sīrat Banī Hilāl* epic singers, has not affected the respect generally accorded to the performance tradition itself, despite its recent decline in popularity. Within the greater musical culture, a handful of performers have been able to adopt elements of the performance style and musical idiom of a highly respected religious genre and create a new style of epic performance, thereby distancing themselves from the stigmatized persona of the traditional singers. Since all of these elements are recognized and known by audience members as part of their overall musical culture, this new combination of elements is not perceived as a break in the tradition. What is, from our point of view, distinct change is, from the

## Egyptian Epic Singing

audience's point of view, basic continuity, for the essential thread, the story, the plot, endures.

### Notes

1. This paper was first presented at the Society for Ethnomusicology meeting, October 23, 1988 in Tempe, Arizona. The research was partially funded by a Fulbright-Hays doctoral dissertation research grant 1986–87.
2. For an analysis of the social role of musicians in Islamic contexts, see al-Faruqi (1981, 1982). See also the articles by Denny, Racy, Sakata, Sawa, and Schuyler, all published in volume 17(1) (1985) of *Asian Music*.
3. A similar situation in southern Egypt has been discussed by Slyomovics (1987) in his first chapter, "The Poet Outcast," pp. 6–19.
4. On Gypsies in Egypt see Ḥannā (1982, 1983). See also Newbold (1856) and Sampson (1928).
5. The term *ḥalab* (also *ḥalaba* and *wilād ḥalab*, "children of Ḥalab") is linked by villagers, researchers, and the Ḥalab poets themselves to the city of Aleppo, whose name is attested from Biblical times; there is no evidence for any tie with the Arabic root H/L/B, "to milk (i.e. a cow)" and "to kneel as if milking" (archaic). The arrival of Gypsies in Egypt appears to have taken place no earlier than the thirteenth century, and it is quite possible that many groups did not arrive until much later. Several early texts have been posited as the first reliable accounts of Gypsies in Egypt. Paul Kahle (1950) argues that one of the characters in a shadow-play by the thirteenth-century writer Ibn Dāniyāl may be taken as a Gypsy, though she is referred to only as a *sāni'a*. Other candidates for earliest reference are from the "Travels of Peter Belon in Egypt and Palestine" (1546–49) (Rauwolff 1693) and a traveller's notice published by G. Ward (1934). The latter, however, seems to refer to Bedouin rather than *ghajar* or *ḥalab*, though the author uses the English term *Gypsies*.
6. For a fuller description of the content of the epic and its regional variants, see Slyomovics (1987) and Reynolds (1988).
7. A poet is never, however, referred to explicitly as a beggar (*shahḥā*) by villagers in al-Bakāūsh.
8. On nineteenth-century performances in Cairo see Lane ([1895] 1978).
9. A description of precisely this type of scene is found at the beginning of Naguib Mahfouz's novel, *Midaq Alley*:

Abū Saada, al-Zanaty says that ...

"The cafe owner shouted in angry exasperation: "Are you going to force your recitations on us? That's the end—the end! Didn't I warn you last week?"

...The old poet sweetened his tone a little as he tried to soothe the angry man and said:

“This is my cafe too. Haven’t I been reciting here for the last twenty years?”

The cafe owner took his usual seat behind the till and replied:

“We know all the stories you tell by heart and we don’t need to run through them again. People today don’t want a poet. They keep asking me for radio and there’s one over there being installed now. So go away and leave us alone and may God provide for you ...”  
(1981:5)

10. I use the term villagers here to refer to the non-poet residents of al-Bakātūsh. Though the poets and their families are residents of the village, and in that sense are villagers, I shall not refer to them as such here. This follows the Arabic usage in al-Bakātūsh of “people of the village” (*ahl al-balad*) versus “the poets” (*al-shu‘arā’*).

11. See Abu-Lughod (1986), particularly pp. 41–49, for a more detailed discussion of this concept.

12. My accidental use of a poet’s family name in a public situation once created major tensions which had to be resolved through the intervention of another poet willing to act as a mediator on my behalf.

13. In reality, there is no historical link; the poets claim no actual descent from the heroes of the epic, and recognize that they themselves are not Bedouin. The shared category is one of nomenclature only.

14. Further exploration of the replication of “narrated events” in the “narrative event” can be found in Bauman (1986). For an examination of poet/hero identification in a Turkish performance context, see Moyle (1986).

15. The best known singer of the eastern Nile Delta, Sa’d Muṣṭafā, is discussed below.

16. One *faddān* equals approximately 4,200 m<sup>2</sup>, or 1.038 acres.

17. An *Azhari* is someone who has studied at the al-Azhar Islamic University in Cairo. Since literacy is accorded great esteem, the traditional poets often attribute to ancestors and great poets of the past the ability to read and write. In most cases this is highly improbable.

18. For conflicting attitudes toward the *rabāb* see Slyomovics (1987), pp. 16, 19, 51, 71.

19. From the twelfth century A.D. onwards a number of secondary poetic forms appeared, particularly in Andalusian Spain, such as the *zajal*, *muwashshah*, *mawāliya*, or *mawwāl*, etc. None of these, however, ever displace the mono-end rhyme ode from its central position in the Arabic poetic tradition, nor the general perception that it is the most classical of Arabic poetic forms.

## Egyptian Epic Singing

20. From the form IV verb *anshada*, “to chant or sing religious verse.”

21. Though there are no epic singers in his immediate family, I was unable to determine whether there were ever any epic singers in Muṣṭafā’s extended family.

### References Cited

Abu-Lughod, Lila

1986 *Veiled Sentiments*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.

Bauman, Richard

1986 *Story, Performance, and Event: Contextual Studies of Oral Narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Denny, Walter

1985 “Music and Musicians in Islamic Art.” *Asian Music* 17(1): 37–68.

Ḥannā, Nabīl Ṣubḥī

1982 *Ghajar of Sett Guiranhā: A Study of a Gypsy Community in Egypt*. Cairo Papers in Social Science, vol. 5, monograph 1. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.

1983 *al-Binā’ al-ijtmā’ī wa-’l-thaqāfa fī mujtama’ al-ghajar* (Social structure and culture in Ghajar society). Cairo: Dar al-Ma’arif.

al-Faruqi, Lois

1981 “The Status of Music in Muslim Nations: Evidence from the Arab World.” *Journal of the Society for Asian Music* 12(1): 56–84.

1982 “The Shari‘ah on Music and Musicians.” In *Islamic Thought and Culture*, pp. 27–52. Herndon, Va.: International Institute of Islamic Thought.

- 1985 "Music, Musicians, and Muslim Law." *Asian Music* 17(1): 3–36.
- Kahle, Paul  
 1950 "A Gypsy Woman in Egypt in the Thirteenth Century," *Journal of the Gypsy-love Society* (3d. series) 29(1–2) (January–April): 11–15.
- Lane, Edward  
 1895 *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*. Reprint ed., 1978, London: East-West Publications.
- Mahfouz, Naguib  
 1981 *Midaq Alley*. trans. Trevor LeGassick. Washington, D. C.: Three Continents Press.
- Moyle, Natalie K.  
 1986 "The Image of the Aşık in Turkish Halk Hikâyeleri." In *III. Milletlerarası Türk Folklor Kongresi Bildirileri*, vol 2, pp. 269–275. Ankara: Feryal Matbaacılık.
- Newbold, Captain F. R. S.  
 1856 "The Gypsies of Egypt." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (London) 16: 285–312.
- Racy, Ali Jihad  
 1985 "Music and Dance in Lebanese Folk Proverbs." *Asian Music* 17(1): 83–97.
- Rauwolff, Leonhard  
 1693 *A Collection of Curious Travels and Voyages...*, 2 vols. London: S. Smith and B. Walford.
- Reynolds, Dwight F.  
 1988 "*Sīrat Banū Hīlāl*: Introduction and Notes to an Arab Oral Epic Tradition." *Oral Tradition: Special Issue on Arabic Oral Traditions* (October 1988).

## Egyptian Epic Singing

Sakata, Hiromi Lorraine

- 1985 "Musicians Who Do Not Perform; Performers Who Are Not Musicians: Indigenous Concepts of Being an Afghan Musician." *Asian Music* 17(1): 132–143.

Sampson, J.

- 1928 "The Ghagar of Egypt: A Chapter in the History of the Gypsy Migration." *Journal of the Gypsy-lore Society* (3d series), 7(1): 78–90.

Sawa, George Dimitri

- 1985 "The Status and Roles of the Secular Musicians in the *Kitāb al-Aghānī* (Book of Songs) of Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī (d. 356 A.H./967 A.D.)." *Asian Music* 17(1): 69–82.

Schuyler, Philip

- 1985 "The *Rwais* and the *Zawia*: Professional Musicians and the Rural Religious Elite in Southwestern Morocco." *Asian Music* 17(1): 114–131.

Slyomovics, Susan

- 1986 *The Merchant of Art: An Egyptian Hilali Oral Epic Poet in Performance*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Ward, G.

- 1934 "Gypsies on the Nile in the Sixteenth Century." *Journal of the Gypsy-lore Society* (3d. series) 13(1): 55–56.

# **The Music of Arab Americans: Performance Contexts and Musical Transformation<sup>1</sup>**

Anne Rasmussen

Before the turn of the twentieth century and during its first two decades, when Arabs began to immigrate to America in significant numbers, Arab music occurred only on an informal basis as the responsibility of amateurs. Later, by 1940, and up until the early 1970s, performances by a select group of respected musicians became the axis for a musical system that encompassed several dimensions. First, institutionalized performance events became important social gatherings where community relations and religious affiliations were solidified. Second, these events were primary vehicles for philanthropic fund raising. Third, they were environments where traditional musical and cultural values and practices were nurtured and protected. Fourth, this musical system also encouraged creative innovation on the part of the musicians on social and musical levels. During this time, some of these innovations gathered a great deal of momentum and, ironically, eventually led to the demise of many of the concepts and practices fundamental to the musical system they had created.

How did this system develop, subsist, and subsequently deteriorate? Here I investigate both the experience of musicians and community members during music events as well as the decisions and actions of influential individuals, in order to discover the production, reproduction, and eventual degeneration of a dynamic and formative era in Arab American musical life.<sup>2</sup>

## **An Historical Perspective of Arab American Musical Life**

From the late nineteenth century up until the end of World War I (when immigration quotas were enacted limiting the influx of foreign peoples into the United States) predominantly Christian Arabs from Syria, which then included Lebanon, were steadily immigrating to the United States. They were leaving their homelands for economic and social opportunities in the New World, to escape military conscription, or because of perceived religious and social oppression imposed upon them by the Islamic Ottoman regime. The first communities they established were and still are

## Music of Arab Americans

situated in the northeastern United States and in Detroit, Michigan, the sites of my recent fieldwork.<sup>3</sup>

I divide their musical life into four periods: the “early years,” the “middle period,” the “nightclub scene,” and “contemporary times.” The interpretation presented here focuses upon the evolution of the middle-period musical system and the transition to the nightclub scene. During the early years, when many Arab immigrants worked in mills and factories or as peddlars, music events were limited to informal gatherings, functional events such as births or weddings, and listening to both imported and domestically produced 78 rpm recordings of Arab music.<sup>4</sup> Between the 1930s and the early 1970s, as the population stabilized and the first wave of immigration slacked off, live music performances became the focus of two new types of events in the Arab American community: the *ḥaflah*, a formal music party, and the *maharajān*, a three-day outdoor event involving hundreds, sometimes thousands of participants. During this middle period, various influential musicians established a musical style and repertoire which they describe as “authentic,” and “strictly Arabic.” At music events, patterns of interaction between musicians and audience members became essential to the formation of a common code of contextual aesthetics. With the cooperation of church and community groups, which became primary patronage organizations, musicians activated the evolution of these exciting, new American performance events.

Middle-period musical activity was eventually undermined by the nightclub scene that emerged in the late 1960s. This scene was characterized by polyethnic interaction among Arabs, Turks, Greeks, and Armenians, who shared and combined their musical traditions. The urban nightclub was a commercially motivated venture that strove to entertain the general American public. In contrast to the events of the middle period, when a high premium was placed on the musical program, solo belly dancing and group folk dancing were the most important components of nightclub performances. Although this shift in emphasis occurred approximately twenty-five years ago, performances today in both the nightclub and at the *ḥaflah* still revolve around socializing, eating, drinking, dancing, making merry, and making money.

In 1965, immigration quotas were finally lifted, thus parting the seas for new immigrants from all over the Arab world. The influx of new immigrants and musicians as well as the influence of the civil rights movement,<sup>5</sup> which legitimized ethnic identity and diverse cultural expressions, contributed to the resurrection of a

more purely Arab nightclub repertoire. As new immigrants permeated established Arab American communities, some traditional cultural practices were reintroduced or reinforced. This population has not, however, effected a return to tradition or authenticity in musical style or musical values. At most music events today, social interaction prevails over musical appreciation and dancing is clearly more important than listening.

The contemporary Arab American music scene reflects the disappearance not only of the music repertoire and styles of the middle period, but also of the contextual aesthetics: namely the rapport between artist and audience that was integral to the vitality of the middle-period music scene. While there are several factors which contributed to the decay of the middle-period music scene, I suggest that the seeds of decomposition were unintentionally sown by conscientious artists and appreciative audiences during the dynamic performance events of the middle period.

### **Middle-Period Musical Activity and the Rise of Professionalism, 1930–1970**

Beginning in the 1930s, audience demand for the services of recognized musicians in the community increased and a number of amateur musicians became a class of professionals. Musicians became increasingly in demand and performance events became larger and more frequent. This proliferation was due to the growing stability of the Arab American community, as well as to a patronage system created by church and community groups. These groups organized a plethora of social and artistic activities to benefit kin and comrades and, as a result, acted as agents of cultural preservation and promotion.

The musicians who performed and recorded a transplanted and transforming repertoire of folk, art, and popular music describe themselves as “only a handful” (Anton Abdel Ahad, pers. comm., July 20, 1987). Because they were few in number, each of these musical pioneers was powerful. The aesthetic tastes and musical background of this finite group, now called “old-timers,” was fundamental to the evolution of the music scene during this middle period.

Russell Bunai (né Riskallah), now 85, resides in the same Boston neighborhood to which he immigrated as a teen from Damascus, Syria. Bunai describes the music he used to performed as “classical music” from a Syrian/Egyptian tradition; he says he “never bothered with the Lebanese way of singing” (pers. comm.,

July 21, 1987). Bunai, in contrast to many earlier immigrants and their children, speaks and reads classical Arabic. He stresses the importance of good diction as well as the meaning of the poetry of the songs. Distinguishing himself from younger generations of musicians, he declares that he has never played in a nightclub and has always promulgated values of honesty, respect, integrity, and hard work.

Bunai is representative of the Syrians who derive their musical identity from such cities as Aleppo and Damascus and, by association, Cairo, the city that became the dominant commercial and cultural center of the Arab World in the early twentieth century. Urban Syrians enjoyed a varied and what they called sophisticated musical repertoire consistent with that of the secular urban music contexts of the Arab world (Racy 1983, 1976). The vocal music reflected both the ubiquity of Quranic and liturgical chant in Muslim and Christian religious contexts as well as the Arabic literary and poetic tradition. Singing style featured highly ornamented manipulation of the melodic modes (*maqāmāt*), and the musical rendition of various poetic forms. These included the *qaṣidah*, classical Arabic poetry from the Sufi tradition characterized by non-metric delivery and liberal amounts of improvisation; the *muwashshah*, Syrian strophic song written in a mixture of classical and colloquial Arabic and often set to complicated irregular meters; the *dawr*, an Egyptian vocal genre with precomposed and improvised sections during which a chorus follows a solo vocalist; and *layālī* and *mawwāl*, non-metric vocal improvisation, beginning with a few repeated words (*ya layl*, *ya ‘ayn*, etc.), and then followed by a poem, usually in colloquial language. Singers were accompanied by a *takht*, an ensemble of instruments of complementary timbres: the ‘ūd, a pear-shaped, round-bellied, plucked lute; the *qānūn*, a trapezoidal zither, the *kamānjah*, originally an upright bowed lute, later replaced by the Western violin; the *nāy*, a reed flute; the *riqq*, a heavy fish-skinned tambourine; and/or the *darabukkah* or *ṭablah*, an hourglass-shaped ceramic one-headed drum.<sup>6</sup> Solo instrumental improvisations (*taqāsīm*) were indispensable to middle-period performances as were composed instrumental genres such as the *dūlāb* (a short prelude), and the *bashrav*, a classical Turkish form.

This “authentic Arabic music,” often referred to as “the heavy stuff,” was presented for an audience of appreciative and serious *sammī‘ah* or music connoisseurs (usually men). Russell

Bunai and his contemporaries, many of whom learned their craft in the United States, balanced this essentially Syrian/Egyptian “classical” repertoire with lighter strophic songs (*taqātiq*) in colloquial dialect, folk songs, and music for dancing. Musicians explain that the “light music” was included for the enjoyment of American-born children and women who, many assumed, were not as appreciative of the classical poetic forms and traditional musical artistry.<sup>7</sup>

### The *Haflah*

Hesitant to accept payment as a musician, an occupation that some felt implied a questionable status, Russell Bunai resisted a shift to professionalism for several years. When he began to perform publicly, his role as a patron was just as important as his performance as a musician.<sup>8</sup> Bunai was integral to the planning of *haflāt*, which were conceived as formal events held in the evening where couples reserved tables and enjoyed *mazza* (a variety of snacks and appetizers) and alcoholic beverages. The *haflah* became a cross between the *sahrah* (an evening house party), and the formal concert.

Bunai asserted aesthetic authority in booking and rehearsing musicians as well as in the choice and order of the music to be performed. He planned and printed programs for the evening’s entertainment which consisted of one or more *waṣṭāt* (s., *waṣlah*)—a suite of instrumental and vocal pieces based in one mode with precomposed and improvised sections (Racy 1983). In addition to this serious music the musicians always included a few *taqātiq* and dance pieces. The musical ensemble, or *takht*, sat on a stage; any dancing occurred during prescribed times and, because there was no dance floor, only in the back of the room (see photo 1).

The most musically satisfying moments often occurred after the formal program was completed. At this time those who really enjoyed music, the *sammī‘ah*, would remain to request their favorite pieces. The musicians, who by then were completely warmed up and musically energized from the evening’s performance, were primed for demanding musical renditions and creative improvisation. With an audience of attentive and appreciative *sammī‘ah*, they had the artistic license to perform their preferred repertoire, the heavy stuff. Anton Abdel Ahad, a middle-period singer, composer, and ‘ūd player remembers:



Figure 1a. A ḥaflah at the Hotel St. George in New York held on November 20, 1949, and sponsored by the St. Nicholas Young Men's Association. Note the close proximity of the musicians to the audience. Within ten or fifteen years, a space for dancing was systematically incorporated into the physical arrangement of the ḥaflāh performance space. The dance floor of later ḥaflāt both legitimized public dancing and distance the performers from their audience. All photos courtesy of Rose and Russell Bunai.



Figure 1b. Detail of photograph 1a. The musicians from left to right are: Naim Karakand and Philip Solomon (violins); Joe Budwey ('ūd); Mike Hamway (darabukkah); Muḥammad al-'Aqqad (qānūn); Fatala Abiad ('ūd); and Russell Bunai (riqq). Those without instruments include an unidentified singer and the presenters of the ḥaflah.

## Music of Arab Americans

In my day, the emphasis was on the singer. Say I perform for two or three hundred people: we used the light [music] and intermingle some of the heavier stuff during the course of the evening (the classical and semi-classical music of 'Abd al-Wahhāb, or Farid al-Atrache, for example). Then, when it comes close to quitting time, there will be about fifty remaining that want to hear the real heavy stuff. They make a half moon around the stage and they'd be hitting me with one request after another. "Please don't stop, [the audience would say] now we enjoy it the others are gone." So now I enjoy it because I can do what I like to do. (Anton. Abdel Ahad, pers. comm., July 20, 1987)

During the middle period, Bunai, Abdel Ahad, and fellow pioneers traveled frequently. They performed in the New York area almost every weekend and in communities which extended from Montreal, Canada, through New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the Carolinas, and west to Detroit. Many young musicians inaugurated their careers on this *ḥaflah* and *maharajān* circuit. Together the musicians negotiated contracts, organized events, determined dress codes, and endorsed respectable behavior on the road to such an extent that several women artists were permitted to tour and perform with these well-known artists.

At performance events, the conduct of the audience was dependent upon the demeanor of the musicians, their regulation and juxtaposition of the musical genres they performed, and the example set by responsive *sammī'ah*, the real music connoisseurs. The success and prevalence of the "high-quality *ḥaflah*" during the middle period was due not only to the integrity of the performing musicians but also to the social nature of the event and the honorable causes they served.

### The *Maharajān*

The *maharajān* was an extended outing where music was played both in the afternoon and evening. Originally, *maharajānāt* were church picnics where musicians would play, women would dance, and the old folks would tell stories to the young. Platforms for the musicians were constructed out of whatever was available: Russell Bunai remembers being perched on top of a tonic box or wooden crate for early *maharajān* performances. Later, real stages were built with some sort of roof to protect the musicians from the sun. Concurrently, musicians opted for a more sophisticated and professional look, donning white tuxedos and shoes for the summer festivities (see photo 2).



Figure 2. A New England *maharajān* of the 1940s. Note the covered stage and the musicians' white tuxedos. The violinist is Philip Solomon.

## Music of Arab Americans

Eventually the *maharajān* grew into a three-day affair sponsored by a church or a larger organization such as the Lebanese League of Progress, the *Lebanese American Journal (LAJ)*, or *Al-Hoda*, another newspaper. The festive *maharajān* was especially popular with children and young adults. Because of the length of the event and its open-air context, the musical program was varied and consisted of lighter, popular tunes and music for dancing. Virginia Solomon, who always traveled with her husband Phillip, a highly respected violinist, remembers:

There was a group of businessmen in New York who organized a three-day *maharajān* in Trenton, New Jersey over Labor Day. People came from all over, it was fantastic. Eventually the *LAJ* and *al-Hoda* sponsored the outings and they became a little more sophisticated in their approach. They held it at the Narragansett Racetrack, they used to have big flood lights, a huge stage, you would see miles of tables of people there, with their families, their children... they'd buy food, or bring food... and drinking and dancing and listening to the music and just having one hell of a time and they always used to have the best musicians. Always! (Solomon, pers. comm., July 23, 1987)

Like the *ḥaflah*, the purpose of the *maharajān* was philanthropic fund raising; the *maharajān*, however, was also a society affair where networking, matchmaking, eating, and dancing were just as important as the live music.

Evidently the *maharajān* became too large and too much of a financial gamble for those who planned and promoted them; the last large-scale *maharajānāt* were held about fifteen years ago.<sup>9</sup> *Ḥaflāt* however, are still common in many communities. At contemporary *ḥaflāt*—and this is the opinion of both musicians and audience members—there has been a shift in emphasis from musical appreciation to social interaction and audience participation in the form of almost continuous “oriental-style” dancing and a group folk dance called the *dabkah*.<sup>10</sup>

### The Nightclub Scene, 1960s–1980s

Russell Bunai, along with a number of other old-timers, never made the transition from the church affair to the club date; they never worked in nightclubs. Furthermore, they dissociate the Arab community from the evolution of the nightclub. They claim that foreign nightclubs are not an Arabic phenomenon and that they originated in the Armenian, Turkish, and Greek communities. On

the other hand, younger Arab American musicians, who originally shared the stage with middle-period old-timers, thrived in this exciting environment which, according to Eddie “the Sheik” Kochak, emerged during the 1960s in the Greek restaurants along Eighth Avenue in New York City. The nightclub music created during the 1960s and 1970s was adventurous, creative, polyethnic, electronic, and commercial. The music reflected interaction both with other immigrant groups and with American society and music culture at large.

Many of the characteristic features of nightclub music—including the driving rhythms that accompany group *dabkah* and solo belly dancing—as well as the use of such Western instruments as the saxophone, electric guitar, traps, and flute—can be traced to the collaboration between Muhammad al-Bakkar and Eddie “the Sheik” Kochak. Al-Bakkar, an Egyptian film star, became the “Elvis Presley” of the Arab American music scene. He capitalized on the tastes of younger American-born audiences for whom Arabic poetry and song texts were insignificant and who “just wanted to dance and have a good time” (Mary Abdel Ahad, pers. comm., July 20, 1987).<sup>11</sup> Nightclub musicians say they respect “authentic Arabic music” yet their music was tempered to create a product that was palatable and yet intriguing for mixed audiences. Improvisation, “which can be boring,” and Arab intonation, “which has too many indigestive tones for the modern ear,” were tightly controlled.<sup>12</sup>

The nightclub era witnessed, in addition to performances in urban nightclubs, a surge in the production of LP records of music for belly dancing. On these albums the original composers of traditional tunes were rarely recognized. Song titles were often anglicized (“Camel Hop”), exoticized (“Dance of Contessa”), bastardized (“chifti,” derived from the name of the Turkish rhythmic pattern *çifti telli*), or omitted altogether.<sup>13</sup> Such linguistic alterations were made to accommodate non-Arabic-speaking audiences and the burgeoning population of professional and amateur belly dancers who used the recordings for teaching, practice, and performance. Names of rhythmic patterns, tempo indications, and time signatures often replaced the names of songs as exemplified in one recording of the popular tune “*Ah ya Zayn*,” retitled “Medium 2/4.”

The musicians of the nightclub scene and their audiences included many second- and third-generation Americans of Arab heritage. Their lack of familiarity with the Arabic language, and vocal music in general, comprises the third level of a three-tiered

process of language loss—from classical Arabic, to colloquial or vernacular dialects, to the negation of the Arabic language altogether. While progressive loss of language may be an expected symptom of immigration, the language issue for Arab American music is complicated by the classical/colloquial dichotomy in the Arab world. While no one speaks classical Arabic as an everyday language, it is always used for public speeches and lectures, media broadcasts, and in newspapers and published literature. The rules of pronunciation and articulation and the poetic formulas of the classical Arabic language are important components of vocal music compositions and improvisation. Middle-period musicians, some of whom sang classical Arabic lyrics they could not even understand, nevertheless recognize the loss of classical Arabic language and poetry as a catalyst for the loss of authentic Arabic music.

The complete disregard for Arabic titles and composers' names as well as their control of improvisation and intonation reflect the nightclub musicians' perception of the "period ear,"<sup>14</sup> or the aesthetic sensibility and musical taste of the general public. Nightclub musicians wanted to be in step with the trends of the times. Their motivation was commercial and not communal, and they strove to gain audience and professional stability on a much broader level than the musicians of the middle period. They did not want to intimidate either their American-born "relatives," or the polyethnic American public with an unfamiliar tuning system, long boring improvisations and instrumental numbers, and odd-sounding foreign titles.

### A Matrix of Periods and Processes

In conceptually organizing the path of change for this protean music system, we might envision a matrix of these four periods—the "early years," the "middle period," the "nightclub scene," and "contemporary times,"—intersected by at least three processes: marginal preservation, transplantation, and innovative assimilation, all of which are rooted in the musically fertile middle period. These processes were set in motion by the ideas and accomplishments of cultural leaders such as those described in this article. While most of the choices and actions of middle-period musicians were voluntary, some of them are defined here as proactive and others as reactive. For example, musicians' instigation of new events for music making and their introduction of new musical styles may be described as proactive; these actions set precedents for other musicians and eventually became accepted trends. On the

other hand, musicians' perceptions of the tastes and expectations of their audiences resulted in reactive compensation.

Due to the prevalence of Syrian *sammī'ah*, the importance of imported 78 rpm recordings of Egyptian/Syrian classical music, and the musical performances and recordings of Arab American performing artists, a "traditional" and "authentic" music style was preserved in the United States among middle-period musicians and audiences.<sup>15</sup> Traditional vocal and instrumental genres continued to be performed in the New World years after their popularity had diminished in the old country. This marginal preservation is specifically exemplified by singers' recordings from the late 1940s through the 1960s of the *dawr*, the *qaṣīdah*, and the *muwashshah*, genres no longer disseminated on 78 rpm recordings from Cairo after the 1930s. Preserving "authentic" Arabic music was consistent with an implicit common code of contextual aesthetics that musicians and patrons proactively instilled in the performance events of the middle period.

Direct transplantation of the newest tunes from the old country was (and still is) a continuous process. Musicians would travel to New York to get the "samples," the newly imported hits from home. They would borrow the records, learn them, perform them on the *ḥaflah* and *maharajān* circuit as well as on the Arabic radio shows in New York, Boston, and Rhode Island, and popularize the music to the delight of audiences and record importers. Musicians' choices were more or less dictated by the modern trends of Cairo especially film songs and *ṭaqāṭiq*, both of which used colloquial Arabic.

The comments of music patron, producer, and old-timer Albert Rashid, whose family is still one of the largest importers of Arabic music, videos, and printed material, resonates values of performance aesthetics associated with "authentic music."

I liked *ḥaflat* where *sammī'ah* listened and enjoyed it ... no drinks, no eats. When you have a set-up with tables and drinking and hollering and dancing, that to me was not music, just a good time. (Rashid, pers. comm., July 31, 1987)

In spite of his traditionalist attitude, Rashid, always attentive and reactive to the changing tastes of his American audience, clearly feels that recordings of Egyptian classical music were inaccessible to the primarily Levantine families in the United States. Due to his perception of the period ear, he imported film songs and light music in colloquial dialect: music he thought would sell.

Finally, innovative assimilation, which may be described as both proactive and reactive, may be heard on the recordings of Anton Abdel Ahad, a middle-period singer, composer, and 'ūd player. In addition to transplanting all of the hits of the popular Egyptian composer 'Abd al-Wahhāb, Abdel Ahad set Arabic words to Italian and American popular music and composed humorous songs about the shortage of housing and of ladies' nylon stockings, subjects which were relevant to his audiences during the Depression.<sup>16</sup> Innovative assimilation was, of course, central to the musical methodology of nightclub artists.

Interviews and experience suggest that the dynamic energy of the *ḥaflah* has not been lost. During the middle period, however, that dynamic energy resulted from the solidarity of the community, who joined together in order to raise money for a good cause, and from the interaction between the musicians and their audiences. The musicians, who performed a varied repertoire of "authentic" and lighter music and improvised in a traditional idiom, played for the listening connoisseurs and their families who in turn responded with verbal compliments and encouragement. Now, however, audience response takes the form of almost continuous group *dabkah* and oriental-style couple dancing.

As in the old days, it is the choice and order of music styles that determines the response and social conduct of audiences. Unlike the old days, musicians no longer assert aesthetic authority in their choice of a musical program. *Ḥaflāt* have lost their audiences of true *sammī'ah* and their musical leaders of the past. Those who still enjoy the so-called heavy stuff listen to or perform this music only on recordings, in a concert setting, or at a private *sahrah* or house party. Musicians themselves lament their lack of leadership, claiming that they "have no control over the audience." "Business is business. You give the people what they want [and] all they want is *dabkah*" (Kerim Badr, pers. comm., June 24, 1988). Virginia Solomon is overwhelmed by the social process occurring at Rhode Island *ḥaflāt*:

When we used to go to a *ḥaflah* you would listen to the musicians and the singer, and during intermission you would do the *dabkah* or have solo dancing [oriental or belly dancing]. Now the music plays up on the stage and before you know it here comes the couples and they're dancing Arabic disco. It's amazing you know, we just sit back and watch it. [Before] if you ever got up to dance while a singer was singing, not a dance number but a classical number, wow! You were committing

... it was awful. You couldn't just get up and dance, you waited until they had the special dance music. Now it is entirely different. (Solomon, pers. comm., July 23, 1987)

This type of social behavior is for the most part tolerated, expected, and even appreciated by musicians who, like their audiences, judge the success of the event by the amount of fun had by all. Musical appreciation and sophistication on the part of audience members and musicians, many of whom are haphazardly trained on the nightclub stage, has taken a back seat to social interaction. While musicians complain about their ignorant audiences, few of them can really tackle the heavy stuff or play more than a quick cliché *taqāsīm*; they are both victims and advocates of the patterns of mediocrity which are by-products of the good intentions and rational decisions of creative artists, appreciative audiences, and supportive patrons of the middle period.

## Conclusion

The *ḥaflah* and *maharajān* were events of the middle period wherein musical and social values and contextual aesthetics were tested, defined, and combined. Musicians and patrons based their actions upon their own creative ideas as well as on the social needs and artistic expectations of the community. Their moves to institute reserved tables, *mazza*, drinks, and a little popular music for the young folks were in response to short-term goals and concerns. Taken collectively, however, their actions had the long-range effects of: 1) destroying a reputable patronage system in favor of commercialism and capitalism; 2) replacing an "authentic, strictly Arabic" musical repertoire and performance tradition with a simpler one, easily mastered by less conscientious musicians; and 3) transferring the social role of the musician from that of an authoritative specialist to that of a professional servant.

I have attempted here to describe an ongoing historical process by examining the relationship between the middle-period musical system and the individual actors who created that system. An understanding of contemporary trends and future developments may be possible using this focus on performance events as dynamic structures where residual and emergent cultural forms are tested and rearranged. I close with a thought by the French philosopher, Michel Foucault: "People know what they do, they frequently know why they do what they do, but what they don't know is what they do does."<sup>17</sup>

### Notes

1. This article is based on fieldwork conducted during 1986–89 in various Arab communities, especially those in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Detroit, and New York. Among the many community members whose comments are incorporated in the article, I am especially grateful to Anton and Mary Abdel Ahad, Russel and Rose Bunai, Warren David, Georgiana Deckey, Albert Rashid, and Virginia Solomon. I also wish to thank Jihad Racy and my colleagues Virginia Danielson, Scott Marcus, and Jane Sugarman for their invaluable perspectives.
2. Ortner (1984) describes an emerging theoretical orientation which she calls “practice,” “action,” or “praxis.” The analysis of my data on the Arab American musical life follows a similar dialectical approach in my consideration of the reciprocal effects of peoples’ decisions and actions upon a musical system and the effects of that system on its participants.
3. For information on early Arab immigration to the United States see Hitti (1924), Khayal and Khayal (1975), and Naaf (1983, 1985). For studies that include information on both early immigration as well as the recent and continuing wave of Arab immigration see Abraham and Abraham (1983) and Hoogland (1987).
4. All of my informants discuss the importance of listening to imported and domestic 78 rpm recordings of Arab music. Anton Abdel Ahad (who, as a child, was responsible for cranking the Victrola record player), recalls his father paid up to eight dollars for imported 78 rpm recordings from the old country.
5. Naaf has suggested that peddling, the primary occupation of the first Arab immigrants, hastened their process of acculturation by encouraging them to travel widely, learn English, and, consequently, adopt American values (1983:117). Like many ethnic groups, Arab immigrants pursued the American Dream and gradually detached themselves from their heritage and cultural traditions. The ideological wheels that were set into motion by the civil rights movement deemphasized the popular notion of America as a melting pot; cultural diversity became tolerated, even fashionable. As a result, many third- and fourth-generation Arab Americans began to reassert or rediscover their heritage (Abraham and Abraham 1983:3). Most recently, the influence of new immigrants from the Arab world and their struggle for political power and human rights have further reinforced the revitalization of ethnic identity in America.
6. The word *takht* indicates both the instrumental ensemble and the platform upon which musicians performed. In the urban Arab world of the early twentieth century, a *takht* typically included an *ūd*, violin, (formerly a *kamānjah*), *qānun*, *nāy*, and *riqq* (Racy 1988). During the first few decades of the twentieth century there were few *nāy* players in the United States (I have yet to discover a domestically produced 78 rpm recording with *nāy*). In the American *takht*, the rhythmic role of the *riqq* or tambourine was often played by the *darabukkah* (also called *tablah* or “*derbekke*”) due to both practical and aesthetic reasons.
7. Musical genres and repertoire do not always fall into such clear-cut categories as classical or popular. Most Arab American musicians do make a clear distinction between what they call “light music”—music for dancing, folk

songs, or simple strophic *taqāfiq*—and the heavy stuff, which refers to more complicated instrumental pieces incorporating improvisation that requires the exposition and manipulation of the Arab modes.

8. In addition to Bunai, other middle-period musicians and many of the communities' social leaders were integral to the planning and promotion of music events. For example, Bunai and his fellow musicians were associated with the famous immigrant society, *Al-Rabiṭah al-Qalamīyyah*, the "League of the Pen," a group of Arab poets, artists, and journalists led by Kahlil Gibran and based in Boston and New York. Members of this group included: Nassib Aridah, who edited the newspaper *Al-Fanoon (The Arts)*, writer Elia Abu Madhi, who founded the magazine *As-Sameer (The Entertainer)*, and Sabri Andrea who hosted an Arabic radio show. These literati were among the social leaders who patronized and participated in the growing music scene.

9. *Maharajānāt* still occur in various Arab American communities. Their structure and spirit, however, differ radically from those held in the past. During the course of my fieldwork, I attended small afternoon or weekend *maharajanāt* sponsored by churches in tightly knit Arab communities in New England. In contrast to these community events, the *Maharajān al-'Alam al-Arabīyyah*, or Arab World Festival, is a city-sponsored festival that has been held annually for the past eighteen years in Detroit, Michigan. This three-day festival draws a general audience of several thousand, the majority of whom are Arabs from the diverse communities of Detroit. The festival is ecumenical in its presentation of professional and amateur groups representing every nationality, religion, and community from the surrounding area.

10. Two different genres of dance may be performed to Arab music. The first, "oriental style" or belly dancing, is traditionally performed by a woman alone although today couples may dance together in this style. The oriental style is characterized by curvacious movements of the hips, torso, with hands held at shoulder level or higher. It is an improvisatory dance that can be subtle and delicate, bouncy and rambunctious, or erotic, voluptuous, and licentious. *Dabkah* dancing, the second genre, is a group line dance traditionally performed by men, characterized by squared shoulders, hands held tight with arms touching, and much percussive stamping and stepping. While the "oriental style" allegedly prevailed in the Near Eastern harem (see Lane [1833] 1966), the *dabkah* was a rural tradition of immigrants from Mount Lebanon. In the United States, the urban Syrians who were known as appreciative, listening *sammī'ah* learned the dance from the Lebanese; eventually *dabkah* dancing became a common activity for both Syrians and Lebanese, especially the children (Khayal and Khayal 1975). Although there are several regional and national styles of *dabkah* dancing and even many different step patterns that can alternate, most groups perform a simple repetitive pattern of four to seven steps as established by the leader of the line.

11. This statement was reiterated by Jalil Azzouz (June 29, 1988), Anton Abdel Ahad (June 16, 1988) and Virginia Solomon (July 23, 1987) among others.

12. Eddie "the Sheik" Kochak explained to me that Americans have little patience with long improvisations characteristic of traditional Arab music. He feels that general audiences do not enjoy the "weird sounding" quarter tones that appear in some Arab modes (pers. comm., November 8, 1986) Freddy Elias,

## Music of Arab Americans

another important musical innovator of the nightclub era, has repeatedly described these quarter tones as “indigestive tones” which, he fears, will give American audiences “migraine headaches (pers. comm., July 2, 1987)”.

13. “Camel Hop” is from the album *Ya Habibi* by Eddie “the Sheik” Kochak, Hakki Obadia, and their Amerabic Orchestra (Audio Fidelity AFS 583). “Dance of Contessa” was composed by nightclub musician Freddy Elias; it may be heard on his album *Arabic Moods for Dance*, vol. 2 (Intrasonic Records IS 2003).

14. Michael Baxandall organizes his study of visual aesthetics, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy* (1972) using the notion of “the period eye.” I find an analogous term, “the period ear,” quite useful here for I try to discover what the community palette or sense of musical aesthetics was during different historical periods and in various communities.

15. The interaction between Arab American musicians and such visiting artists from the Near East as Zakki Murrād, Sami al-Shawwā, and Muḥammad al-‘Aqqād also contributed to the prevalence of an authentic repertoire.

16. Egyptian singer, film actor, and composer Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Wahhāb is considered the most important male artist in the Arab world during the twentieth century. His innovations set a precedent for the modernization of Arab music in terms of style, instrumentation, and form. His music was especially popular from the 1940s to the 1970s.

17. Personal communication cited in Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982:187).

### References Cited

Abraham, Sameer Y., and Nabeel Abraham, eds.

1983 *Arabs in the New World: Studies on Arab-American Communities*. Detroit: Wayne State University, Center for Urban Studies.

Baxandall, Michael

1972 *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Dreyfus, Hubert L., and Paul Rabinow

1983 Michel Foucault: *Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hitti, Philip

1924 *Syrians in America*. New York: George Doran.

Hoogland, Eric J., ed.

1987 *Crossing the Waters: Arabic-Speaking Immigrants to the United States before 1940*. Washington, D.C., and London: Smithsonian.

Khayal, Philip M., and Joseph M. Kayal

1975 *The Syrian-Lebanese in America: A Study in Religion and Assimilation*. Boston: Twayne.

Lane, Edward

1833-34 *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, London: Alex Gardener. Reprint ed., 1966. London: Everyman's Library.

Naaf, Alixa

1985 *Becoming American: The Early Arab Immigrant Experience*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

1983 "Arabs in America: An Historical Overview." In *Arabs in the New World: Studies on Arab-American Communities*, pp. 9-29. See Abraham and Abraham.

Ortner, Sherry B.

1984 "Theory in Anthropology since the Sixties." *Comparative Studies of Society and History* 26(1): 126-166.

Racy, Ali Jihad

1988 "Sound and Society: The *Takht* Music of Early Twentieth-Century Cairo." *Selected Reports in Ethnomusicology* 7: 139-170.

1983a "Music in Nineteenth-Century Egypt: An Historical Sketch." *Selected Reports in Ethnomusicology* 4: 157-179.

1983b "The *Waṣlah*: A Compound-Form Principle in Egyptian Music." In *Arab Studies Quarterly* 5(4): 396-403.

1977 "Musical Change and Commercial Recording in Egypt, 1904-1932." Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois.



## The Periodization of Modern Arab Music Theory: Continuity and Change in the Definition of the *Maqāmāt*<sup>1</sup>

Scott Marcus

In their writings, modern Arab music theorists have defined the musical modes (*maqāmāt*; s., *maqām*) in a number of different ways.<sup>2</sup> Changes in the way theorists have conceptualized about the *maqāmāt* suggest that it is best to divide the modern era into three periods: early, middle, and present-day. These changes have not been, however, confined solely to the realm of music theory. New concepts and approaches which appeared in the theoretical works often reflected or affected changes in how musicians thought about the *maqāmāt* and even how they performed the *maqāmāt*. Prominent socio-cultural forces which have shaped modern Arab music theory have included those exerted by Turkish and Western European cultures and those that resulted from the aspirations of a new middle class and rising nationalist movements.

The modern era is commonly defined as beginning with the conceptualization of the Arab tonal system in terms of quarter tones (Farmer 1936:754; Shiloah 1981:39). This occurred sometime in the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>3</sup>



Figure 1. The Arab fundamental scale.<sup>4</sup>

Using the Arab fundamental scale as an example, the intervals C–D, F–G, and G–A were said to contain four quarter steps while the remaining intervals were said to contain three. Adding up these quarter steps, native theorists determined that there were twenty-four per octave. At the beginning of the modern era, these twenty-four steps were conceptualized and each step was named using a system of Arabic/Persian note names.<sup>5</sup> The quarter-tone system provides one of the strongest points of continuity throughout the modern era: it existed at the beginning of the era and it still exists today. The Arab fundamental scale itself was not new; it predates the modern era.<sup>6</sup> Rather, it was the conceptualization of this scale in





Figure 3. *Maqām ‘Arbā’*

Soon after Mashāqah wrote his treatise, this method of describing the *maqāmāt*, by presenting a specific melodic line for each, lost favor in the Arab world. By as early as the end of the nineteenth century, Mashāqah’s lines were no longer understood. That is to say, musicians and theorists no longer comprehended how to use these melodic lines as the basis for improvisation, how to see them as abstractions of a mode’s characteristic features.<sup>8</sup>

In the 1930s a new method for describing the *maqāmāt* appeared. Perhaps the most significant development in this period was that theorists now incorporated the concepts of scale and tetrachord in their definitions of individual *maqāmāt*. For each *maqām*, they would first present a structural analysis by naming a scale (fig. 4) and listing the various tetrachords of a *maqām*. They would then describe the *maqām’s* characteristic melodic movement by naming the various tetrachords in the order in which they should be performed, rather than by naming the various notes.

Ascending			Descending	
	(Alternatively)			(Alternatively)
jawāb <sup>9</sup> Kirdān		c'	jawāb Kirdān	
jawāb ‘Ajām		b <sup>b</sup>	jawāb ‘Ajām	
jawāb Huṣaynī		a	jawāb Huṣaynī	
jawāb Nawā		g	jawāb Nawā	jawāb Nawā
jawāb Jahārkāh		f	jawāb Jahārkāh	jawāb Hījāz (f <sup>#</sup> )
jawāb Būsālik		e	jawāb Būsālik	Sinbulah (e <sup>b</sup> )
Muḥayyar		d	Muḥayyar	Muḥayyar
Kirdān	Kirdān	c	Shāhnāz (c <sup>#</sup> )	
Awj	‘Ajām (B <sup>b</sup> )	B <sup>b</sup>	‘Ajām (B <sup>b</sup> )	
Huṣaynī	Huṣaynī	A	Huṣaynī	
Nawā	Nawā	G	Nawā	
Hījāz		F <sup>#</sup>	Hījāz	
Kurd		E <sup>b</sup>	Kurd	
Dūkāh		D	Dūkāh	

Figure 4. The scale of *maqām Hījāz* according to a middle-period work (D’Erlanger 1933:29)

D’Erlanger’s description of the melodic movement in *Hijāz* is as follows:

The performance of this mode starts from the first tetrachord [*Hijāz* on D] entering into it from the note *Rāst* [C] as a support to *Dūkāh* [D] and after showing this tetrachord which represents the soul of the mode there is a descent to the note *Yakāh* [GG] with a *Rāst* tetrachord [on GG]..., then an ascent...to play sometimes a *Rāst* tetrachord on *Nawā* [G] and sometimes a...[*Nahāwand*] tetrachord [on G]. Following this is an ascent...to play [*Nahāwand*] on the note *Muhayyar* [d] and from there..., if possible, to play [*Nahāwand*] on [g].

At the time of the descent ... [one plays] a *Jahārkāh* tetrachord on [d], then ... a *Hijāz* tetrachord [on d]. Following this the descent is to ... a *Hijāz* tetrachord on the note *Husaynī* [A], then ... to the first tetrachord and a settling on the note *Dūkāh* [D] with a touch of *Rāst* [C].(1933: 292)

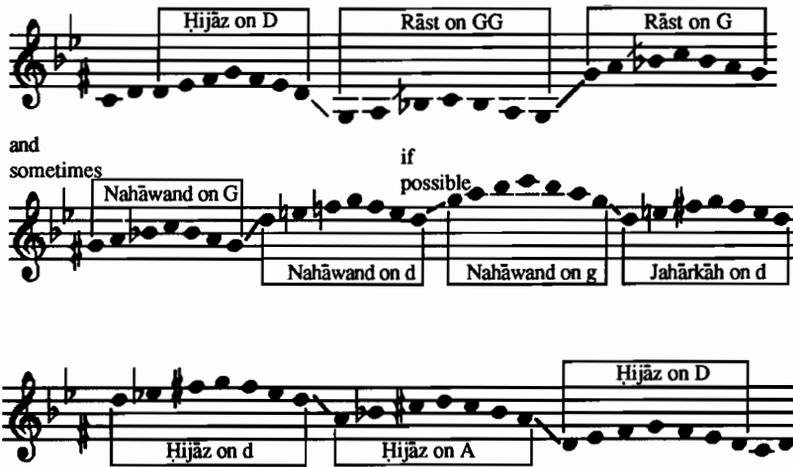


Figure 5. Transcription of the melodic movement of *Maqām Hijāz*

Here, in contrast to the early period, we find a significantly more complex definition of *maqām Hijāz*. First, the ambitus has been extended both below the tonic and into the octave, so that the mode now ranges over two octaves. Second, a number of superimposed tetrachords have been described; in other words, different tetrachords occupy the same scalar segment. Figure 5 illustrates

that D'Erlanger has indicated three tetrachords for the range G to d and another three for d to g.

Third, a surprising feature emerges in the middle period: *maqāmāt* commonly do not duplicate at the octave.<sup>10</sup> In D'Erlanger's example, both duplication and non-duplication are found (fig. 6): duplication occurs when he indicates a *Hijāz* tetrachord on d; non-duplication occurs when he indicates *Nahāwand* and *Jahār kāh* tetrachords on d. In a description of *maqām Hijāz* by the renowned violinist Sāmī al-Shawwā (1887–1960), *Hijāz* is given as never duplicating at the octave. Al-Shawwā (1946:65) mentions only a *Nahāwand* tetrachord on d.

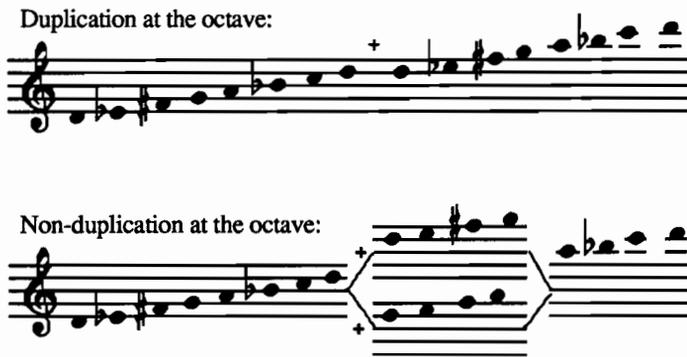


Figure 6. Octave duplication and non-duplication.

In the last of the three periods, the present-day, we find a new way of presenting the *maqāmāt*. Theorists now use Western staff notation when describing the modes rather than the traditional Arabic/Persian note names. Even more significantly, description of melodic movement is totally absent. In addition, the large ambitus and the complexities of the middle period have all disappeared. In the present-day theory, *Hijāz* is presented simply as a single-octave scale (fig. 7); alternatively, separate ascending and descending scales may be given (fig. 8). If further description is provided, it is generally confined to the mode's tetrachordal structure (fig. 9). Finally, in contrast to the middle period, the vast majority of *maqāmāt* are conceptualized as single-octave structures that duplicate at the octave. (For contemporary musicians, it is indeed surprising to learn that, as recently as 1946—the date of al-Shawwā's work—*maqām Hijāz*, for example, was understood not to duplicate at the octave.)



Figure 7. *Maqām Hijāz* as a single-octave scale.



Figure 8. *Maqām Hijāz* presented as separate ascending and descending single-octave scales.



Figure 9. *Maqām Hijāz* analyzed in terms of tetrachordal structure.

## Musical Examples

Two brief musical examples will show two aspects of how changes in the theory have brought about changes in present-day performance practice. The examples are both in *maqām Hijāz Kār*.

The first point concerns the concept of tonic. According to early- and middle-period theory, the performance of many *maqāmāt* started in the middle of the scale or at the octave rather than at the tonic. The first note of the scale, what Westerners call the tonic, was not necessarily an important note for the major portion of the performance of these *maqāmāt*. In fact, a large number of *maqām* descriptions in early- and middle-period works indicate that the tonic would appear only at the end of the performance. In keeping with this function, the tonic was called the *qarār* in early- and middle-period theory. *Qarār* means “resting place” and thus carries the sense of finalis. This was the case with *Hijāz Kār* in the middle period. Theorists said that it was necessary to begin in the octave and then to slowly descend through the scale before

finally reaching the tonic at roughly the same time as the final cadence (fig.10).

The situation has changed, however, in the present-day theory. With the introduction of the concept of the single-octave scale, the perception of the role of the tonic has changed. The term *qarār* has been replaced by the term *asās*, meaning the fundamental note. In Cairo today, conservatory music students are taught that all improvisatory performances of *maqāmāt* start by focusing on the tonic region, *Hijāz Kār* included.

The second point concerns non-duplication. Middle-period theorists and musicians understood that *maqām Hijāz Kār* had both duplication and non-duplication at the octave. Although the *maqām* had a *Hijāz* tetrachord at the tonic, it had both a *Hijāz* and *Nahāwand* tetrachord at the octave.

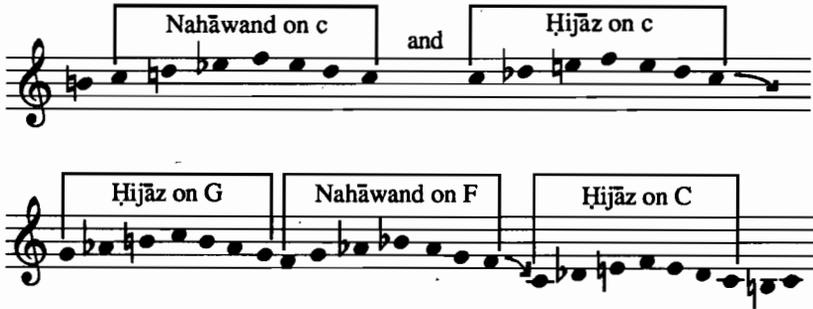


Figure 10. *Maqām Hijāz Kār*, after D’Erlanger (1933:259); see also al-Shawwā (1946:56), and al-Hilū (1961:112).

According to today’s simplified theory, when a composer or musician climbs up the scale and reaches the octave in *maqām Hijāz Kār*, it is understood that the notes of the first octave simply duplicate themselves in the second octave (fig. 11). The composer can modulate to *Nahāwand* on d if he wants (this was a required part of the *maqām* in the middle period) but this is not necessary and is surely not part of the definition of *maqām Hijāz Kār* today.

Figure 12, a vocal piece of the *muwashshah* genre, exemplifies the middle-period understanding of *maqām Hijāz Kār*. It shows non-duplication at the octave and starting at the octave. Figure 13, a *qānūn taqāsīm* by a current Cairo conservatory teacher, shows that present-day performers learn to start with the tonic note and then ascend, even in *maqām Hijāz Kār*.



Figure 11. *Maqām Hijāz Kār* according to present-day theory.

The image displays four staves of musical notation for *Zārānī al-Maḥbūb* in *maqām Hijāz Kār*.  
 - The first staff is in 2/4 time and contains three phrases: 'Nahāwand on c', 'Ḥijāz on c', and 'Ḥijāz on G'.  
 - The second staff is a single phrase: 'Nahāwand on c with ḥ 6th and ḥ 7th below the tonic'.  
 - The third staff is a single phrase: 'Nahāwand on F'.  
 - The fourth staff shows two first endings: '1.' and '2.'. The first ending is labeled 'Ḥijāz on C' and the second is labeled 'Ḥijāz on G'. The piece concludes with 'D.C.' (Da Capo).

Figure 12. *Zārānī al-Maḥbūb* in *maqām Hijāz Kār*.

MM ♩ = app. 88

Figure 13. *Qānūn taqāsīm* in maqām *Hijāz Kār*.

## Socio-Cultural Forces That Influenced the Music Theory

Modern Arab music theory was shaped by a number of cultural, social, and philosophical forces which were prevalent in the Middle East during the era. Turkish music culture was one of the strongest influences in the early and middle periods. When Mashāqah chose to present the *maqāmāt* by giving a specific melodic line for each, he was using a methodology that was prevalent at that time, not only in Syria, where he lived, but also in Turkey.<sup>11</sup> The Turkish connection was revitalized in the late nineteenth century when a number of Egyptian musicians went to Turkey and came back with “new” Turkish modes (Marcus 1989: chap. 8). The Turkish influence is especially strong in D’Erlanger’s work because his main informant, ‘Ali al-Darwish (1874–1952), was educated, in part, at a music conservatory in Istanbul (Ibn Dhurayl 1969:14–15).

Western influence also occurred on many levels. The Middle East has looked to the West as the dominant force not only in military and economic spheres but also in matters of culture during most of the modern era. Many considered Western classical music to be superior to Arab music in form and content (Marcus 1989:chap. 1). As a result Arab theorists began to adopt a number of Western musicological methods and concepts, the most obvious being the adoption of Western notation and *solfège*. More significant, however, was the adoption of the concept of scale which was absent in early-period descriptions of the *maqāmāt*.<sup>12</sup> (In the twentieth century, it became standard practice for students of Arab music first to learn Western scalar theory<sup>13</sup> before starting to study the Arab *maqāmāt*.) Indeed, the whole idea of presenting a structural analysis for each mode (absent in the early period) seems to be the result of Western influence.

The Western approach to scholarship also stimulated historical studies of medieval Arab theorists;<sup>14</sup> the concept of tetrachord was thus rediscovered and subsequently reintroduced into Arab music theory. This did not occur until the middle period, during the 1930s.

Middle-period theory was also affected by a new trend in Western modal studies. Powers (1980:377) discusses how Western scholars at the beginning of the twentieth century were interested in researching the melodic and motivic aspects of modal systems. D’Erlanger clearly shared this new interest. It is ironic, however, that, as Westerners came to study the *maqām* system, wanting to

focus on melodic movement, Arab theorists were looking to the West, fascinated by the static elements of Western music theory, especially scale. The Arab theorists proceeded to develop a new theory in which melodic description was totally ignored. It was apparently felt that discussing melodic movement would clutter an otherwise uniform and systematic music theory.

Western influence also changed the nature of music education in the Middle East. In imitation of Western schools, Arab music conservatories were founded in the first part of this century. These new schools were patronized by a growing new middle class which was ready to provide its children with a liberal-arts education. In this new context, music theory had to be presented in such a way that students could easily digest its intricacies. Arabic theoretical works over the last fifty years are full of calls for a simplified theory that would not be too taxing on the student.<sup>15</sup> Arab music teachers reported that many of their students were turning (out of frustration) to the study of Western classical music because it was so well packaged and thus easier both to learn and teach. Al-Hilū, for instance, writes that a student can learn Western *solfège* in ten minutes but that it often takes weeks and even months to learn the Arabic/Persian note names ([1961] 1972:76). There was also need for a uniform theory so that the teachers in the same institution and in different parts of the same country would be teaching the same music theory. The definition of the *maqāmāt* found in the present-day period fits these needs very well.

Twentieth-century nationalist movements also played a part by encouraging governments to support the new music conservatories and by encouraging a large part of the population to study the indigenous art traditions, something they had traditionally shunned as an inappropriate pastime.

In conclusion, Arab music theory of the modern era can be depicted as forward-looking and ever-modernizing. It is governed by an aesthetic similar to that which has characterized Arab music practice over the same period. (Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, for example, one of the greatest twentieth-century composers, is praised especially for being a great innovator.) Except for a few medieval studies, modern theorists have not read earlier Arab theoretical works. They have not, for example, read the works of Mashāqah, D’Erlanger, or other important works of early- and middle-period theorists. Arab music theory is a theory which is not concerned with its own past. It is a flexible theory that is ready to respond to a variety of social, cultural, and musical forces.

## Notes

1. This paper is based on research conducted for the Ph.D. dissertation, "Arab Music Theory in the Modern Period" (Marcus 1989). Study in Cairo during 1982–83 and 1984 was supported by the American Research Center in Egypt with funding from the Smithsonian and ICA (Fulbright). Research was also supported by the von Grunebaum Center for Near Eastern Studies at University of California, Los Angeles.

2. I am concerned with indigenous conceptualization and thus have limited the focus of this study to Arab theorists with one exception. Rodolphe D'Erlanger's (1933) scholarship in Arabic helped shape the thoughts of a generation of Arab theorists during the middle of the twentieth century.

3. The earliest presentation of the quarter-tone scale known to contemporary scholars is found in Laborde (1780:vol. 1, 437–439).

4. Arab music is based on a fundamental scale of seven notes per octave. The third and seventh degrees of this scale are neither natural nor flat. In a scale built on C, the third, a variety of E, occurs between E natural and E<sup>b</sup>, and the seventh, a variety of B, occurs between B natural and B<sup>b</sup>. Today these notes are called "half-flats" (*nisf bīmūl*) or, occasionally, "neutral" notes. Their position is indicated in transcription by ♯.

5. Some of the note names predate the modern era while others seem to have been coined at the beginning of the era. In most cases, note names also function as *maqām* names. *Rāst*, *Sīkah*, and *Hijāz*, for example, besides being names of *maqāmāt*, are also names of the notes C, E, and F<sup>#</sup>, respectively.

6. See Shiloah (1979:53, 80, 84) for examples of pre-modern Arab theoretical treatises which mention this fundamental scale.

7. The earliest known manuscript copy of Mashāqah's work is dated 1840 (Farmer 1938:160; Ronzevalle 1913:68). Rouanet (1922:2,681), however, dates the work as 1246 H.(1829–30 A.D.). The Arabic text with Arabic commentary was published for the first time by P. L. Ronzevalle in 1899. Ronzevalle later published a critical edition of the Arabic text, along with a French translation and brief introductory remarks, in 1913. All translations from the Arabic are mine.

8. Ronzevalle, for example, expresses his own inability to understand Mashāqah's melodic lines as the basis for composition or improvisation when he writes: "The meaning of these disjointed words (*kalimāt mutaqaṭṭi'ah*) is that they are the sequence of notes necessary for the musician to perform" (1899:727; see also 1913:88). Theorists and performers in Cairo today expressed total lack of comprehension when they were shown this part of Mashāqah's work in 1987.

9. *Jawāb* here indicates the upper octave, thus, for example, the note *jawāb Kirdān* is an octave above the note *Kirdān*.

10. In Mashāqah's early-period *maqām* descriptions, most *maqāmāt* did not extend into the octave. Of those which did, all but a few duplicated at the octave. In his comments, Mashāqah referred only to these (1899:302, 1913:77). Thus, the prevalence of non-duplication at the octave in the middle period was unprecedented.

11. See, for example, the *maqām* descriptions by the Turkish theorist, Hāshim Bey (ca. 1864).

12. The current word for scale, *sullam*, is but a translation of the French *échelle*.

13. Students today study the major and minor scales and their various transpositions.

14. The Egyptian scholar, Maḥmūd Aḥmad al-Hifnī, for example, went to Berlin to pursue graduate studies in musicology. There he studied the theories of Ibn Sīnā (the topic of his doctoral dissertation in 1930) and al-Kindi. D'Erlanger was another important scholar for he translated the works of al-Farābī, Ibn Sīnā, Ṣafi al-Dīn, and others, into French.

15. See, for example, al-Hifnī ([1938] 1946: 129), al-Ṣabbāgh (1950:35), and Ḥāfiẓ (1971:185–186).

### References Cited

D'Erlanger, Baron Rodolphe (1872–1932)

1933 "al-Maqāmāt al-Muqaddamah min Janāb al-Bārūn Dī Arlanjar" [The *maqāmāt* presented by the Honorable Baron D'Erlanger]. In *Kitāb al-Mu'tamar al-Mūsīqā al-'Arabiyyah*, pp.182–329. See *Kitab ...*; reprinted in *Recueil des travaux du congrès de musique arabe*, pp. 187ff. See *Recueil des travaux ...*

Farmer, Henry George

1936 "Mūsīkī." In *The Encyclopedia of Islam.*, vol. 3, pp. 749–755. M. T. Houtsma et al., ed., Leiden: E. J. Brill.

1938 "Mushāka, Mikhā'il" in *The Encyclopedia of Islam Supplement*, pp. 159–60. Leiden: E. J. Brill.

Ḥāfiẓ, Muḥammad Maḥmūd Sāmī

1971 *Tā'rikh al-Mūsīqā wa al-Ghinā' al-'Arabi* [The history of Arab music and song]. Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Fanniyyah al-Ḥadīthah.

## Maqāmāt

Hāshim Bey

- ca. 1864 *Majmū‘at al-Maqāmāt* [The collection of modes]. Istanbul: n.p. Cited in “Nazariyyāt al-Mūsīqā al-‘Arabīyyah wa Turuq Tadrīsihā” [The theories of Arab music and ways to teach it]. Thesis presented at al-Ma‘had al-‘Ālī li-al-Tarbiyyah al-Mūsīqiyyah, Cairo.

al-Ḥifnī, Maḥmūd Aḥmad (1866–1973)

- 1938 *al-Mūsīqā al-Nazariyyah* [Music theory]. 3d ed., 1946, Cairo: Maktabat al-Nadah.

al-Ḥilū, Salīm

- 1961 *al-Mūsīqā al-Nazariyyah* [Music theory]. 2d ed., 1972, Beirut: Dār Maktabat al-Ḥayāt.

Ibn Dhurayl, ‘Adnan

- 1969 *al-Mūsīqā fī Sūriyyah* [Music in Syria]. Damascus: Maṭābi‘ Alif Bā’.

*Kitāb Mu‘tamar al-Mūsīqā al-‘Arabīyyah*

- 1933 [Book of the Arab music conference]. Cairo: al-Maṭba‘ah al-Amīriyyah bi al-Qāhirah.

Laborde, Jean Benjamin de (1734–94)

- 1780 *Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne*, 3 vols. Paris: Imprimerie de Ph.-D. Pierres.

Mashāqah, Mīkhā’īl Ibn Jirjis (1800–88)

- 1899 “al-Risālah al-Shihābiyyah fī al-Sinā‘ah al-Mūsīqiyyah” [The Shihābi treatise on the musical art]. In *al-Mashriq*, pp. 146ff. Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique,

Marcus, Scott L.

- 1989 “Arab Music Theory in the Modern Period.” Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles.

Powers, Harold

- 1980 “Mode,” in *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, vol. 12, pp. 376–450. London: Macmillan.

*Recueil des travaux du congrès de musique arabe.*

1934 Cairo: Imprimerie Nationale, Boulac.

Ronzevalle, P. L.

1899 “al-Risālah al-Shihābiyyah fī al-Ṣinā‘ah al-Mūsīqiyyah li al-Duktūr Mikhā’il Mashāqah” [The Shihābi treatise on the musical art by Doctor Mikhā’il Mashāqah]. In *al-Mashriq*, pp. 146ff. Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique

1913 “Un traité de musique arabe moderne” in *Mélanges de la Faculté Orientale, Université Saint-Joseph* [Beirut] 6: 1–120.

Rouanet, Jules

1922 “La Musique arabe,” in *Encyclopédie de la musique et dictionnaire du conservatoire*, ed. Albert Lavignac, vol 1, pp. 2,676–2,812. Paris: Librairie Delagrave.

al-Ṣabbāgh, Tawfīq

1950 *al-Dalīl al-Mūsīqī al-‘Amm fī Aṭrab al-Anghām* [The general music manual on the most pleasing modes]. Syria: Maṭba‘at al-Ihsan li-Maytam al-Rm al-Kāthūlīk.

al-Shawwā, Sāmī (1887–ca. 1965)

1946 *al-Qawā‘id al-Fanniyyah fī al-Mūsīqā al-Sharqiyyah wa al-Gharbiyyah* [Artistic rules in Eastern and Western music]. Cairo: Maṭba‘at Jibrā‘il Fatah Allah Jabrī wa Waladuhu.

Shiloah, Amon

1979 *The Theory of Music in Arabic Writings (c. 900–1900): A Descriptive Catalogue of Manuscripts of Europe and the U. S. A.* RISM B, x. Munich: G. Henle Verlag.

1981 “The Arabic Concept of Mode.” in *The Journal of the American Musicological Society* 34 (1): 19–42.



## Cultural Authenticity in Egyptian Musical Expression: The Repertory of the *Mashāyikh*<sup>1</sup>

Virginia Danielson

During the twentieth century in Egypt, within the context of widespread resistance to the British occupation and the ever-growing support for Egyptian control of economic and political affairs, the concept *min al-mashāyikh* has acquired an important ideological dimension. The *mashāyikh* (s., *shaykh*), educated religious men, have come to be viewed as the principal repository for “authentic” Egyptian musical culture. Within the musical culture, alongside trends toward Westernization, there has been strong support for the development of musical styles and practices considered to be authentically Egyptian. Although less obvious to Europeans, this trend has been nevertheless very strong and has penetrated most strata of Egyptian society.<sup>2</sup>

The common expression “*min al-mashāyikh*” means literally “one of the *shaykhs*.” The title *shaykh* has been applied in Egypt during the twentieth century to various public figures, including musicians. Although it has been occasionally used in secular contexts (for instance, *shaykh al-balad* denoting a village political leader), the term usually carries religious overtones. The *shaykh* is supposed to be an educated, mature, practicing Muslim.

Musicians who are *min al-mashāyikh* have been credited with representing authentic Egyptian musical culture and preserving Egyptian musical heritage from extinction threatened by extensive and prolonged contact with foreign cultures: Turkish, European, and American.<sup>3</sup> As Cairo journalist Rajā’ al-Naqqāsh wrote:

All of [the *mashāyikh*] were trained early in their lives in a religious atmosphere and in authentic religious culture. After that they burst into our artistic life and filled it with authentic, mature art. To them belongs the greatest credit in the development of Arabic art as they have opened horizons to create a contemporary art which is expressive of our taste and our artistic nature. (1978b:104)

In the words of another writer:

In spite of the repeated visits of foreign symphony orchestras and continuous presentations of seasons of Italian song at the Opera House of Cairo and the appearance of other kinds of European music in Egyptian locales, new generations of

Egyptian musicians have remained committed to our own musical life up to the present day and the works of these musicians are linked in song and composition, directly or indirectly, to the oral teaching of the *mashāyikh*. (Jamīl 1970:22)

For al-Naqqāsh and other intellectuals and critics, the expression *min al-mashāyikh* became an important component of the language with which they discussed their music and culture and came to represent a significant aspect of their view of Egyptian music history.

This article presents an historical investigation into the associations of religion and cultural authenticity in the musical culture of Egypt. The interplay of religious learning and musical performance has a long history in Egypt; the principal purpose of this paper is to trace this development. I will outline the historical connections between Muslim religious expression and grassroots popular culture in Egypt, and briefly mention qualities of musical sound associated with the *mashāyikh* and believed to be significantly and distinctively Egyptian. The discussion is also addressed to several larger issues: the relationship of the apparently religious to the apparently secular in the Arab world, and the character of Arabic “classical” music, or the “great tradition,” as an Egyptian might view it.

### Popular Islam and Grassroots Cultural Expression in Egypt

The holidays of Islam have served as occasions for public festivity all over Egypt in which its entire population—rich and poor, rural and urban, Muslim and non-Muslim—may participate. Although sources of information about the musical aspects of these celebrations prior to the twentieth century are not readily available, there is sufficient data to sketch the events.

In his essay on everyday life in eighteenth-century Cairo, historian André Raymond observed strong links between trade guilds in the popular quarters and Muslim religious confraternities, or Sufi groups, giving each quarter its own economic and cultural identity.<sup>4</sup> He wrote:

*The esprit de corps* of a quarter was normally expressed by the collective demonstrations in which its population (and especially the youth) participated, in loud and colorful processions with accompaniment by drums and flutes behind torch-bearers and flags.... These processions were organized for the occasion of a marriage, a circumcision, the feast of a local saint, or a celebra-

tion more general in character such as the birthday of the Prophet. (1968:110)

Raymond described a variety of special occasions, both religious and secular, celebrated in similar manner by entire communities. This characterization was reiterated by writers during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. According to Edward Lane ([1895] 1978:441, 451, 242), saints' days (*mawālid*, s. *mūlid*) included recitations of the *Qur'ān* and singing of religious texts belonging to the *dhikr* ceremonies of Sufis, storytellers reciting the old Arabic epics, solo singers performing religious and secular songs, and informal gatherings centering around smoking and drinking coffee. The Prophet's Birthday was traditionally celebrated in Azbakīyah Garden, next to the opera house and the theater district of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. According to Egypt's foremost music historian, Maḥmūd al-Ḥifnī:

Egyptians used to celebrate the Birthday of the Prophet in Azbakīyah Square with pomp and splendor. The dervishes would gather there in many groups, each associated with one of the Sufi orders, of which many remain in Egypt up to the present day. Each is differentiated from the others by the colors of their banners and turbans and clothes. Before the "Big Night" of the *mūlid*, there were celebrations every night from the first of the month of Rabī' al-Awwal, right up to the night of the *mūlid* itself. Each Sufi order had its own tent in which there was an uninterrupted flow of parts of the *dhikr* ceremony and religious songs accompanied by wind and percussion instruments. (1969:vol. 1, 58)

Other types of entertainment filled side streets and surrounding areas, and foreign writers noted what seemed to them a startling mix of secular and sacred expressions in a single celebration: fire-eaters, dancers, Punch and Judy-like puppet shows, shadow plays, and entertainment tents managed by professional theatrical agents.<sup>5</sup> Similar occasions included the evenings of the Holy month of Ramadan, weddings, celebrations for newborn babies, and circumcisions, in addition to royal tours of the countryside and the Day of the Inundation of the Nile.<sup>6</sup> Whole neighborhoods participated in these events and the audiences were typically a mix of religious groups. Lane ([1895] 1978:242) observed that the Christians in his neighborhood decorated their homes for the annual celebration of the local saint's day and that public celebrations were attended by local residents often regardless of religious affiliation.

Performers included members of Sufi groups, *Qur'ān* reciters, and religious singers, some of whom were scholars from

## Cultural Authenticity

the old and famous Azhar University and constituted the musical *min al-mashāyikh*. About writers of *mawāwīl* (s., *mawwāl*, a genre of colloquial Arabic song), Pierre Cachia remarked:

What is significant is that all the literate authors I have been able to trace are products of the traditional Islamic type of education, like the Azhari Shaykh Mustafa Ibrahim ‘Ajaj who died ca. 1936—an extremely prolific writer of *mawwāls* who appears to have wielded considerable authority in his day and is still remembered with respect by present-day singers. (1977:85)

The musical *min al-mashāyikh* contributed to popular entertainment all over Egypt. According to al-Naqqāsh:

The *mashāyikh* had a big role in village life....The voices which charmed the people for the saints’ days and other religious holidays were the voices of the *mashāyikh*....The *mashāyikh* used to present all kinds of religious songs during evenings which were the most beautiful and the sweetest in the Egyptian village. (1978:31–32)<sup>7</sup>

## Cultural Authenticity in Popular Song

Training in the recitation of the *Qur’ān* was an essential component of religious education and was frequently cited as the principal factor in the success of a singer. Concerning the popular star Umm Kulthūm, for instance, one commonly hears that “she was good because she could read the *Qur’ān*.” Moreover, as al-Naqqāsh wrote:

There is no doubt that Umm Kulthūm’s link with our artistic heritage is her drive for the importance of religious song. After she came to Cairo she did not forget that she came from the Egyptian village, that she learned the *Qur’ān*, and that our artistic history is filled with *tawāshīḥ* and [other] religious song, and that religious sensibilities are a basic part of the feelings of the [Egyptian] people. (1978:22)

The ranks of professional singers who engaged in commercial recording and broadcasting during the twentieth century included many who had been originally trained in recitation of the *Qur’ān* and had performed both as reciters and as singers. Others included the most famous solo singers and stage personalities of their time. At the turn of the century, singers without a strong religious background sought such training and sometimes participated with the *al-Laythī* Sufi order notable for its impressive vocal performances (Shafiq 1969:a). Some of the *mashāyikh* were women, such as al-Ḥājjah al-Sūwaysiyah in the nineteenth century

and later Sakīnah Ḥasan and Umm Kulthūm. A few women worked as reciters of the *Qur'ān*.

The influence of the musical *min al-mashāyikh* permeated the most secular form of entertainment, the musical theater. Features of the recitation of the *Qur'ān* and Sufi *dhikr* are believed to have penetrated the composition styles of theatrical stars Salamah Hijazi and Sayyid Darwīsh.

The musical *min al-mashāyikh* were familiar and meaningful to Egyptians irrespective of their religious affiliation. Jewish composer Dawud Ḥuṣnī, when asked by his European colleagues at the 1932 Conference on Arabic Music about the encroachment of Western influences said, "As long as there is the *Qur'ān*, Arabic music will always live" (el-Shawan 1980:66). Christian violin virtuoso Sāmī al-Shawwā frequently expressed his view that religious songs were principal exemplars of traditional Egyptian music and part of the culture shared by all Egyptians (Fu'ād 1976:399).

While accessible to the poorest of the poor, the repertoires of the *mashāyikh* were also welcomed in the salons of elites. Al-Shaykh Yūsuf al-Manyalāwī entertained exclusive audiences at glittering occasions such as the benefits held by the wealthy matron and Egypt's première feminist, Hudá Sha'rāwī, and within the salons of the Princess Nazlī Fāzil. Sha'rāwī's family represented the new elite of Egypt at the turn of the century. They were Egyptian-born landowners who had married into the Turco-Circassian ruling class and, though they held large estates in the far reaches of the countryside, were also politically active in Cairo. Virtually all of these elite families patronized local traditional singers even though they held European culture in high esteem, frequently vacationed in Europe, and enjoyed attending European operatic and theatrical productions. Especially during the years surrounding the revolution of 1919, Sha'rāwī and her social circle deliberately sought the *mashāyikh* as a way of affirming their commitment to Egypt and Egyptians in the face of continued British political and economic domination (Storrs 1937:106; Shaarawi 1986:98).

The repertoires sung by the *mashāyikh* consistently admitted change. For example, one genre, *Qissat al-muld al-rabawi*, known as the "Story of the Prophet" and essentially a loosely organized collection of texts about salient aspects of the Prophet's life, changed from prosaic recitations to melodically elaborate and musically challenging renditions of songs.<sup>8</sup> Throughout the twentieth century, Qur'ānic recitation has gradually become more musically elaborate. Larger ensembles, new instruments, and electronically produced echo effects have been adopted by singers of

religious repertoires. Whereas old texts might remain in the performed repertory, the *shaykh* has not been expected to repeat familiar melodies, but rather to innovate on familiar models.

The musical *miṣṣ al-mashāyikh* were thought to manifest a relatively high degree of learning. Training in the recitation of the *Qur'ān* was and is still considered to produce much admired correctness and clarity of pronunciation. Knowledge of Arabic literature, especially of the classical *qaṣā'id* and *muwashshahāt*, accounted for the superior skill of the *mashāyikh* in composing new texts and effectively improvising on old ones. The melodic lines of the old *muwashshahāt* were thought to be the best source of training in exposition and development of the musical modes (*maqāmāt*). One who knew the *muwashshahāt* was better able to compose and to improvise with sophistication than one who did not. At the turn of the century, the aesthetics of good singing shared many qualities with *Qur'ānic* recitation and religious song. This connection gained strength as the century progressed and found expression in statements such as the following:

The *shaykh* who would read the *Qur'ān* with a beautiful voice was at the same time the professor of the science of the Arabic melodic modes, the poetic meters and the rhythmic modes of music. Thus the traditional school of music teaching in Egypt is the school of the *mashāyikh*. (Jamīl 1970:17)

For the Holy *Qur'ān* not only embodies the eloquence of the Arabic language; it also includes its music and its emotive power and all the musical expressiveness in its very sound. This much is true if it is simply read; if it is cantillated, it joins to the music of language, the music of many Oriental melodies. (Fu'ād 1976:154)

...besides the Revelation, it was basically the transmission of the *Qur'ān* by Prophet Muḥammad which prepared the ground for the successful establishment of traditional Muslim vocal art-forms in the world. (Boolakly 1984:52)

Kamāl Ḥuṣṣnī, a teacher of classical song and son of the Jewish composer Dawud Ḥuṣṣnī, attached importance to the balance between innovation and tradition required to combine correct and clear recitation of a text with melodic enhancement of its meaning:

The *Qur'ān* is the basis of all music. It allows for improvisation but also has a system of strict rules. People *min al-mashāyikh* know the rules but they also know the means of improvisation. As a result of their training they understand the meaning of texts and also their pronunciation is better than those without the same background. (pers. comm., May 2, 1982)

Because of the public nature of holiday celebrations and the appearance of the *mashāyikh* in all sorts of contexts, the sounds of both the recitation of the *Qur'ān* and religious songs are familiar to virtually everyone in Egypt. The sound qualities from these expressions constitute a common fund of musical culture representing what is local, what is familiar, and what is considered to be authentic and indigenously Arabic-Egyptian. For many Egyptian listeners, the *mashāyikh* formed the “real school of traditional music in Egypt” (al-Farīb 1985:18–19).

### **Conclusions: Importance in Egyptian Society as a Whole**

Discourse about the musical *min al-mashāyikh* emerged with concurrent debates over Westernization, which concerned the role that Western resources might best play in Egypt. Many Egyptians embraced Western musical styles and practices and sought ways to integrate these into Arabic music. However, at the same time traditionalism acquired strength and importance in an environment where a strong foreign alternative existed and held a certain appeal, as Western music clearly did.

The Islamic background of the musicians and the association of their repertory with cultural authenticity may be understood in light of the historical links between popular religion and popular cultural expression in the society as a whole. The historian Afaf Marsot has pointed out that religious models or functionaries in Egypt have been used historically as a means to assert an alternative to foreign domination (or local domination thought to be foreign in its aim). This, she says, signifies not “a backward-looking fundamentalism” but “a forward-looking movement seeking to change society from its rapid pace of Westernization and redirecting it towards a society that derives its ethos from traditions, that is an authentic society, not an alien hybrid” (1984:551).

The acknowledgement of singers *min al-mashāyikh* reflects an attitude which has informed Egyptian views of cultural change over the past century, namely the importance of local culture and its relevance in modern life. The importance of the *mashāyikh* in Egyptian musical life offers insight into a society which has been perceived as relatively Westernized but characterized by many outsiders as being stubbornly slow or hesitant to follow seemingly logical and desirable Western paths. The significance of religious repertories to musical life in other parts of the Arab world has been observed by Jürgen Elsner (1983:460), Amnon Shiloah (1979:40,

46–47), and Lois al Faruqi (1979:64). The available evidence strongly suggests that religious song and related repertoires constitute an essential component of so-called “classical” Arab musical tradition and of a view of musical tradition widely held in Arab Middle Eastern society.

### Notes

1. This paper is based on field work and historical research conducted in Egypt in 1982–83 and 1984–86. It is essentially an annotated version of my presentation at the annual meeting of the Society For Ethnomusicology in November 1988 in Tempe, Arizona. I am grateful to Professor Jihad Racy for his comments on an earlier draft of this paper and also to Professor R. Stephen Blum for his suggestions. The translations from Arabic are my own; I am grateful to Professor Everett Rowson for reviewing them.

2. The desire for cultural authenticity did not obviate the well-documented tendency in Egypt toward musical modernization. It simply mandated that modernization proceed from historically Arab-Egyptian musical models and retain their essential features.

3. The *mashāyikh*, however, were not always admired. Kāmil al-Khulā‘ī, in his early work on Arabic music (1904:84–86), chastened some of them for ignorance and errors in rendition, hastening to identify by name a number of exemplary performers among the *mashāyikh* as well. In general, while religious functionaries certainly commanded respect, the faults of some made them objects of criticism and humor. The autobiographies of Ṭāhā Ḥusayn (1981) and Umm Kulthūm (‘Awaḍ 1969) exemplify this common view, as does the Arabic adaptation of Molière’s *Tartuffe*, featuring Shaykh al-Maṭlūf (literally, a spoiled *shaykh*) to great audience appreciation.

4. The historical association between “popular religion” and Sufi groups is discussed by Fazlur Rahman (1979:150ff). Interesting general discussions of the interrelationship of politics, religion, and art in Egyptian cultural expression appear in Karnāl al-Najmī (1966:87–88) and in Majdi Wahba (1972:800–813).

5. For instance, McPherson (1941:76–87). For similar but less detailed descriptions, see Martinovich (1912:517–522) and “Der Muled...” (1877: 1,522–1,524). George Swan (1914:45–51) wrote that 500,000 people annually attended the *mūlid* of al-Sayyid al-Badawī in the provincial city of Tanta.

6. In its description of religious recitation, the Committee on Modes, Meters and Genres reported that such recitations occurred in places of worship and “on other occasions” (1933:166).

7. The widespread familiarity of religious song was also noted in a recent study by Earle Waugh (1989:31–32).

8. Ibrahim Shaffīq (1969:b) credits al-Shaykh Ibrahim al-Maghrabī and al-Shaykh Isma‘īl Sukkar with this development.

## References Cited

- ‘Awaḍ, Maḥmūd  
 1969 *Umm Kulthūm alāfī lā ya‘-rifuhā Aḥadd*. Cairo: Akhbār al-Yawm. Translated as “The Umm Kulthūm Nobody Knows” in *Middle Eastern Muslim Women Speak*, eds. Elizabeth Fernea and Basima Bezirgan. 1977. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Boolakay, Ibrahim  
 1984 “Traditional Muslim Vocal Art.” *Arts and the Islamic World* 1(4): 52–55.
- Cachia, Pierre  
 1977 “The Egyptian Mawwāl: Its Ancestry, Its Development, and Its Present Forms.” *Journal of Arabic Literature* 8: 77–103.
- Committee on Modes, Meters and Genres  
 1933 *Kitāb Mu‘tamar al-Musiqa‘ al-‘Arabīyah* (Proceedings of the conference on Arabic music). Cairo: al-Maṭbā‘ah al-Amīriyah.
- “Der Muled el-Nebbi”  
 1877 *Allgemeine Zeitschrift Beilage* 101: 1,522–1,524.
- Elsner, Jürgen  
 1983 “Ferment nationalen Bewusstseins: die Musikkultur Algeriens.” *Musik und Gesellschaft* 33(8): 456–63.
- al-Farīb, Muḥammad  
 1985 “al-Ughniyah al-Diniyah tastahadaf al-Qalb.” *al-Idhā‘ah wa-al-Tilifiziyyūn*, no. 2,633 (August): 18–19.
- al Faruqi, Lois Ibsen  
 1979 “The Status of Music in Muslim Nations: Evidence from the Arab World.” *Asian Music* 12(1): 56–85.
- Fu‘ād, Ni‘māt Aḥmad  
 1976 *Umm Kulthūm wa-‘Aṣr min al-Fann* (Umm Kulthūm and an era in art). Cairo: al-Hay‘ah al-Miṣriyah al-‘Āmah lil-Kitāb.

## Cultural Authenticity

al-Ḥifnī, Maḥmūd Aḥmad, et al.

1969 *Turāthunā al-Mūsīqī* (Our musical heritage), 4 vols.  
Cairo: al-Lajnah al-Mūsīqīyah al-'Ulyá.

Husayn, Ṭahā

1981 *An Egyptian Childhood*. London: Heinemann.

Jamīl, Sulaymān

1970 *al-Inshād fī al-Ḥaḍrah al-Ṣūfīyah* (Religious song in the Sufi Ḥaḍrah. Cairo: Maṭbā' at al-Kīlāfī.

al-Khula'ī, Kāmīl

ca.1904 *Kitāb al-Mūsīqá al-Sharqī* (Oriental Music). Cairo: Maṭbā'at al-Taḡaddum.

Lane, Edward M.

1895 *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians Written in Egypt during the Years 1833–1835*. Reprint ed., 1978. The Hague: East-West Publications.

Marsot, Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid

1984 "Religion of Opposition? Urban Protest Movements in Egypt." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 16: 541–552.

Martinovich, N.

1912 "Prazdnik v Tantie (Holiday in Tanta)." *Mir Islama* (The world of Islam)1: 517–522.

McPherson, J. W.

1941 *The Moulids of Egypt*. Cairo: n.p.

al-Najmī, Kamāl

1966 *al-Ghinā' al-Miṣrī*. Cairo: Dār al-Hilāl.

al-Naqqāsh, Rajā'

1978a "Lughz Umm Kulthūm" (The secret of Umm Kulthūm. In *Lughz Umm Kulthūm*, pp. 9–33. Cairo: Dār al-Hilāl.

1978b "al-Mashāyikh wa-al-Fann" (The Mashāyikh and art). In *al-Kawākib* (The stars). Reprinted in *Lughz Umm Kulthūm*, pp. 34–51. Cairo: Dār al-Hilāl.

- Rahman, Fazlur  
1979 *Islam*, 2d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Raymond, André  
1968 "Quartiers et mouvements populaires au Caire au XVIIIème siècle." In *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt*, ed. P. M. Holt, pp. 104–116. London: Oxford University Press.
- Shaarawi, Huda  
1986 *Harem Years: The Memoirs of an Egyptian Feminist (1879–1924)*, ed. Margot Badran. London: Virago.
- Shafiq, Ibrahim  
1969 untitled notes. In *Turāthunā al-Mūsīqī*, vol. 3, pp. a–b, of al-Ḥifnī (1969).
- el-Shawan, Salwa  
1980 *al-Mūsīka al-'Arabiyyah: A Category of Urban Music in Cairo, Egypt, 1927–77*. Ph.D. diss., Columbia University.
- Shiloah, Amnon  
1979 "The Status of Traditional Art Music in Muslim Nations." *Asian Music* 12(1): 40–55.
- Storrs, Ronald  
1937 *Orientalisms*. London: Ivor Nicholson & Watson.
- Swan, George  
1914 "The Tanta Mulid." *The Muslim World* 4: 45–51.
- Wahba, Majdī  
1972 "Cultural Planning in the Arab World." *Journal of World History* 14: 800–813.
- Waugh, Earle  
1989 *The Munshidin of Egypt*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press.



Figure 1. Two Mimbres bowls from the classic black-on-white phase, 1000–1150 A.D. Reproduced from *Mimbres Pottery: Ancient Art of the American Southwest* by J.J. Brody et al, pp. 52, 107, copyright 1983, by permission of The American Federation of Arts.

## Form as Cosmology: An Interpretation of Structure in the Ceremonial Songs of the Pueblo Indians<sup>1</sup>

Paul Humphreys

It is of prime importance to have a conceptual system which will force us to see the "message" (e.g., the object of art) as both itself internally patterned and itself a part of a larger patterned universe (Bateson 1972:132).

### Introduction

Relationships between music and overall cultural systems have been of interest to ethnomusicologists since the founding of the Society for Ethnomusicology in 1953. David P. McAllester's study of music and values in Navajo life entitled *Enemy Way Music* (1954) is an early example. Ten years later, Alan Merriam called for the study of "music in culture" and suggested a model by which such study might be carried out (*The Anthropology of Music* 1964:6, 32–33). Interpretations of his challenge varied widely—from John Blacking's discursive and hermeneutic studies of Venda musical life (e.g., 1972), to the clustering of musical features within a world-wide sample that led Alan Lomax (1968:121ff.) to correlate the incidence of specific musical features with specific types of societies.

Responding to the variety of interpretations of his suggestion, Merriam wrote that ethnomusicology is better described as the study of "music as culture" (1977:202). Steven Feld went further, suggesting that the discipline not only be redefined, but renamed as "comparative sociomusicology," a field that takes as its purpose the elaborating of "coherences of sound structures as social structures" (1984:406). Marina Rosenman clarified this objective: ethnomusicologists must compare not merely "the sound structures *per se*, but primarily the cultural logics informing those structures" (1984:411).

Studies that have explicitly set out to describe the music of indigenous American peoples "in" and "as" culture include Anthony Seeger's analysis of performance practice in relation to a single genre of song among the Suya Indians of Brazil (1980) and Marcia Herndon's discussion of the performance of curing songs among the Eastern Cherokee of North Carolina (1980). Both are notable for drawing attention to aspects of musical form—as well

as of performance—that express underlying principles of their respective cosmologies.<sup>2</sup>

Instances of striking coherence between culture and epistemology have prompted some scholars to hypothesize that an artifact or performance may be an “iconic” expression of world view. Alton Becker clarifies this larger concept of “icon” in remarking that “something may be described as iconic when it is seen as a fact about the real world, rather than a fact about the discourse in which it occurs” (1979:218). Efforts to illuminate musical meaning with the notion of iconicity include his work in collaboration with Judith Becker (1981) that draws attention to relationships between musico-temporal organization and cosmological orientation in Java. Subsequently, Judith Becker (1988) has described the relationship between the activities associated with constructing gamelan instruments and the Javanese notion of *sakti*, or primordial powers and Elizabeth Tolbert (1987) has drawn attention to musico-temporal and cosmological coherences within the ritual complex that attends funerary lamenting in Finland. In this paper I draw attention to analogous coherences between the musical organization of a particular song genre and the cosmological orientation of the Pueblo Indians of the southwestern United States.

### Views of Pueblo Land and Life

Descriptions of the character and milieu of Pueblo life range from those of outsiders (non-Pueblos) to insiders (Pueblos) with a few contributions from “native outsiders”<sup>3</sup> who have chosen the difficult role of mediating between traditional and scholarly communities. The perspectives of numerous authors, trained in the disciplines of academe, furnish a valuable introduction to the rich tapestry of Pueblo past and present. Geographer Carl O. Sauer (1975), for example, has called for a study of the region that takes into account the discovery in the Southwest of what are “possibly the oldest traces of human culture in the New World.” He further describes the area as one of the “ever-recurring loci of history” where an interplay of biotic and cultural associations with the “powerfully operating isolating factor” of aridity has worked as a mechanism both for tempering and nurturing balanced evolution (1975:40-41).<sup>4</sup> Archaeologist Bertha Dutton has pointed to a continuity of beliefs and symbols that link the contemporary Pueblos with societies that flourished from, roughly, 950 to 1250 (1957:8).<sup>5</sup> Historian Edward Spicer (1976) has recounted the

remarkable endurance of the Pueblos through “cycles of conquest” since European contact, beginning with Coronado’s *entrada* in 1540, through the Pueblo revolt in 1680, a Mexican interregnum in the early nineteenth century, and several distinct phases of United States sovereignty since 1848. Frank Waters (1950:368–69) has suggested that the Pueblos represent the flowering of a democratic communal ideal in the soil of a profound conservatism while anthropologists and ethnomusicologists have remarked upon the proclivity of Pueblo artisans and ceremonialists to borrow, not only from one another, but from non-Pueblo Indians and non-Indians as well (Roberts 1923; Dutton 1936:70; Lange 1957:70–73; and Humphreys 1984).

Pueblo insiders include poets such as Simon Ortiz (Acoma),<sup>6</sup> authors of fiction such as Leslie M. Silko (Laguna), and author-statesmen such as Joe Sando (Jémez). In a poem entitled “Earth and Rain, the Plant and Sun,” Ortiz evokes the manner and mood in which one perceives the onset of a Pueblo communal dance ceremony:

O great joy, they come.  
The plants with bells.  
The stones with voices.  
Listen, Son, hold my hand. (1977:61)

Silko (1977) has woven a powerful fabric of myth and prose to portray the life-threatening contradictions that confront many young Pueblo adults. Recognizing these contradictions, Sando voices his conviction that, despite the pressure of a wage economy, “a new life will emerge” that blends “restrained technical development [with] a growing respect for the land as taught by the elders of the ancient Pueblos” (1976:133).

Without the work of native outsiders, non-Pueblos would have only fragmentary notions of the ancient teachings to which Sando refers. Frank Hamilton Cushing was the first non-Zuni to describe Pueblo ritual from the standpoint of a participant (Eggen and Pandey 1979:474). During his years at Zuni (1879–83), he was adopted into one of the thirteen Zuni clans and served as a priest in the Bow Society. More recently, Edward Dozier (born a Santa Clara Pueblo) has illuminated both the rigor and the reciprocity that are inseparable from the Pueblo world view:

## Form as Cosmology

As long as ceremonies are consistently and properly performed, nature will respond by providing the necessities of life...man and nature cooperate to maintain universal balance (1970:200).<sup>7</sup>

Alfonso Ortiz has gone further by providing a thorough analysis of the cosmological order that informs the whole of Tewa Pueblo ceremonialism (Ortiz 1969).

### Sacred Realities

Mircea Eliade observes that an *axis mundi*, which connects the three realms of earth, heaven, and underworld, is a nearly universal human conception of the cosmos (1956:37). Human beings may gain access to sacred, non-ordinary reality through visualizing or physically representing this spiritual conduit.<sup>8</sup> Dennis and Barbara Tedlock have noted that sacred reality “is also encountered at the periphery of the horizontal plane” (1975:xiv). Benjamin Lee Whorf has described this experience for the Hopi as the borderland of a realm “which is as much subjective as objective” (1975:128). The Pueblos associate this realm with the beings variously described as *kossa*, *kwirana*, *shiwana* or *kat’sina*, *kacina*, and *kachina*.<sup>9</sup> These beings “have their house” either at the outer boundaries of the Pueblo cosmos (Tewa) or at sacred lakes and springs that, while of intermediate distance in relation to the cosmological perimeter, are nonetheless well-removed from the village and its sphere of “ordinary” existence (Western Keres, Zuni, Hopi).

At masked dances, ritual participants explicitly identify themselves with the *kacina*, thus partaking, albeit in a group context, in the non-ordinary reality of the shaman where “everything is numinous, suffused with sacredness, holiness, light...” (Tedlock and Tedlock 1975:xviii).<sup>10</sup> Some Pueblo narratives tell of a time when the *kacina* themselves danced to delight the people, but because they are themselves spirits of the dead, “they always took someone with them” (i.e., someone would die). As a result, they authorized masked dances and promised “to come and stand before them” (Bunzel 1932b:844; White [1930] 1973:69).

...since the divine ones no longer come in the flesh, they come in their other bodies, that is, as rain. The mask is the corporeal substitute of the god and in donning it the wearer, through a miracle akin to that of the Mass in Roman Catholic ritual, becomes the god. (Bunzel 1932a:517)

## The Tewa World View

The following prayer, quoted by Alfonso Ortiz in his landmark study of the Pueblo Indian religion, *The Tewa World*, is telling of the central notions of Pueblo cosmology:

Within and around the earth, within and around the hills, within  
and around the mountains your authority returns to you (1969:13).

The principal sacred reference points of the Tewa thus articulate concentric regions about their villages. Each of these points, as well as the central point upon which they converge, is a conduit of essential energy between spirit and corporeal realms. The outermost points of this cosmos are identified with mountains that are visible in the four cardinal directions. Each mountain cradles a lake where the *katsina*, or ancestral spirits, are understood to dwell; at the top of each mountain a shrine designates an "earth navel" where the *Towa é* or guardians of order are understood to live.

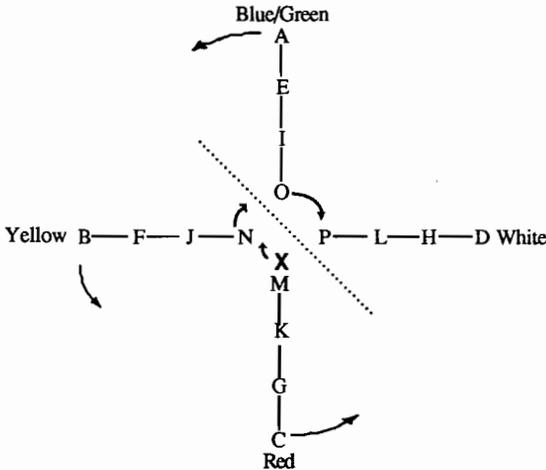


Figure 2. "Principal reference points in the Tewa world" (Ortiz 1975:182, fig. 2). Points A–D represent mountains, points E–H, mesas, points I–L, shrines at the village perimeter, points M–O, plazas within the village; the broken line represents the division of ceremonial responsibilities of summer (south and west) and winter (north and east) moieties and their color associations. X represents the stone shrine in the south plaza.

Closer by in relation to the village are four mesas with caves that also suggest “earth navels”; another variety of order-restoring beings (the *Tsave Yoh*) are understood to dwell within these caves. In addition, the mesa tops serve as vantage points for the *Towa é* when they come from the mountains to look in upon the village, particularly when a communal ceremony is in progress.

At the fringes of the village are four shrines that are associated with specific mythic personages and the dead. Within the village itself, the mountains, hills, and shrines all converge on four plazas, focal among which is the south plaza where a small and easily overlooked shrine of stones marks the “center of centers” within the *Tewa* cosmos (Ortiz 1969:18–27).<sup>11</sup> In all Pueblos, it is to this central point that the ancestor spirits, identified with outer boundaries, are understood to converge on the day of a ritual communal dance.

Two distinct classification schemes are implicit in this cosmology: an ordering of horizontal space into regions that Ortiz has described as “concentric,” in the human realm and a six-fold ordering of temporal existence in which the three spirit realms—the *kacina*, the *Towa é*, the dead and mythic beings—each have their counterpart (1975:181–83). He represents this interpenetration of spatial and existential realities with the following diagram:

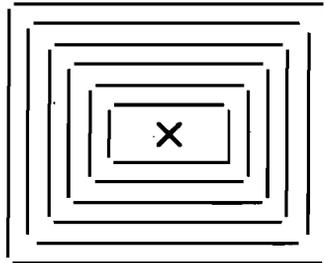


Figure 3. Diagram of *Tewa* cosmos depicting six levels of spiritual and corporeal existence (Ortiz 1975:185).

This diagram illustrates the integration of multiple centers described above and, in particular, what appears to be an “opposition between sacred and sacred” in which the outermost points represent the dwelling places of the *kacina* and the sacred center represents “the conceptual center of the village” (Ortiz 1969: 22). Ortiz also notes that “the points at both spatial extremes

are sacred, and it would be fruitless to argue about which is the more so" (1975:185).<sup>12</sup>

### Cosmological Resonances

An underlying principle of this cosmological scheme—that of precise articulation of concentric regions about a unifying center—has its expression in a variety of Pueblo cultural patterns and behaviors: 1) the mediation of Tewa moiety division by individuals who, in accord with prescribed temporal cycles, take on roles that are associated with the “middle of the structure”;<sup>13</sup> 2) the activity of ritual sandpainting in which the priest first sets out delimiting boundaries before working inward from this perimeter toward the center (this practice stands in diametric contrast with Navajo ritual sandpainting in which the ceremonialist works outward from the center of the painting); 3) the convergence of dancers upon the pueblo from the sacred hill at dawn on the day of a ritual game dance; and 4) the process of decorating clay pots in which the potter first measures with fingers about the circumference, then draws in the large-scale outlines of an encompassing pattern, only last adding in detail (Bunzel 1969:49). The painted pottery of the Mimbres, a culture whose florescence during the eighth through twelfth centuries of the Christian era was an important precursor to Pueblo civilization, exemplifies even more explicitly this orientation of proportionately balanced regions about a unifying center (Brody 1983:91, 97; see also Fig. 3).

The principle of articulation about a central point is further expressed in the terminology used and statements made by Pueblo songmakers: 1) names designate vocable formulas that articulate large-scale sections with *katsina* and *katsina*-style songs; 2) identical or cognate forms of the Zuni word *kwayinanne* or “coming out” designate what might be termed “concentric” levels of structure within Zuni *katsina* dance songs; 3) statements by songmakers at Hopi First Mesa, Zuni, and Jémez indicate that the large-scale middle section of a song is the most difficult portion to compose; and 4) my field consultant at Jémez who likens the creating of a song to the fitting together of the pieces of a puzzle—a metaphor which suggests that he, like the Pueblo potter, is aware of the limits that define his endeavor, as well as what sorts of elements are admissible within those limits, before he sets about his task (List 1967:47–51; LaVigna 1980:86, 93; Tedlock 1980:18–23; Humphreys 1983:165).

## **Songs of the Katsina: General and Formal Considerations**

Songs sung to accompany communal dance ceremonies of the katsina type, one of seven categories of song identified by Herzog (1936:299–300), have been acknowledged to form the core of Pueblo ritual music. These ceremonies, in turn, share characteristics when viewed on a geographical east-to-west stylistic continuum: 1) the dances are performed by costumed men who move through a prescribed circuit of pathways and “stations”;<sup>14</sup> 2) the dances are line dances in which the most experienced performers stand strategically and symbolically at the center of the line; and 3) the performers most often accompany themselves with hand-held gourd rattles and leg-worn rattles made from hooves of deer or turtle shells.

Melodic and rhythmic organization of the songs is conditioned by the use of a low tessitura, strong accents, formulaic phrases, interruptions and rhythmic modulations of the basic pulse, and phrases that are comparatively longer than those found in other Pueblo song genres. These features are all apparent in the graphic transcription of a San Juan Turtle Dance song offered in the appendix.

The outsider’s perspective of katsina dance song structure has been limited somewhat by a desire for privacy that attends the performance of these songs in many pueblos. George Herzog, for example, while noting unusually elaborate use of vocable formulas (1936:297), was unable to observe or deduce the fundamental structure of katsina dance songs from items within his sample. George List was early among scholars to identify this structure, describing a generalized pattern for Hopi First Mesa and calling it “a classical art form” by virtue of its balance and restraint (1967:45). More recently, Maria LaVigna (1980) and Nora Yeh (1980) have confirmed the currency of this pattern among the eastern Tewa, while the most detailed examination of this structure and its variants has been offered by Barbara Tedlock (1980). Tedlock gives three distinct classifications within the katsina dance song genre at Zuni:

"Kachina Call"		"Bundle Drum"		"Log Drum"	
A	[aa' cc']	A	[aa' cc']	A	[aa']
A	[aa' cc']	A	[aa' cc']	A	[aa']
B	[bb'aa']	B	[cc']	B	[bb'aa']
B	[bb'aa']	B	[cc']	B	[bb'aa']
A	[aa' cc']	A	[aa' cc']	A	[aa']

Figure 4. Formal structure in three kachina dance song genres at Zuni.  
(B. Tedlock 1980:20)

These analyses illustrate the balance of formal elements as well as the complexity of structure that List first noted for kachina dance songs at Hopi. Useful as they are, however, these representations fail to show adequately the hierarchy of formal organization or the essential role of vocable formulas in delineating the song structure. I have chosen a Turtle Dance song from San Juan Pueblo (recorded in 1969) to illustrate a method of representation that brings these important and, I believe, iconically significant features into sharper relief.

Figure 5 reveals three distinct levels of musical structure within this song. The foreground level is intimately related with the rhythmic/melodic profile of individual phrase groups. These groups are known as "verse," "chorus," and "tail." The intermediate level is articulated by linking formulas that signal the end of each phrase group.<sup>15</sup> The background level is articulated both by delimiting structural formulas and by section markers in which voices are silent and rattles sound alone. Opening formulas at this level of organization are distinct for verse and chorus sections; those of the finishing and verse sections are identical (see appendix, lines a and f). Closing formulas are unvarying. Note that the profile of both opening and closing formulas is primarily rhythmic.

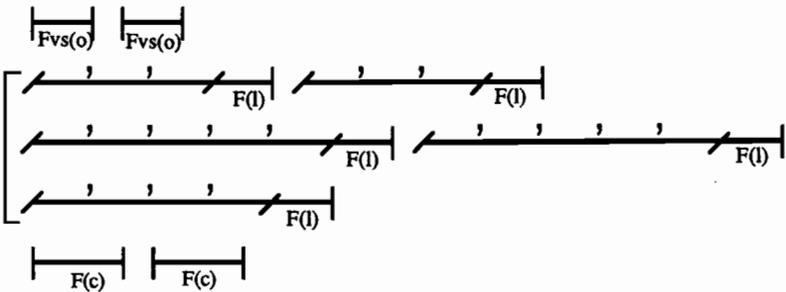
The opening formula for unit statements of the chorus section (line f in the transcription) is more than a vocable utterance: it also signifies, "Listen, I am going to sing or chant something new" (List 1967:45; LaVigna 1980:93), thus contributing to the expectation that accords aesthetic prominence to the middle section of kachina dance songs. In addition to these "kachina growls" that mark off units within the verse, chorus, and finishing sections, instrumental markers set off the large-scale sections themselves.

instrumental marker



unit of Verse Section [VS]  
articulated by  
opening and  
closing formulas  
[Fvs(o), F(c)]

melodic content  
of VS articulated  
by linking  
formulas [F(l)]



Verse Group  
of VS

Chorus Group

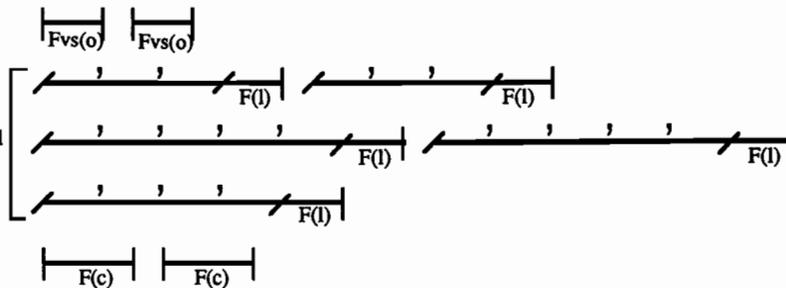
Tail (one  
unit only)

instrumental marker



unit of Chorus Section [CS]  
articulated by  
opening and  
closing formulas  
[Fcs(o), F(c)]

melodic content  
of CS articulated  
by linking  
formulas



Verse Group  
of CS

Chorus Group

Tail

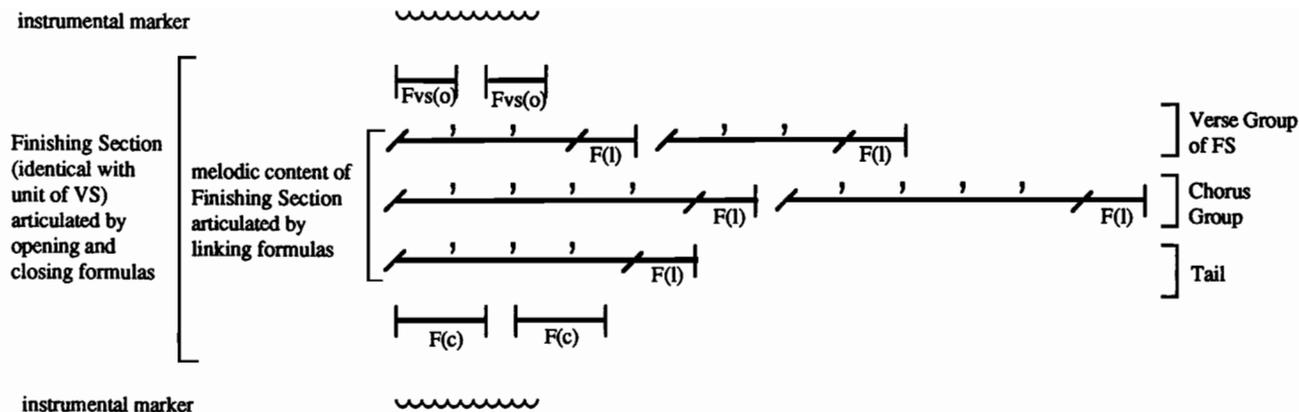


Figure 5. Graphic representation of abbreviated structure (ABA) in a katchina-style song from San Juan Pueblo (Canyon Record, ARP 6065, side A, band 2).

- Legend:
- 1) bold lines bounded on one or both sides by vertical lines indicate formulas.
  - 2) bold lines bounded on both sides by diagonal slashes indicate melodic portion.
  - 3) commas indicate phrase articulation within phrase groups (i.e., "verse," "chorus," and "tail.")

## Interpretation

Pueblo songmakers' use of a variety of vocable formulas and instrumental markers to articulate self-encompassing formal divisions within katchina dance songs, as well as their use of a distinct opening formula to herald an aesthetically prominent central section, prompt me to suggest that their musical organization has iconic significance in relation to cosmological orientation. I suggest further, and by extension, that "centripetal orientation" and the activity of composing songs stand in iconic relationship as well. Songmakers must work "inwards" from large-scale formal requirements through a somewhat more flexible web of prescribed vocable formulas to the melodic content of initial and final sections, only last composing the portion of the song identified as "song's middle" and which songmakers from a number of pueblos acknowledge as "the hardest part" to compose (see, for example, List 1969:51).

Aesthetic prominence of the chorus section or "song's middle" goes hand in hand with aesthetic delight in the return of the melodic content of the verse section that closes the song (B. Tedlock 1986:193).<sup>16</sup> Figure 6 represents both this centripetal process and the cyclic character of katchina dance songs as they are performed in a communal ceremonial context. Nora Yeh succinctly and accurately interprets the resulting AABBA form: "... five is *four plus one*" (1980:119). The shaded region of the graph in figure 6 thus represents an overlapping of the first unit statement of the verse section with the finishing section of the song.<sup>17</sup> What Ortiz describes as a basic Pueblo tendency to combine and balance opposites is clearly evident here in a temporal structure that is at once symmetrical and asymmetrical.<sup>18</sup>

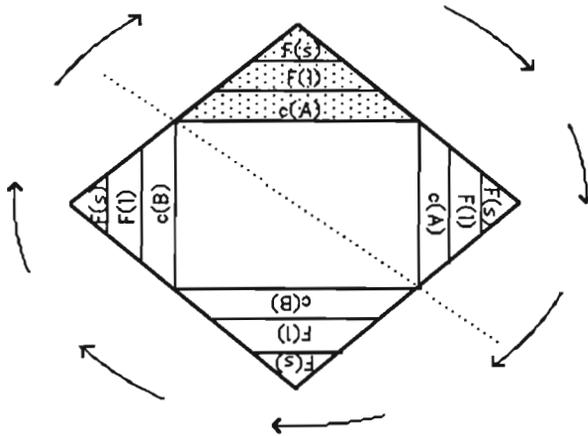


Figure 6. Schematic representation of "concentric" structure in Pueblo katchina-style song. Shaded portion indicates "return" statement of A section; F(s) indicates structural (i.e., opening or closing) formulas; F(l) indicates linking formulas; c(A) and c(B) indicate melodic content of large-scale units within verse and chorus sections, with the diagonal line indicating the distinction between the melodic content of the A and B sections.

Still another interpretation of this structure allows the opening and closing formulas of unit statements within each section to be taken as central rather than outer features of this aural cosmology. As the most archaic and therefore sacred stratum of katchina dance song structure, they can be appropriately identified with the "center of centers" of the temporo-physical cosmos. This enfolding further suggests the meeting and merging of outer with inner sacred domains through which the Pueblos create a metaphor for transcendental reality that is both spiritually compelling and aesthetically satisfying.<sup>19</sup>

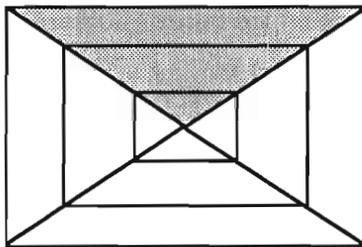


Figure 7. "Enfolding" of Figure 6.

## Conclusion

In his exemplary study of epistemology and text in the *wayang kulit* theater of Java, Alton Becker suggests that a single set of constraints may run through the whole of traditional Javanese cosmology. Becker recognizes that these constraints, when taken together in the aesthetic context of a well-performed *wayang* performance, constitute “a vision of sanity” (1979:241). The Pueblos of the Southwest may provide yet another example of the relatively rare occurrence of such thorough-going coherence within a culture. Homologies of structure in various modalities that obtain in both Javanese and Pueblo socio-cultural spheres suggest a biological analogy with concomitant open system properties that provide for adaptive change. In his description of the activities of growth and learning in living systems, Kenneth Boulding depicts “an inward teacher imposing its form and will on the less-formed [world] around it” (1961:18). This image is a subjective reality that, to the extent that it jibes with a more objective reality, stands the organism or individual in good stead over time. The form and realization of Pueblo katchina dance songs illuminate just such a coherence of inner and outer realities. Taken in its larger social context, it is indeed “a vision of sanity” that serves to sustain and delight the denizens of both heaven and earth.

## Notes

1. This paper is based, in part, upon fieldwork and research carried out through the support of the UCLA Institute of American Cultures. I acknowledge my gratitude to that agency and to the following individuals for their advice, criticism, and encouragement: Charlotte Heth, Timothy Rice, Jihad Racy, Paul Kroskrity, Peter Crossley-Holland, and Steven Blum.

2. Seeger (1980:37), for example, demonstrates that dualism—apparent in many spheres of Suya society and culture—is related to the structure of *akia* song form.

3. This term is mine; I trust it will not be taken amiss by Pueblo-born, university-educated scholars to whom it primarily refers.

4. Sauer (1975:40–41) also compares the region with the eastern Mediterranean where similar conditions were host to successive “layers” of civilizations.

5. See also Cordell (1979:137–142); Brown (1972:71) has gathered evidence that suggests a continuity of ritual and music from this era as well.

6. Tribal affiliation is indicated in parentheses.

7. Sauer appears to have intuited this relationship as an outsider.
8. Temples such as the Javanese Buddhist monument of Borobudur are an example of the latter (Eliade 1974:18).
9. Differing terminologies reflect tribal linguistic variations: *kossa* (Tewa), *kwirana* (Tewa and Eastern Keres), *shiwana* or *kat'sina* (Western Keres), *kacina* (Zuni), and *kachina* (Hopi). Henceforth, I use *kacina*, the Zuni term.
10. In a manner that suggests the more solitary practice of medicine men and shamans (see Lane Deer 1972:164–71), participants in the masked communal dances of the Pueblos are obliged to undergo rituals of purification for many days in advance of the ceremony (Lange 1959:233–36).
11. Similar, though less elaborate, classification schemes have been noted by White (1964:87–88) for Acoma and Ellis (1959:338) for Laguna.
12. Eliade has remarked that “a multiplicity of centers raises no difficulty...for it is not a matter of geometrical space, but of an existential and sacred space” that concerns religious thought (1956:57).
13. Ortiz explains that, without mediation, moiety divisions, such as those of the Tewa, may bring about rivalry and eventual estrangement. Edward Spicer (1962:496–98) has given a succinct account of one such schism in the 1930s at the Tewa Pueblo of San Ildefonso. The taking on of roles by individuals that are “of the middle of the structure” is thus crucial to the mitigating of dualities that might otherwise threaten the socio-ceremonial continuity of the pueblo (Ortiz 1969:134–36).
14. See Kurath (1973:49–60) for “circuit orientation” of Tewa ceremonies.
15. I have not yet elicited a native term for these formulas; they are nevertheless distinct by virtue of their phrase-final placement and their rhythmic-vocable identity. Singers in some Pueblos (e.g. Laguna) employ non-identical formulas within a verse or chorus phrase group; to the ear of a listener trained in Western music, this usage imparts an antecedent-consequent relationship to paired units, otherwise identical, within the group.
16. In the western Pueblos, pitch is consciously modulated upwards for the finishing section, otherwise melodically identical with each of the paired unit statements of the verse section.
17. See Sweet (1983:266) on the “finishing” of ceremonial dances performed away from the pueblo. Yeh (1980:119) notes also the practice of abbreviating the AABBA structure in commercial recordings; the recording cited in this paper is an example.
18. See Tedlock 1986:195; note also the striking resemblance of this diagram with Ortiz’s representation of the principal reference points in the Tewa world given here as figure 1.
19. Bunzel has remarked for Zuni that “public rituals constitute the most important esthetic expression of the people,” and, commenting further, that “if Zuni civilization can be said to have a style, that style is essentially the style of its rituals” (1932a:509).

### References Cited

Bateson, Gregory

1972 *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Becker, Alton L.

1979 "Text Building, Epistemology, and Aesthetics in Javanese Shadow Theater." In *The Imagination of Reality*, eds. A. L. Becker and Aram A. Yengoyan, pp. 211–43. Norwood, N. J.: Ablex.

Becker, Judith

1988 "Earth, Fire, *Sakti*, and the Javanese Gamelan." *Ethnomusicology* 32(3): 385–91.

Becker, Judith and Alton Becker

1981 "A Musical Icon: Power and Meaning in Javanese Gamelan Music." In *The Sign in Music and Literature*, ed. Wendy Steiner, pp. 203–16. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Blacking, John

1972 "Deep and Surface Structure in Venda Music." *Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council* 1: 33–108.

Brody, J. J., Catherine S. Scott, Steven A. LeBlanc, and

Tony Berlant

1983 "Mimbres Painting." In *Mimbres Pottery: Ancient Art of the American Southwest*, ed. J. J. Brody, pp. 69–127. New York: American Federation of Arts.

Brown, Donald N.

1972 "Evidence for Dance from the Prehistoric Southwest." In *New Dimensions in Dance Research: Anthropology and Dance—The American Indian*, ed. Tamara Comstock, pp. 263–84. CORD research annual no. 6. New York: Committee for Research on Dance.

Bunzel, Ruth L.

1932a "Zuni Origin Myths." In *Forty-seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology for the Years 1929-30*, pp. 467-544. Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian.

1932b "Zuni Kachinas." In *Forty-seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology for the Years 1929-30*, pp. 837-1086. Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian.

1969 *The Pueblo Potter: A Study in Creative Imagination in Primitive Art*. New York: AMS Press.

Cordell, Linda S.

1979 "Prehistory: Eastern Anasazi." In *Handbook of North American Indians*, v. 8: *Southwest*, ed. Alfonso Ortiz, pp. 131-151. Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian.

Dozier, Edward

1970 *The Pueblo Indians of North America*. New York: Holt, Reinhart, and Winston.

Dutton, Bertha P.

1936 "Hopi Dance of the Jémez Indians." *Research* 1: 70-84.

1957 "Indian Artistry in Wood and Other Media." *El Palacio* 64: 3-28.

Eggan, Fred and T. N. Pandey

1979 "Zuni History, 1850-1970." In *Handbook of North American Indians*, v. 8: *Southwest*, ed. Alfonso Ortiz, pp. 474-81. Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian.

Eliade, Mircea

1956 *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

## Form as Cosmology

- 1954 *The Myth of the Eternal Return [Cosmos and History]*, trans. Willard R. Trask. Bollingen Series, no. 46. Princeton N. J.: Princeton University Press

Ellis, Florence Hawley

- 1959 "An Outline of Laguna Pueblo History and Social Organization." *Southwest Journal of Anthropology* 15: 325-47.

Feld, Steven

- 1984 "Sound Structure as Social Structure." *Ethnomusicology* 28(3): 383-409.

Herndon, Marcia

- 1980 "Fox, Owl, and Raven." *Selected Reports in Ethnomusicology* 3(2): 175-192.

Herzog, George

- 1936 "A Comparison of Pueblo and Pima Musical Styles." *Journal of American Folklore* 48: 283-417.

Humphreys, Paul

- 1983 "The Tradition of Song Renewal among the Pueblo Indians of the Southwest United States." M.A. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles.

- 1984 "The Borrowing and Adapting of Songs among the Pueblo Indians of the Southwest United States." *Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology* 1: 29-56.

Kurath, Gertrude P. with Antonia Garcia

- 1973 *Music and Dance of the Tewa Pueblos*. Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press.

Lame Deer, John (Fire) and Richard Erdoes

- 1972 *Lame Deer: Seeker of Visions*. New York: Washington Square Press.

Lange, Charles H.

- 1957 "Corn Dances of the Rio Grande Pueblos." *Texas Journal of Science* 9: 59-74.

- 1959 *Cochiti: A New Mexico Pueblo, Past and Present*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Lange, Charles H. and Carroll L. Riley, eds.  
 1970 *The Southwest Journals of Adolf F. Bandolier, Volume Two: 1883–84*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- LaVigna, Maria  
 1980 "Okushare, Music for a Winter Ceremony: The Turtle Dance of San Juan Pueblo." *Selected Reports in Ethnomusicology* 3(2): 77–100.
- List, George  
 1968 "The Hopi as Composer and Poet." In *Proceedings of Centennial Workshop in Ethnomusicology*, ed. Peter Crossley-Holland, pp. 43–53. Vancouver: Government of the Province of British Columbia.
- Lomax, Alan  
 1968 *Folk Song Style and Culture*. New Brunswick, N. J.: Transaction Books.
- McAllester, David P.  
 1954 *Enemy Way Music*. Papers of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology 41(5). Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Merriam, Alan P.  
 1964 *The Anthropology of Music*. Chicago: Northwestern University Press.  
 1977 "Definitions of 'Comparative Musicology' and 'Ethnomusicology.'" *Ethnomusicology* 21(3): 189–204.
- Nettl, Bruno  
 1983 *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Twenty-nine Issues and Concepts*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

## Form as Cosmology

Ortiz, Alfonso

1969 *The Tewa World: Space, Time, Being, and Becoming in a Pueblo Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

1972 "Ritual Drama and the Pueblo World View." In *New Perspectives on the Pueblos*, ed. Alfonso Ortiz, pp. 135–161. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

1975 "The Tewa World View." In *Teachings of the American Earth*, pp. 179–89. See Tedlock and Tedlock (1975).

Ortiz, Simon

1977 *A Good Journey*. Berkeley, Calif.: Turtle Island.

Roberts, Helen H.

1923 "Chakwena Songs of Zuni and Laguna." *Journal of American Folklore* 36: 177–84.

Roseman, Marina

1984 "The Social Structuring of Sound: The Temiar of Peninsular Malaysia." *Ethnomusicology* 28(3): 411–445.

Sando, Joe S.

1976 *The Pueblo Indians*. San Francisco: The Indian Historical Press.

Sauer, Carl O.

1975 "Man and Nature in the Southwest (General Remarks)." *New World Journal* 1: 37–47.

Seeger, Anthony

1980 "Sing for Your Sister: The Structure and Performance of *Suya Akia*." In *The Ethnography of Musical Performance*, eds. Norma McLeod and Marcia Herndon, pp. 7–42. Norwood, Pa.: Norwood Editions.

- Silko Leslie M.  
1977 *Ceremony*. New York: Viking Press.
- Spicer, Edward  
1976 *Cycles of Conquest: The Impact of Spain, Mexico, and the United States on the Indians of the Southwest, 1533–1960*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
- Sweet, Jill Drayson  
1983 "Ritual and Theater in Tewa Ceremonial Performances." *Ethnomusicology* 27(2): 253–69.
- Tedlock, Barbara  
1980 "Songs of the Zuni Kachina Society." In *Southwestern Indian Ritual Drama*, ed. Charlotte Frisbie, pp. 7–35. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.  
  
1986 "Crossing the Sensory Domains in American Indian Aesthetics." In *Explorations in Ethnomusicology: Essays in Honor of David P. McAllester*, ed. Charlotte Frisbie, pp. 187–95. Detroit: Information Coordinators.
- Tedlock, Dennis and Barbara Tedlock  
1975 *Teachings of the American Earth*. New York: Liveright.
- Tolbert, Elizabeth  
1987 "'On Beyond Zebra:' Some Theoretical Considerations of Emotion and Meaning in Music." *Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology* 4: 75–97.
- Waters, Frank  
1950 *Masked Gods: Navajo and Pueblo Ceremonials*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- White, Leslie  
1930 *Bureau of American Ethnology Annual Report for 1929–30*. Pages 23–192 reprinted as *The Acoma Indians*, 1973. Glorieta, N. M.: Rio Grande Press.

## Form as Cosmology

- 1964 "The World of the Keresan Pueblo Indians." In *Primitive Views of the World*, ed. S. Diamond, pp. 83–94. New York: Columbia University Press.

Whorf, Benjamin Lee

- 1975 "An American Indian Model of the Universe." In *Teachings of the American Earth*, pp. 121–129. See Tedlock and Tedlock (1975).

Yeh, Nora

- 1980 "The Pogonshare Ceremony of the Tewa San Juan, New Mexico." *Selected Reports in Ethnomusicology* 3(2): 101–45.

## Recording Cited

*Pueblo Indian Songs from San Juan.*

- 1969 Performed by Peter V. Aguino, Juan J. Aguino, Carpio Trujillo, Joe M. Abeyta, and Diego Aguino. Canyon Records, ARP 6065.

## Appendix

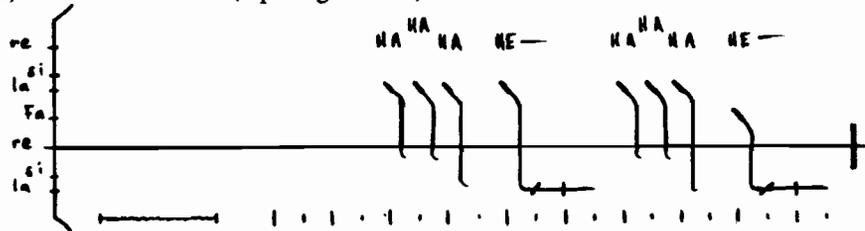
### Melodic/Rhythmic Profile of San Juan Turtle Dance

The following transcription represents the melodic-rhythmic profile of the phrases and vocable formulas in the San Juan Turtle Dance Song analyzed in figure 5. Each formula that articulates large-scale structure appears on an independent time-pitch system. Each formula that occurs in association with a melodic phrase appears on the same time-pitch system as that phrase. Chanting syllables are transcribed only at those points within each system at which the melody becomes formulaic. Time-pitch systems are lettered sequentially.

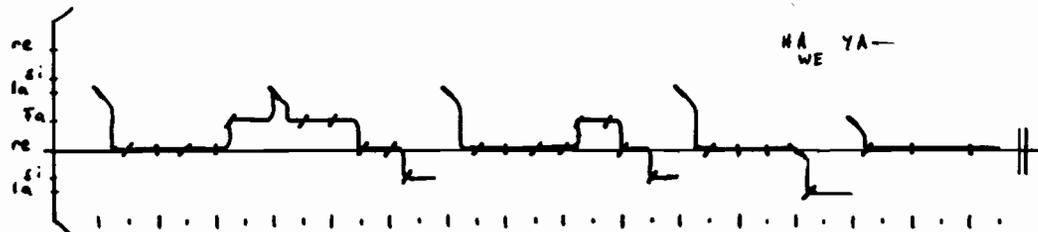
Conventions observed within the graph transcription:

- (1) time is measured along a horizontal axis;
- (2) pitch is measured along a vertical axis;
- (3) pulse markers below the horizontal axis represent patterns of accompaniment played by rattles and a rawhide bundle; cross-rhythms and implied pulses are indicated, when they occur, in parentheses;
- (4) solfège syllables to the left of the vertical axis represent pitch relationships within and suggest the "scale" of the song;
- (5) forward-tilted diagonal slashes (/) represent articulations of pitches and vocables (note that this usage differs from that in figure 5);
- (6) back-tilted slashes (\) represent accented articulations of indeterminate pitch;
- (7) vertical slashes (|) represent vocal pulsation with focus on a single pitch;
- (8) a bold line represents the melodic path; and
- (9) letters above the bold line (when they appear) represent vocables; dashes indicate melismas.

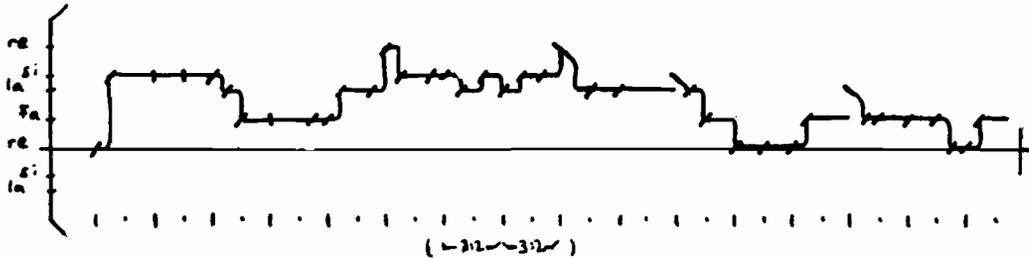
a) instrumental marker; opening formula, VS



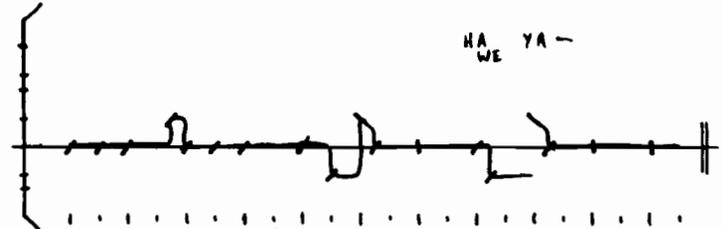
b) unit, verse group, VS [with f(l)]



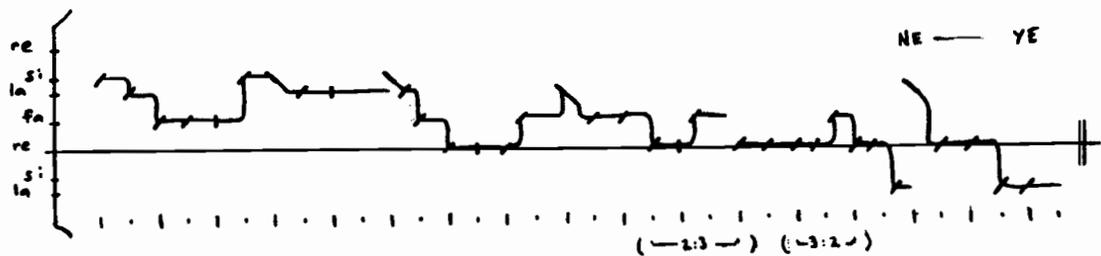
c) unit, chorus group, VS [with f(l)]



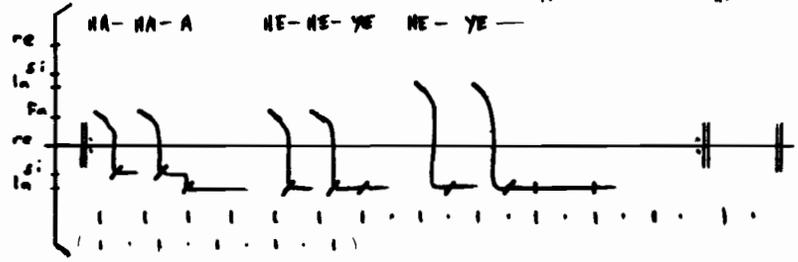
c) continued



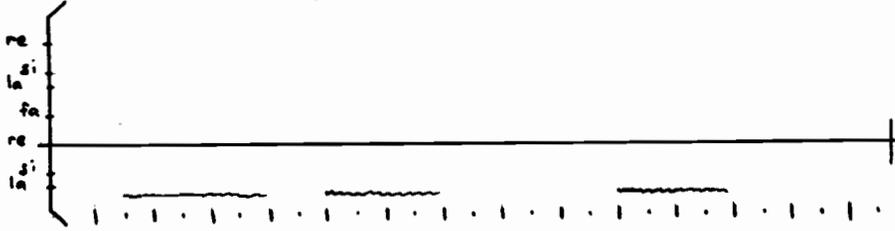
d) tail [with f(l)]



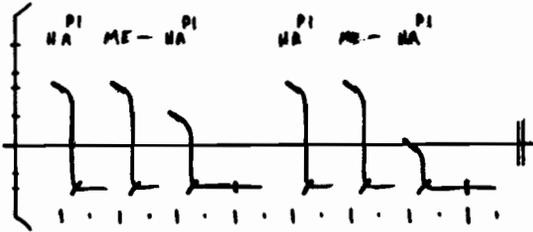
e) closing formula



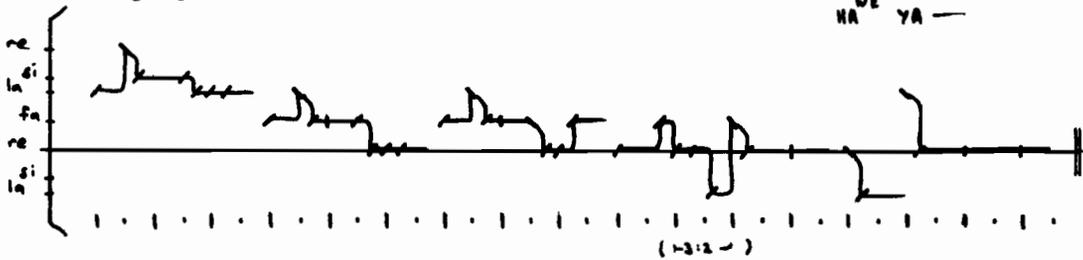
f) instrumental marker; opening formula, CS ( HA-PI-ME)



f) continued



g) unit, verse group, CS [with f(1)]



## Gong Forging in Bogor, West Java: The Process through Its Soundscape<sup>1</sup>

Sue Carole DeVale

Several studies have discussed gong making in Central Java (Jacobson and van Hasselt 1907; Simbriger 1939; Kunst 1973:136–141; Scott-Kemball 1976; Suhastjarja and Soeroso 1986).<sup>2</sup> These have centered on the manufacturing processes in Semarang, Surakarta and Yogyakarta (fig. 1). Little attention has been paid to gong making in West Java (Sunda). Further, none of these studies mention the sound of the iron-headed hammers used to pound and shape bronze into gongs. In the gongsmithy of Pak Sukarna<sup>3</sup> at Bogor, West Java, as is true elsewhere in Java, each hammer has its own pitch which rings out clearly as its iron head strikes the heated metal being forged and, when used by two, three or four smiths, they are heard as interlocking melodious patterns.<sup>4</sup> The sound of these hammers adds a musical quality to the soundscape of the gong-making process, and thus, to the observer, the hammers seem to serve as “music instruments” in an unusual instrumental “work song.”<sup>5</sup>

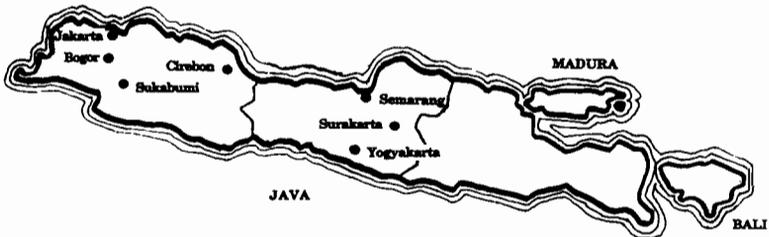


Figure 1. Map of the islands of Java, Madura and Bali.  
From left to right on Java: West Java or Sunda, Central Java, and East Java.

The purpose of this paper, therefore, in addition to pointing out the acoustic phenomenon of the hammers *per se*, is to use that soundscape to analyze and describe aspects of the gong-making process at Bogor. The soundscape provides sonic evidence of the intense, laborious nature of gong forging, a process made more

## Gong Forging/Soundscape

accurate, efficient and, perhaps, even more pleasant by the musical qualities of the hammers.

The major difference in gong making between Central Java and West Java is one of metaphysical conception, and not of fundamental manufacturing process. While making large gongs, Central Javanese gong makers assume the names, and thereby the mystical protection, of important figures in the Panji epic (Kunst 1973:137–139). In Bogor, West Java, at the smithy of Pak Sukarna (photo 1), there is no assumption of names, and gong making is simply regarded as a highly respected and specialized craft.<sup>6</sup>

In 1948, Kunst (1973:136–37) estimated there were thirty-one active gongsmithies in West, Central and East Java. At that time in West Java, there were nine smiths with forges in Cirebon, Sukabumi and Bogor (then called Buitenzorg). In 1977, Pak Sukarna believed that, in all of Java, only two gamelan factories remained that produced gongs: his in West Java and that of Empu Reksowiguno<sup>7</sup> in Surakarta, Central Java.<sup>8</sup>

Begun by Pak Pangarang in the early nineteenth century, gong making in the gamelan factory in Bogor has been carried on by successive generations of his family through Budin, Nasimin, Jakim (listed in Kunst 1973:137, n. 1), and Jupri to Sukarna. Pak Sukarna's son does not wish to carry on the trade, and gong making will cease at Bogor if Pak Sukarna does not find a successor. Ernst Heins reported that, in 1979, Pak Sukarna still had no successor and remained reluctant to let the factory pass out of the family, but that he still had twelve workers and business was booming. Anne Rasmussen, a UCLA Ph.D. candidate, returned from Java in early 1989 with videotape footage of the factory, the most recent confirmation that the factory is fully active and business continues to thrive.

All the bronze sounding parts as well as stands, resonators, and drums for both *gamelan salendro-pelog* (large ensembles) and *gamelan degung* (small chamber ensembles) are made at Pak Sukarna's smithy. In addition to making gamelans, especially *gamelan degung* which is his primary business, he makes souvenir instruments to sell to the many tourists who make the trip from Jakarta. These consist of small bronze gongs, 50 cm. or 22 cm. in diameter, each on its own stand festooned with intertwined *naga* (mythological serpents with elaborate headdresses) and complete with padded hammer; individual *saron* (metallophones with bronze keys); and small three-kettle *bonang* sets (gong chime).<sup>9</sup> Pak Sukarna reported that the gong output of the factory was six *bonang* kettles per day, and three small *goong* in two days or two large

*goong* in three days.<sup>10</sup> On October 3, 1977, I watched, heard, photographed, and recorded the simultaneous forging processes of a *goong* and a *bonang* kettle which would become, respectively, 71 cm. and approximately 18 cm. in diameter.

### The Smithy at Bogor

There is no uncertainty that one has arrived at the right place. Sitting in the shade in front of the factory, workers busily whittle and carve stands and resonators. Immediately across the winding street called "Jalan Pancasan," in front of Pak Sukarna's house, others are sanding and finishing resonators or resting in the shade, while the stockpile visible through the window of his house behind them testifies to the number of instruments constructed there (photo 2). In another large room in the front of his house, Pak Sukarna stores the raw metals to be melted together to make bronze, an alloy of three parts by weight of copper to one part of Bangka tin.<sup>11</sup> Next to them are stacked rows of finished *bonang* kettles (photo 3). The outsides of some of the *bonang* kettles are completely polished, on others, a choice of the customer and less expensive, the sides remain fire-blackened or sometimes only the boss is polished. Across the room are completed gongs and gong stands of different sizes and finishes (photo 4). Gong stands are left natural or stained to either a medium or dark walnut opaque finish.

To arrive at the main entrance to the factory, one walks along a narrow path lined with baskets of charcoal wrapped in banana leaves (photo 5), the charcoal ready to be used for all the heating processes required in the making of bronze alloy and the forging of gongs. Upon entering the one-room factory, which measures only 16 m. long, 7 m. wide, and 8 m. tall, one is immediately overwhelmed by the intense heat essential to gong forging. On one of the woven-bamboo walls hangs a sign proclaiming *Bengkel Gamelan Djupri* ("The Gamelan Workshop of Jupri"), the trademark of Sukarna's father. Empty baskets, their charcoal consumed by the fires, are piled nearly to the rafters. A fire extinguisher acts as a twentieth-century reminder that one must be ready to hurriedly climb the traditional bamboo ladder to quench the fires whenever sparks set the naked rafters ablaze.

The factory accommodates the simultaneous forging of *bonang* kettles and *goong*. Each process has its own crew lead by a head smith who is responsible for one of the most critical aspects of gong making: heating the gong or kettle to just the right tem-

## Gong Forging/Soundscape

perature for hammering and deciding when it needs to be returned to the fire for reheating. Dug out of the earthen floor are two fire pits: a small one for *bonang* heating and a large one for the *goong*. Close to each fire pit is another pit filled with muddy water to cool and temper red-hot gongs either when their forging is entirely completed or at the end of a day's forging if a *goong* is not finished; a gong cannot be allowed to cool in the air or it will crack.<sup>12</sup>

The *bonang* kettle is made in one corner of the small factory by a crew of four men (photo 6): one bellows operator, a head smith, and a team of two other smiths who hammer the kettle while it is carefully turned in tiny increments after each strike by the head smith using tongs. The head smith's action controls the specific area of the kettle that is hammered by each strike, making certain that each new strike falls just inside the mark left by the preceding one.

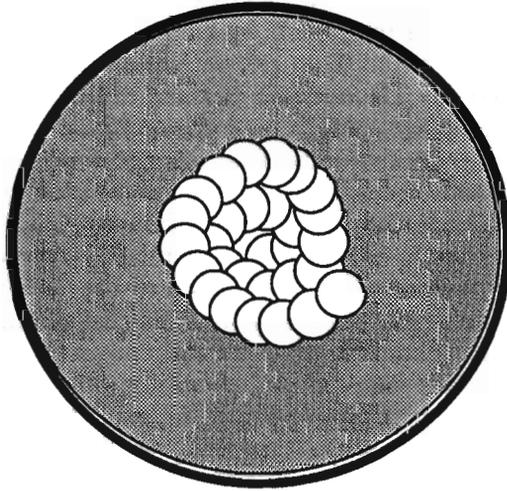


Figure 2. Schematic showing the counterclockwise, overlapping hammering of a metal disc being forged into a *goong*.

The forging of the *goong* occupies more than half of the room and requires a crew of eight men. The *goong* crew is also lead by a head smith who, like that of the *bonang* crew, controls and judges the temperature of the *goong* solely by its color and brightness (photo 7). One worker's function is to place the *goong* into the fire pit for heating and to pull it out again when the head smith signals it is ready (photo 8), placing the *goong* once again on the stone anvil for forging. A team of four other smiths hammer the

*goong*, while again it is turned by the head smith (photo 9). The last two members of the crew are the bellows operators, sitting behind a low mud wall for protection from the heat and flying sparks. During the heating of the *goong*, these two men constantly feed air to the huge coal fire to keep it at peak temperature (photo 10). In both crews, half the men from the hammering teams continue to work feverishly during the minute or two that the gongs are being reheated; they hasten to a corner of the forge to scrape and polish the bosses and sides of finished, but still fire-blackened, kettles and gongs (photo 11).

Gongs are hammered counterclockwise in a spiral, beginning with a small area at the center of the heated bronze mass that is being forged into a gong (fig. 2). Thus the lead forger is on the right end of the team in both photos 6 and 9. In the order of hammering, from right to left in photo 9, the four smiths who forge the *goong*, as reported by Heins, are called 1) *bas pake*, the "leader," 2) *penengah*, the "middle one," 3) *pemantu*, the "helper," and 4) *penimpung*, "the beater."

In the performance of their work, all the smiths hold the handle of the hammers with both hands, their right hands closest to the head of the hammer. They differ, however, in their stances. On the *goong* forging team, the leader, and each of the next two team members, stands with his right foot forward, the last smith to strike (the farthest left in photo 9) stands with his left foot forward. Similarly, the leader of the two *bonang* smiths stands with his right foot forward; the other smith (on his left in photo 6), with his left foot forward.<sup>13</sup>

### The Hammers Used in the Gong-forging Process

Ernst Heins learned from Pak Sukarna that the four hammers used to forge the *goong* are all the same weight: seven kilograms. For balance, on each hammer, the exposed end of the wood handle is the same length as the iron head: forty centimeters. Pak Sukarna added that their identical weights and dimensions are essential to insure the even thickness of the gongs. The handle is inserted into a hole in the iron head and forms a right angle with it; the heads of most hammers are squared at the ends where the handles are inserted and taper, each by varying degrees, to round toward the striking end (fig. 3 and photo 9). The hammers for the *bonang* forging are lighter in weight and smaller, but their handles and heads are identically proportioned (photo 6). Pak Sukarna stated

that, through their individual pitches and volume, the hammers help to “keep the rhythm straight and the strikes even” in force.<sup>14</sup>

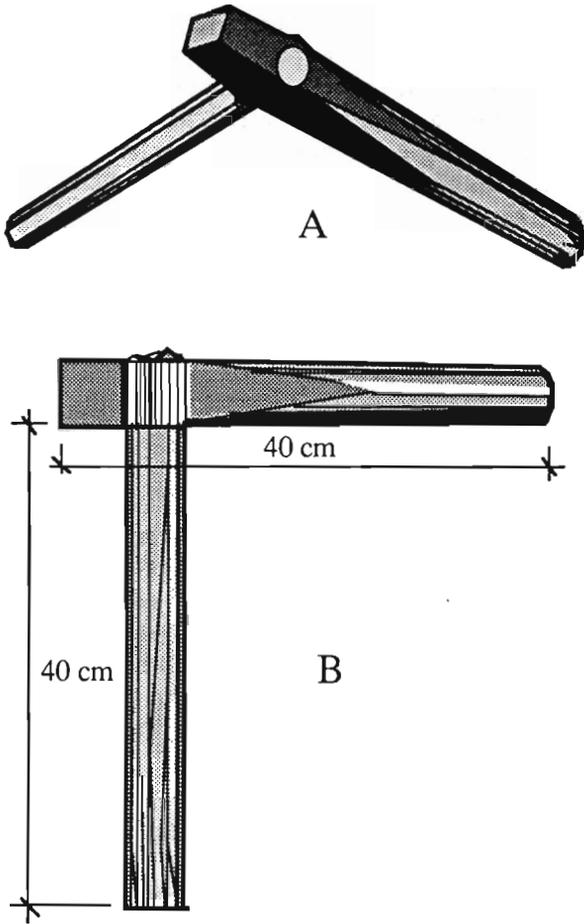


Figure 3. Renderings of a hammer used to forge a *goong* at Bogor. A. Perspective showing the shape of the iron head. B. Profile showing the corresponding lengths of iron head and wood handle.

While this study is the first to center on the melodious sound of hammers in the gong-forging process, it is not, by any means, the first time that the use of ringing hammers with individual pitches has been observed in a smithy. Perhaps the most famous is the legend that Pythagorus discovered the mathematical proportions of music from the sound and weight of hammers used in an iron forge in the sixth century B.C.<sup>15</sup> Although Pythagorus’s

writings have not survived, the legend is related in Nichomachus's *Harmonikon Enchiridion*, written about 100 A. D.:

Once upon a time, while pondering with intense calculation whether it might be possible to devise some kind of instrumental aid for the ears which would be firm and unerring ... by a miraculous chance, he [Pythagorus] walked by a smithy and heard the hammers beating out iron on the anvil and giving off the sounds that are the most harmonious in combination with one another, except for one pair. He recognized among them the consonance of the octave, the fifth and the fourth. But he perceived that the interval between the fourth and the fifth was dissonant in itself, but was otherwise complementary to the greater of these two consonances. Delighted, therefore, since it was as if his purpose was being accomplished by a god, he ran into the smithy and found by various experiments that the difference of sound was consistent with the weight of the hammers, but not with the force of the blows, nor with the shape of the hammers, nor the alteration of the iron being forged. Taking precise note of the weights of the hammers and their downward momentum, which was identical, he departed to his home. (translated in Levin 1975:70)

In discussing the mathematical proportions of Pythagorean intervals in 1708, Johann Gottfried Walther (1955:79–80), reported that the four hammers Pythagorus heard weighed 12, 9, 8, and 6 pounds. The intervals between the first and heaviest hammer and the others were, respectively, what Pythagorus later defined as a pure fourth (ratio 4:3), a pure fifth (ratio 3:2), and an octave (ratio 2:1): the intervals they sounded given the same ratio as their weight relationships. The interval between the fourth and the fifth, a major second, was assigned the ratio 9:8, corresponding to the weights of the two hammers that sounded the fourth (9 lbs.) and the fifth (8 lbs.) with the heaviest hammer.

While the basic phenomenon of hammers with individual pitches are identical in the Pythagorean legend and in Java, there is a significant difference between the hammers Pythagorus purportedly studied and these at Bogor, both in their weights and the intervals between their pitches. Most notably, the four hammers used for gong forging at Bogor all weigh the same but still sound different pitches.

Many factors besides weight can determine the pitch of metal sonorous objects. For example, the pitches of the keys of the three *saron* (seven-key metallophones) family members in Field Museum's 1893 Sundanese gamelans span three octaves, but all the keys are nearly identical in weight. Their individual pitches are the

result of differences in overall shape including their length, width, and thickness (Savage, DeVale, and Kottick 1979).<sup>16</sup> Conversely, in other gamelans, like UCLA's Central Javanese gamelan, Kyai Mendhung ("venerable dark cloud"),<sup>17</sup> the keys of the three *saron* family members may differ in all of these factors, including weight, and in no case is any single factor in direct proportion to the differences in their pitches. It would have indeed been a "miraculous" coincidence for the hammers Pythagorus supposedly heard and weighed to have sounded those particular pitches. Nevertheless, it is possible, and I find it delightful to think that the ancient mathematical proportions for interval structure in Western music may have derived from the alchemy and mystery-shrouded art of metal forging.

Unlike the Pythagorean legend, I do not wish to imply that the intervallic proportions of any Sundanese or Javanese scale derives from the pitches of hammers used in the gong-forging process. In fact, the pitches of the hammers used at Bogor are not meant to fit into any particular scale; they do not have to be any specific pitch, only different enough so that each hammer in a set has a pitch far enough apart from the others as to be clearly distinguishable. The combined pitches fall within a relatively narrow range. In fact, the pitches of the sets of hammers discussed throughout this paper fall within the outer limits of a third, a fourth, a fifth and a sixth. Those of Pak Sukarna have the widest intervals between them and thus, in combination, sound the most melodious, at least to me.

The tuning of the individual pitches results from the process of making the hammers themselves: slight differences in the placement of the handle along the iron head, which alters the length of the vibrating end, or variations in width or the rate of tapering of the head (akin to the shaping of a *saron* key), will cause them to sound different pitches. Differences in the shape of the heads, in the placement of the handles and in the resulting vibrating length of the heads are clearly evident in the two hammers used to forge the *bonang* kettles (fig. 4).

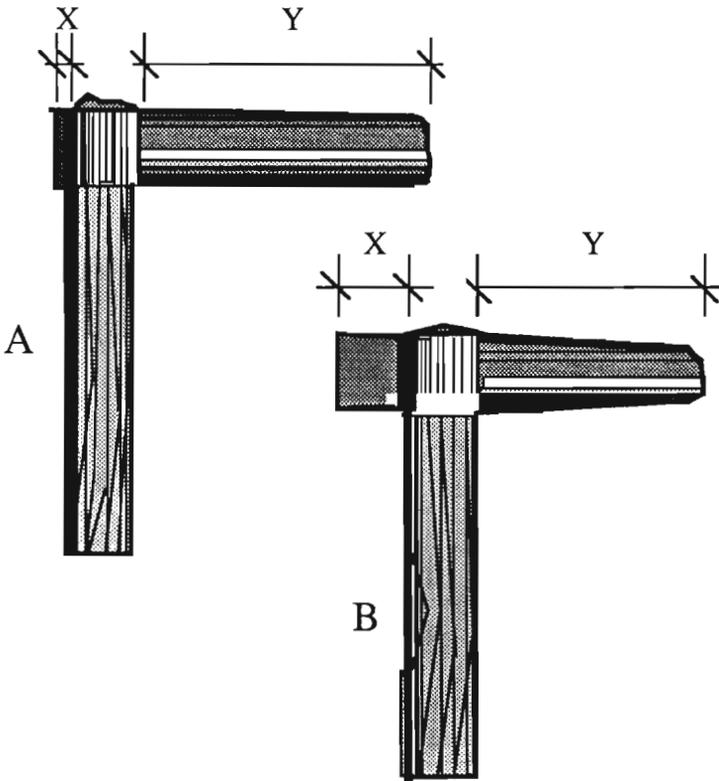


Figure 4. Profile renderings of the two hammers used to forge *bonang* kettles at Bogor, emphasizing differences in the placement of the handles ( $x$ ) and in the resulting length of the vibrating ends ( $y$ ), and demonstrating the variation in the shape of the heads. A. The leader's hammer. B. The other hammer.

Their pitches, measured with a Korg WT 12 tuner, are shown below, with the leader's hammer first. All the iron hammers all the smiths used are of high frequency. Most of the pitches bend upward immediately after the strike, most probably due to a tone

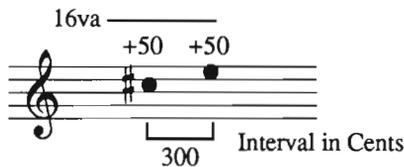


Figure 5. The pitches of the hammers in the *bonang* forging.

## Gong Forging/Soundscape

cluster that exists at strike and then resolves quickly to a single pitch.<sup>18</sup> This tone cluster, along with their rapid decay, makes them difficult to measure.

The hammers used by the four *goong* smiths in 1977 have their own set of pitches. They are given in the order used, beginning with that of the leader (fig. 6). In spite of the dramatic differences in size and weight between the two sets of hammers (the *bonang* hammers are about half the size of the *goong* hammers), the pitches of both sets are in the same range, with the first two *goong* hammers being close in pitch to the *bonang* hammers. Thus, when the two teams forge simultaneously, the first two *goong* hammers interlock with those used to forge the *bonang* kettle.

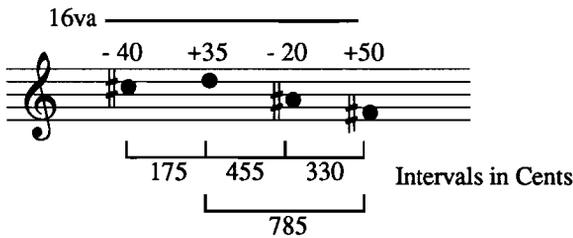


Figure 6. The pitches of the hammers in the 1977 *goong* forging.

When Heins visited the smithy again in 1979, he also recorded an excerpt of the gong-forging process. At that time, only a *goong* was being forged and the pitches of the hammers differed entirely from those recorded in 1977, although they were within the same range. Obviously, an entirely different set of hammers was being used, and the melodic pattern resulting from their use varied in contour from those on my recording. The pitches of the hammers Heins recorded are given below in the order used.<sup>19</sup>

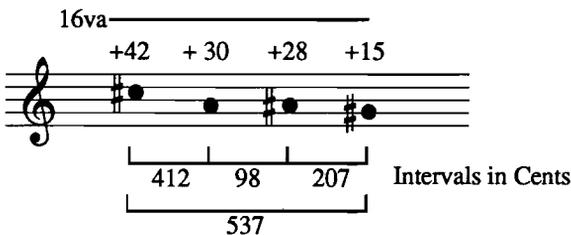


Figure 7. The pitches of the hammers in the 1979 *goong* forging.

## The Gong-forging Process through Its Soundscape

The texture of the sounds in the smithy at Bogor consists of a blend of the same sounds that have been heard there for nearly two hundred years along with twentieth-century intrusions. The melodic patterns of the hammering by the *bonang* and *goong* forging teams are heard individually or in randomly syncopated combinations, never twice the same. Their silences are filled by the whishing of the bellows; the scraping of fire-blackened gongs; the hard, clanking, toneless sound of the cold hammering used to tune completed gongs; the planing and sanding of wood resonators and stands; the songs of birds; and children playing nearby. Nowadays the occasional crescendo-decrescendo of a passing motor scooter or the blaring of an automobile horn contributes to the soundscape.

In order to document the intense laboriousness of gong making and to provide an outline for a description of that process through its sounds, particularly those of the tuned hammers, I have organized the statistics derived from my analyses of my recording (1977) and that of Ernst Heins (1979) as tables 1 and 2, respectively. The following discussion will be based primarily on my recording with information from Heins's used for comparison or to point out other aspects of the process not exemplified on mine.

During the seventeen-minute segment that I recorded, the *bonang* kettle was fired and then forged in hammering sequences twenty-one times; the *goong*, eleven. While the density (speed) of the *bonang* team's hammering stayed fairly constant within each sequence, that of the *goong* team actually increased slightly during each sequence; thus the density per second and the metronome markings, especially for the *goong* team, are postulated as averages on the tables.

The first and second hammering sequences on table 1 are transcribed below as figures 8 and 9. Artificial bar lines and note stems, to separate and delineate the melodic pattern for each cycle of the hammering, and metronome markings, to approximate the speed or density of the hammering, have been added. The transcription of sequence 1, the first hammering of the *goong* during that period, is shown as figure 8. The role of the leader in setting the pace is evident in the first two cycles of the sequence. In the first cycle of hammering, he is assisted by the second smith; in the second cycle, the third smith enters the pattern. Finally in the third cycle, the pattern is firmly established and all four smiths participate. The phenomenon of the leader setting the pace is also evident in Heins's recording.

Table 1. Statistics on the usage of tuned hammers in gong forging at Bogor, analyzed from the 1977 recording by DeVale.

Hammering sequence	Time <sup>1</sup> hammering begins	Goong being hammered	Time elapsed since last <i>bonang</i> hammering	Duration <sup>2</sup> of <i>bonang</i> hammering	No. of cycles/pulses per sequence	Density per minute (MM)	Time elapsed since last <i>goong</i> hammering	Duration of <i>goong</i> hammering	No. of cycles/pulses per sequence	Density per minute (MM)
1	0:02.0	<i>Goong</i>					0:00.0	16"	9/36 <sup>3</sup>	135
2	0:33.5	<i>Bonang</i>	0:00.0	12"	13/26 <sup>4</sup>	130				
3#	1:24.5	"	0:51.0	13"	14.5/29	134				
4#	1:29.5	<i>Goong</i>					1:27.5	22"	14/56	153
5	2:12.0	<i>Bonang</i>	0:47.0	13"	15/30	138				
6#	3:30.0	"	0:78.0	14"	15/30	129				
7#	3:31.0	<i>Goong</i>					2:01.5	20"	13/52	156
8	3:57.0	<i>Bonang</i>	0:27.0	11"	14.5/29	158				
9	4:35.5	<i>Goong</i>					0:64.5	21"	15/60	171
10	4:59.5	<i>Bonang</i>	0:62.5	13"	16.5/33	152				
11	5:49.0	"	0:49.5	15"	19.5/39	156				
12	6:12.0	<i>Goong</i>					1:36.5	21"	14/56	160
13	6:46.5	<i>Bonang</i>	0:57.5	14"	20.5/41	176				
14#	8:11.0	"	1:24.5	17"	19/38	134				
15#	8:14.0	<i>Goong</i>					2:02.0	19"	16/64	202
16	8:36.5	<i>Bonang</i>	0:25.5	17"	18.5/37	131				

17	8:59.0	<i>Goong</i>					0:45.0	19"	18/72	227
18	9:28.0	<i>Bonang</i>	0:51.5	15"	16.5/33	132				
19#	10:09.5	<i>Goong</i>					1:10.5	16"	16/64	240
20#	10:16.0	<i>Bonang</i>	0:48.0	16"	18.5/37	139				
21	11:06.0	"	0:50.0	13"	16/32	148				
22	11:22.0	"	0:16.0	9"	10/20	133				
23	12:36.0	"	1:14.5	11" *	15/30	164				
24	12:55.0	<i>Goong</i>					2:45.5	22"	13/52	142
25	13:18.0	<i>Bonang</i>	0:41.5	9" *	12/24	160				
26	13:58.0	"	0:40.0	9"	12/24	160				
27#	14:44.5	<i>Goong</i>					1:49.5	17"	9/36	127
28#	14:47.0	<i>Bonang</i>	0:49.0	13" *	16/32	148				
29	15:32.0	"	0:45.0	10"	13/26	156				
30#	16:06.0	<i>Goong</i>					1:21.5	16"	9/36	133
31#	16:15.0	<i>Bonang</i>	0:43.0	11"	15/30	164				
32	16:56.0	"	0:41.0	10"	14/28	168				
Tape ends	17:11.0									

Notes: 1. Rounded to the nearest half-second. 2. Duration of *bonang* and *goong* hammering rounded to the nearest second.  
3. Four hammers were used for all the *goong* hammering cycles, thus this sequence of 36 pulses consisted of 9 hammering cycles.  
4. Two hammers were used during all the *bonang* hammering sequences, thus this sequence of 26 pulses consisted of 13 hammering cycles. # Consecutive sequences marked with this symbol overlap one another. \* Duration of pattern as indicated, but hammering sequence was actually 2" longer consisting 3 additional taps by the lead smith only.

Table 2. Statistics on the usage of tuned hammers in gong forging at Bogor, analyzed from the 1979 recording by Heins.

Hammering sequence	Time <sup>1</sup> <i>goong</i> hammering begins	Time elapsed since last hammering	Duration <sup>2</sup> of <i>goong</i> hammering	No. of cycles/pulses per sequence	Density per minute (MM)
1	0:33.5	0:00.0	14"	8/32 <sup>3</sup>	140
2	1:24.5	0:51.0	13"	8/32	145
3	2:20.0	0:55.5	18"	11/44	147
4	3:22.0	1:02.0	14"	9/36	156
5	4:25.0	1:03.0	17"	12/48	171
6	5:34.0	1:09.0	13"	9/36	163
7	7:36.0	2:02.0	17"	17/51 <sup>4</sup>	182
8	8:40.0	1:04.0	14"	14/42	182
9	9:34.0	0:56.0	15"	17/51	204
10	10:36.0	1:02.0	13"	14/42	190
11	11:46.0	1:00.0	15"	16/48	192
12	12:48.0	1:02.0	13"	14/42	191
13	14:03.0	1:15.0	12"	13/39	195
14	15:08.5	1:05.5	13"	14/42	190
15	16:15.0	1:06.5	18"	11/33	110
Tape ends	16:46.0				

Notes. 1. Rounded to the nearest half-second. 2. Rounded to the nearest second. 3. Four hammers are used during sequences 1-6, thus this sequence of 32 pulses consisted of 8 hammering cycles. 4. Three hammers are used during sequences 7-15, thus this sequence of 51 pulses consisted of 17 hammering cycles.



## Gong Forging/Soundscape

as the *goong*. Practically speaking, this is because it is difficult for two smiths to quickly get out of one another's way when working on something as small as a *bonang* kettle, which usually ranges in finished size from fifteen to twenty centimeters in diameter.

The *goong* hammering pattern ranged from a density of 127 to 240 beats per minute; the *bonang*, from 129 to 176. I was not the only one intrigued by the amazing density of the hammering patterns; the two bellows operators on the *goong* crew cheered each successive increase in the smiths' hammering of the *goong* from 202 to 227 to 240 beats per minute.

The drop from 240 beats per minute to 142 beats between the *goong* patterns, listed as sequences 19 and 24, as well as the long pause between them, was due to the fact that the deep outer rim of the *goong* was formed during that period. The four smiths then had to contend with avoiding the rim during their subsequent hammering in addition to the fact that formation of the rim made the flat area of the gong a smaller area to work on, both necessitating a slower hammering pace. The same was true of the *bonang* between sequence 13, where the hammering reached a peak of 176 beats per minute, and sequence 14, where it dropped back to 134 beats per minute.

This discussion of the rim brings up the fact that the parts of a *goong* are given anthropomorphic associations. The deep rim is its "foot," the boss its "head," and the flat surface of the gong between the boss and the rim its "eyebrows." After a *goong* is completed, the rim is bored with holes into which ropes are threaded to hang it. An interesting technical detail is the fact that the distance between the holes should be the same as the circumference of the boss.

When Ernst Heins made his recording in 1979, a smaller *goong* was being made. During the two minutes between sequences 6 and 7 on his recording (table 2), one can clearly hear the quick, dull thuds of the wooden hammer used to create the rim of the *goong*. Then, because of the smaller size of the area to be hammered after the rim was added, only three smiths forged the gong and thus only three hammers are heard. The hammer with the pitch of approximately A#<sup>+28</sup>, the third in the original sequence of four, was no longer used. The use of fewer hammers for smaller gongs is further described in Jacobsen and van Hasselt (1975:139).

The analyses of soundscape heard on these recordings provide us with many details that might easily be missed if absorbed in only watching the process. In addition to allowing us to closely analyze the sound of the tuned hammers, their frequency of use,

along with other sounds, documents the industrious and driving pace of the gong smiths. From the statistics derived from my recording (table 1), it can be seen that in each typical one-minute period, the smiths who forge the *bonang* "rest" on the average of only forty seconds between their hammering cycles which last from ten to fifteen seconds. The smiths who forge the *goong*, in their typical periods of sixty to ninety seconds, hammer from sixteen to twenty two seconds, and "rest" for the remainder. However, the "rest" is only from hammering. Most of the smiths spend that time sitting on the floor nearby polishing finished gongs, with only five to seven seconds at each end of the "rest" period to rush back to the anvil and pick up their hammers again, or to drop them and rush back to polishing. Note, for example, that the men polishing in photo 11 are part of the team hammering the *goong* in photo 9. Ernst Heins's recording reveals similar phenomena (table 2).

The statistics on both tables show how the speed of the hammers correlates to the changing shape of the metal disc becoming a gong. During all the sequences the *goong* was hammered from sequences 4 to 19 of table 1, the disc continued to grow in diameter while thinning out. During these sequences the speed of the hammering increased while the duration of the hammering decreased. The faster hammering speeds are the result of the disc's continual growth in diameter. Not only did the smiths have a progressively bigger surface to hammer during each succeeding cycle, but, each time, they were also hammering closer to the edge of the disc. Thus the smiths had more room to get out of each other's way and could hammer at faster rates. The shorter durations are the result of the thinning out of the disc; the thinner it gets, the more quickly it cools, and thus the more frequently it has to be heated, and, in general, the less time it takes to heat it to the right temperature for forging.

The one major contrast between the 1977 and the 1979 *goong* forgings is revealed in the statistics on tables 1 and 2. After the rim was added to the *goong* I recorded, four smiths continued to forge it, but the presence of the rim forced them to drastically reduce their pace. (Compare sequences 19 and 24 on table 1.) Conversely, after the rim was added to the *goong* Heins recorded, the team of smiths forging the *goong* was reduced to three, and with their reduced number, they were able to forge at an even more feverish pace than before the rim was added. (Compare sequences 1 to 6 with sequences 7 to 14 on table 2.)

In addition to the sound of the rim being formed, Heins's recording documents the final tuning of a *goong*. The clanking

sound of a hammer striking a cold gong is heard on and off beginning between sequences 9 and 10 (table 2) and continuing for most of the remaining six minutes of the recording. In Bogor, the tuning of a *goong* is done by Pak Sukarna. To raise the pitch of a *kempul* or a small *goong*, he hammers its surface symmetrically on either side of the boss from the inside of the *goong*; to lower the pitch, he hammers from the outside. Any type of gong can be lowered slightly by the addition of a small amount of some substance placed inside the boss; Pak Sukarna recommends hot asphalt, wet mud balls, or rice paste (*beras ketan*) made of sticky rice, but never wax. A *kempul* or *goong* may be tuned while cold, a *bonang* must be heated first.

Unlike those of Central Java, large Sundanese gongs are not tuned to match any particular pitch in the gamelan's tuning system; they are instead deliberately tuned to fall *between* pitches of the system. For example, the pitch of the lower of the two large *goong* in Field Museum's 1893 *gamelan pelog* (seven-tone system) falls between the third and fourth pitches from the lowest on the system; the other *goong*, between the sixth and seventh. However, like large Central Javanese gongs, Sundanese *goong* must have *ombak* ("wave"), a primarily amplitude modulation (with some pitch modulation during the decay) that is heard as a kind of vibrato. In figure 10, *ombak* is visualized; it is the waveform of a gong from the Central Javanese Kyai Mendhung gamelan.<sup>20</sup> As a result of their overall shape, Sundanese *kempul*, with shallower rims (by two fingers depth) than Central Javanese, have *ombak*, an aesthetic quality intrinsic to Sundanese *kempul* but not to Central Javanese. If *ombak* is undesirable for some reason, such as the choice of a customer, it must be deliberately removed by cold hammering.

*Ombak* is added or adjusted in two ways. The first is by cold hammering from the outside of the *goong*, at specific points to the left and right of the boss midway between its edge and the raised ring around it, in an asymmetrical manner. Striking with more force or blows on one side or the other alters the *goong's* modes of vibration (fig. 11). The second is by the addition of small amounts of earth or wax on the inside of the *goong* at the same points. Pak Sukarna can be heard using the cold hammering method of adjusting *ombak* as part of the tuning process during sequences 9–15 on Heins's recording.

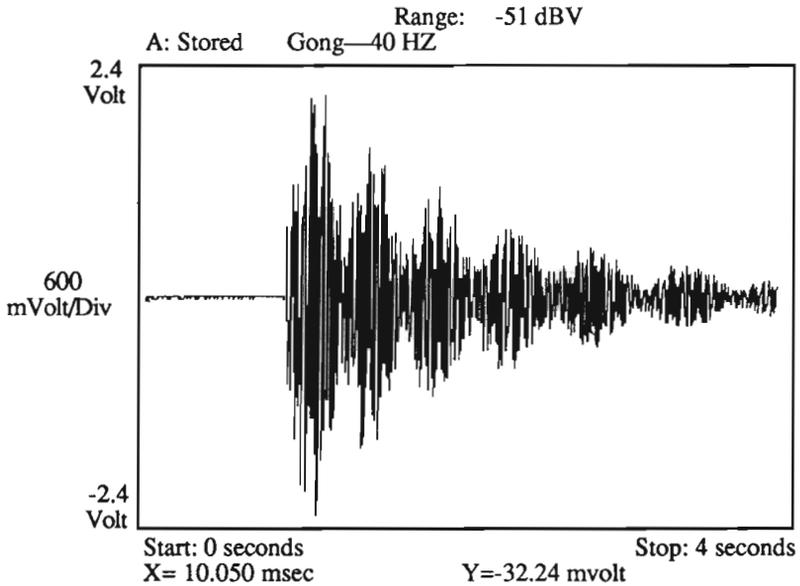


Figure 10. Real-time analysis of the *ombak* in the female (lower) gong in the UCLA gamalan, Kyai Mendhung. Changes in the envelope over a four-second period are shown.

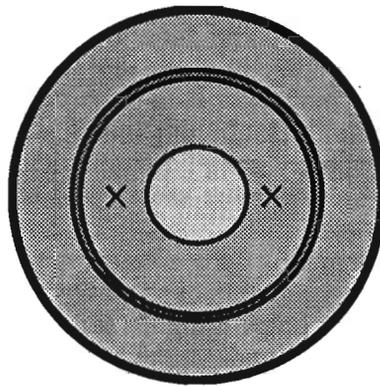


Figure 11. Schematic of the surface of a *goong* indicating the points that may be hammered to adjust *ombak*.

At Bogor, there are four basic types of *ombak*, two with fast vibratos and two with slow. The terms for them were given to Ernst Heins by Pak Sukarna in the following order: 1) "*banbarang apung*" (fast), 2) "*sekar gadung*" (fast), 3) "*Bima gabuyuh*," (slow),

and 4) "*ombak banyu*" (slow). In providing me with translations of these terms, Undang Sumarna (pers. comm., January 15, 1989) explained that "*bangbarang* is a kind of bug rather like a beetle which has a deep buzz," and that "*apung* means 'to fly.'" *Sekar gadung* is "the flower of the *gadung*" (*Discora triphyla*). *Ombak banyu* is "ocean wave," and *Bima gabuyu* is "the deep voice of Bima."

The name for each type of *ombak* has metaphorical associations in the aural and visual, and probably even metaphysical, realms.<sup>21</sup> In addition to hearing the buzz of a flying beetle, one can almost see its thick wings beat. I Wayan Dibia (pers. comm., June 16, 1989) explained that tiny yellow *gadung* flowers grow in tight bunches like grapes, never standing alone but growing on a vine which wraps itself round and round the trunk of a tree; their sultry, sweet fragrance, at least in Bali, makes them favorites in certain rituals. In Sunda, one can both watch and hear ocean waves rolling in slowly, far apart from one another due to the great depth of the oceans surrounding Java, especially along the south coast. And Bima, the second of the Pendawa brothers, heroes of the *Mahabharata*, the Hindu-Javanese epic, who finds his inner power after merging with an image of himself in the ocean, takes giant leaps over oceans and mountains, and his voice, through the *dalang* (puppeteer) in *wayang kulit* (shadow puppet plays) and *wayang golek* (three-dimensional rod puppet plays) is low, deep, and marked with regular, deliberate, and slow amplitude modulations. Although there is no clear-cut metaphysical message, Sumarna suggested some of these *ombak* names recall associations that are something more than onomatopoeic and visual. For example, he mentioned that, throughout Sunda, many of the words appear as terms in poetry, song lyrics and titles belonging to pieces and genres that are the most sacred and have the most spirit-soothing power.

One last element of the soundscape must be mentioned. During their work, the gong smiths rarely talk. In addition to the tuned hammers which help assure that the gong will be forged to an even thickness, other sounds in the process appear to serve as a form of *cuing*. On my 1977 recording, one can hear this *cuing* in action. During each period that the *goong* is being heated, one hears first the sound of the bellows, quickly overlapped by the scraping and polishing of completed gongs. When the sound of the bellows stops, the smiths stop their scraping and polishing almost instantly, alerted that the heating cycle is complete, and within a few seconds the hammering starts anew.

The combination of ancient and modern sounds heard during the making of gongs unfolds as a unique texture rich in its variety of pitches and timbres. The soundscape of gong making reveals much about the process; it is extremely heavy work requiring almost ceaseless diligence and, notably, as much attention must be given to sound as to vision. Most notable of all are the instrumental “work songs” which accompany the human wave of gong smiths who wield their tuned hammers, forging gongs while creating, in hocket, cyclic melodic patterns that constantly vary in duration and tempo. The hammers, with their individual pitches, make the smiths’ work simultaneously more efficient and accurate, and, quite possibly, more enjoyable than if the hammers all made the same sound or did not ring at all.

The photos and the analyses of the recordings presented here provide only small samples of gamelan manufacture in Bogor, a process of making music instruments that has musical qualities of its own. The making of gongs seems to reflect the making of gamelan music: an inseparable symmetry of sound and movement is intrinsic to both, and the total experience as performance lies in the aural as well as the visual. Even the hammer marks on completed gongs serve as indelible visual reminders of the sounds of the tuned hammers used to forge them.

*Editors’ note:* We wanted to make one of the gong-making recordings that provide the basis for this paper available to interested readers. We chose Heins’s recording because it contains pure gong-making sounds, free of the background voices of customers and visitors apparent on DeVale’s recording. Ernst Heins has most graciously allowed us to do so. A copy of his recording may be obtained by sending \$3.00 to:

Gong-making recording  
Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology  
Department of Ethnomusicology  
Schoenberg Hall  
University of California, Los Angeles  
Los Angeles, CA 90024

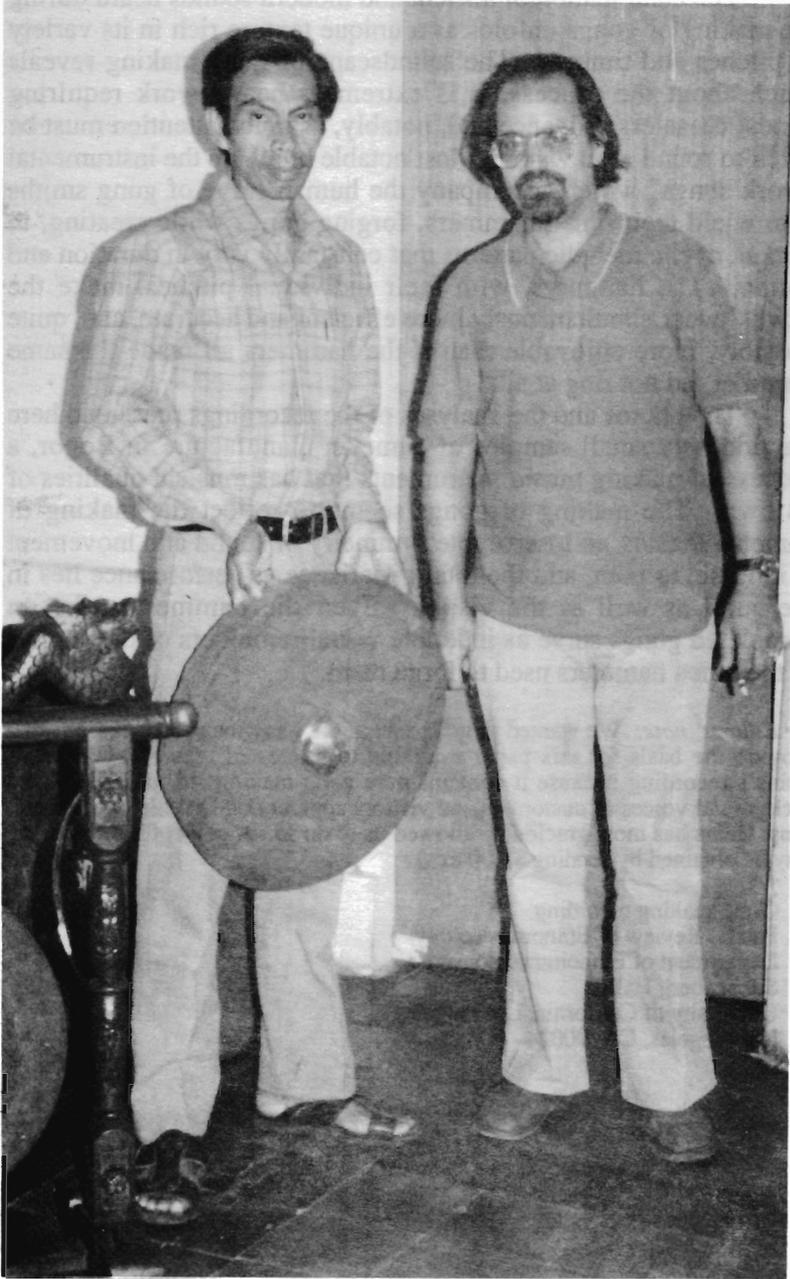


Photo 1. Pak Sukarna (left) and Ernst Heins (right)  
in Sukarna's house in Bogor, October 1977.  
All photos were taken in Bogor by the author in October 1977.

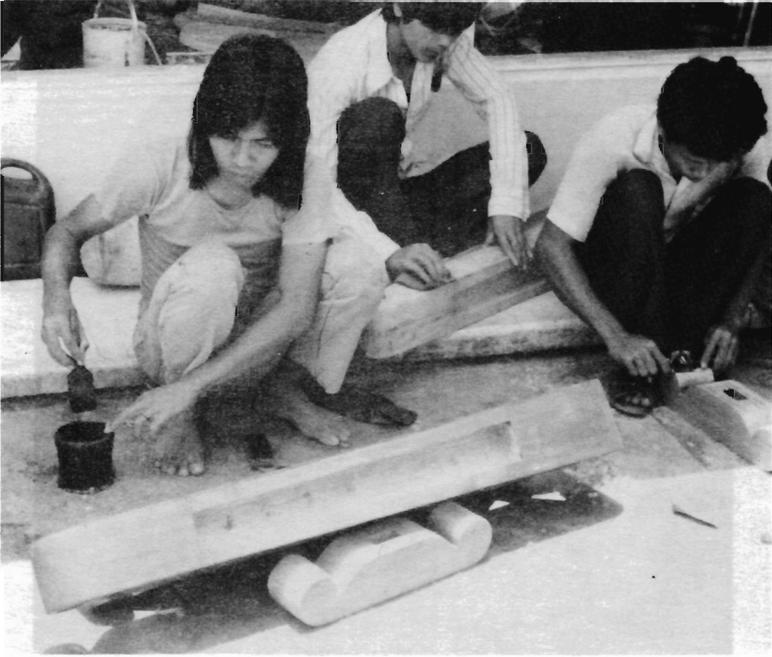


Photo 2. Workers planing, sanding, and applying stain to *saron* resonators and the feet of gongstands.

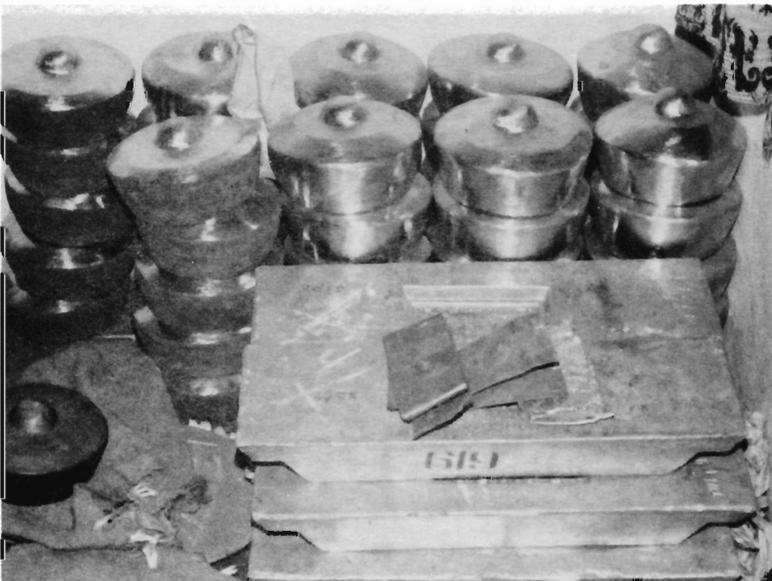


Photo 3. The raw materials for bronze: large blocks of copper and sheets of tin alongside finished *bonang* kettles.

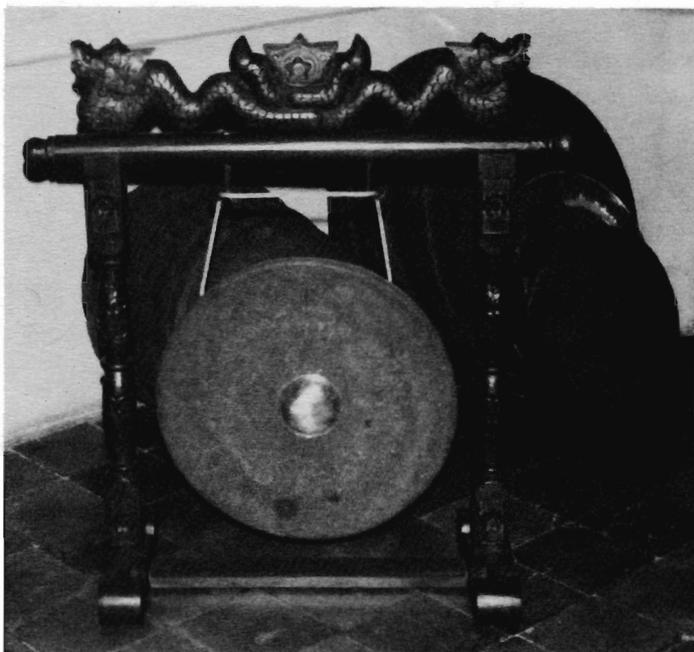


Photo 4. Completed gongs and gongstand inside Pak Sukarna's house. At center is a 50 cm. gong with its stand, a product for tourists.



Photo 5. Baskets of charcoal wrapped in banana leaves line the pathway to the entrance of the smithy.



Photo 6. The making of a *bonang* kettle. From left to right: the bellows operator, the two smiths who forge the kettle, and the head smith.



Photo 7. The head smith heating the *goong*.



Photo 8. A worker pulling the heated *goong* out of the coals.  
At the left is the head smith.



Photo 9. Four smiths hammer the *goong* while it is turned in increments by the head smith.



Photo 10. The bellows operators sitting behind a heat-protective earthen wall.

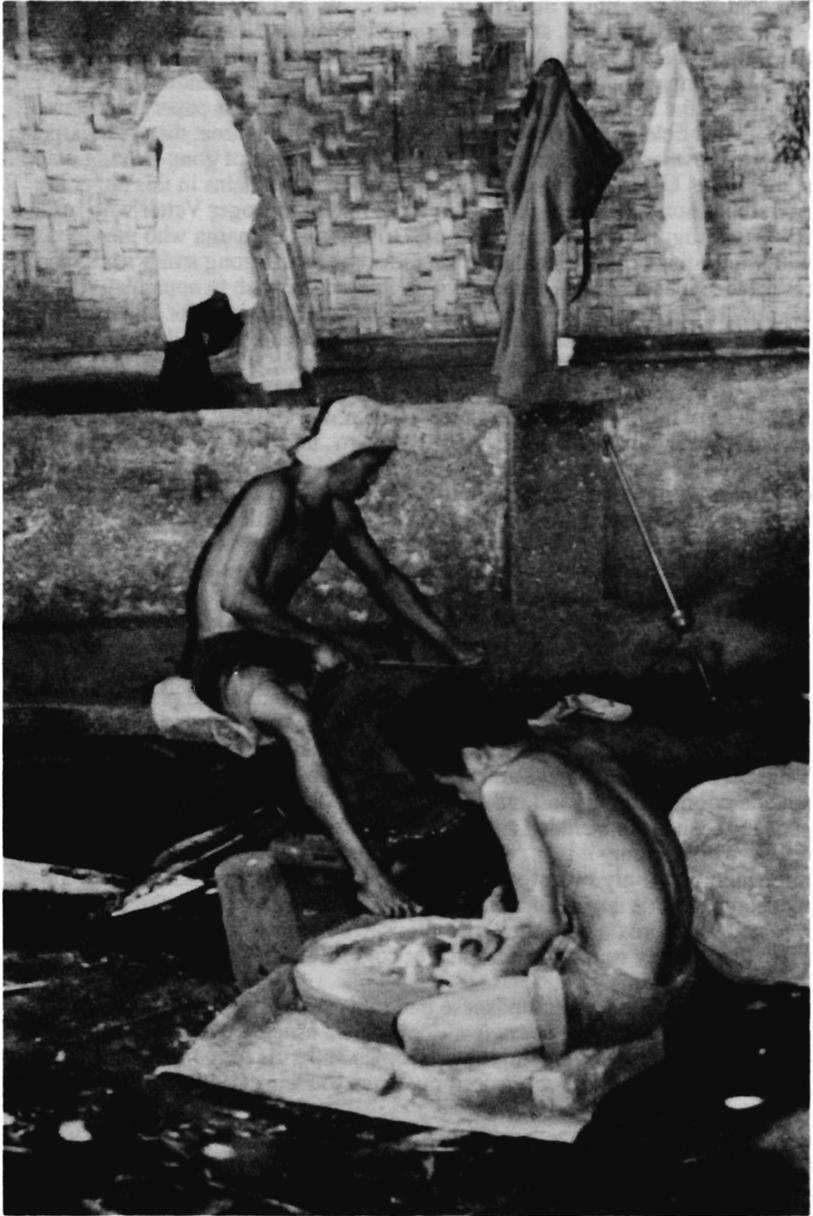


Photo 11. Two of the *goong* forgers scraping and polishing finished gongs.

## Notes

1. The research underlying this paper was funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for the research and restoration of the gamelan, accessioned in 1893, at Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. I am extraordinarily grateful to Ernst Heins who, as external advisor to the museum, accompanied me to the smithy at Bogor in 1977. In addition, Heins returned to the smithy in 1979 and, for the purposes of this paper, has shared with me his field notes from that interview with Pak Sukarna, the chief gamelan smith and owner of the factory, as well as his recording of gong making made at that time. Unless otherwise stated, all references to Heins in this paper are from those notes and recording. I am also grateful to Roger Vetter who made important suggestions for the paper, and to Undang Sumarna who provided me with translations of the Sundanese terms for the fourth gong smith's role and for all the types of *ombak* named by Pak Sukarna. I wish to appreciatively acknowledge Donn Allen Carter who rendered the drawings for this paper, most of them computer-aided. And most of all, I thank Pak Sukarna, without whom, on all counts, this paper could not exist.

2. As this article was going to press, D. Samuel Quigley, keeper of musical instruments at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, informed me that he has just completed the editing of a videotape on gong making in Surakarta at the smithy of Pak Tentrem Sarwanto (Quigley 1989). In addition, Andrew Toth, who has extensively researched gong making in Bali, is completing a videotape on the subject (in preparation, 1989) which I have been privileged to preview. Toth's tape is complete with rituals conducted before and during the process and contains rare footage of the lost wax process used to repair cracked gongs.

3. "Pak" is a title of respect akin to "Sir."

4. It is quite probable that ringing hammers with individual pitches have been used for gong forging throughout Java. I do know they are also used at the present time in the gamelan factory of Empu Reksowiguno and that of Pak Tentrem Sarwanto, both in Surakarta. There is one commercial recording of the sounds of gong forging in Java (Ijzerdraat ca. 1955). Unfortunately only sixteen seconds are included and the liner notes give no indication as to what city or which smithy it is in, what kind of gong is being made, nor why we hear three hammers, only two of which are tuned. As for Bali, Andrew Toth's videotape records the fact that hammers used for forging gongs there do not ring and therefore do not sound melodious in combination. When they are used, they simply sound like the click of cold metal striking hot metal.

5. One recalls here the Sundanese tradition of the interlocking, rhythmic beating of the inside of the *lesung* ("rice block") which provides the accompaniment for the leader-chorus singing by women and girls for *gondang* ("rice stamping" or "threshing"). For a recording, listen to Heins (1970: side A, no. 3).

6. Like these facts, much information in this paper is the result of personal communications with Pak Sukarna on October 3, 4, and 11, 1977.

7. "Empu" is a special title given to smiths who also forge *keris*: sacred daggers.

8. Scott-Kemball (1976) and Suhastjarja and Soeroso (1986) discuss gong making at the smithy of Empu Reksowiguno. While Pak Tentrum Sarwanto, who studied with Empu Reksowiguno, now makes gongs at his own factory in Surakarta, it is not known exactly when he actually began doing so. Sam Quigley (pers. comm., May 30, 1989) reported that it could have been about that time, at least for *gong suwukan*, the Central Javanese name for gongs that are sized between *kempul*, small hanging gongs of 45–50 cm. in diameter, and *gong ageng*, which, ideally, approach a meter in diameter.

9. I discovered by happenstance during the 1988 SEM meeting in Tempe that Pak Sukarna's gongs are now marketed in the United States. A nearby import shop "Kakatua Kaper, Inc.," specializing in "Treasures from Indonesia" and owned by an expatriot, was selling Pak Sukarna's standard size souvenir gongs as well as his very large full-sized ones, all on *naga*-festooned stands.

10. The Sundanese have several names for gongs. Small gongs are called *goong leutik* or *goong alit*, meaning "small" or "little gong," or *goong anak*, "child gong." Large gongs may be called *goong besar* or *goong gedé*, both meaning "large gong," or *goong indung*, meaning "mother gong." A *gamelan degung* usually has one large *goong* and one small *goong*; the latter functions as a *kempul*, a term not always used in Sunda. Ernst Heins informed me that Pak Sukarna usually makes small *goong* about 50 cm. in diameter weighing 6–7 kgs. and large *goong* of about 80 cm. weighing 22 kgs. In addition, he occasionally makes 90 cm. *goong gedé*, weighing 27 kgs., which take three days to complete. However, my recording and photographs that provide the basis for this article were made while a *goong* of 71 cm. was being forged.

11. The ideal ratio of copper to tin for the bronze alloy mixture for making gongs in Pak Sukarna's smithy is 3:1 (or 75%:25%). Kunst (1973:136) reports a ratio of 10:3 (77%:23%) in Java but does not indicate a specific smithy; instead, he cites Huyser (1939:227, 257, 292). Jacobson and van Hasselt give the same ratio in their discussion of gong forging in Semarang. Tests show the actual proportions may not be quite precise. Minute scrapings of bronze from various instruments in Field Museum's 1893 gamelan, believed to be from Cirebon, were subjected to electron microscopy in 1977 at the laboratory of Walter C. McCrone and Associates in Chicago. In his report dated April 26, 1977, McCrone observed slight deviations in every piece of bronze tested, (including bronze keys and several types of gongs), but stated that he felt that an attempt had been made by the gamelan makers to meet a ratio of 7:3 (70%:30%), based on the comparative results of the nine instruments he tested. The actual results of the tests (which have a  $\pm 5\%$  accuracy) on the 1893 gamelan's two large hanging gongs were 72% copper to 25% tin (c. 3:1) for the larger (cat. #36030, 87 cm. in diameter, 25.68 kgs.), and 65% copper to 33% tin (c. 2:1) in the smaller (cat.#36031, 76 cm. in diameter, 21.09 kgs.). 2 percent of each gong was shown to consist of trace elements, primarily silicon, probably from sand that got into the alloy mixture during the melting of the metals.

12. In Javanese and Balinese versions of the creation of the world, gods and goddesses are assigned to guard the eight primary and secondary directions as well as the center of the world. In at least one Javanese version, (Probohardjono 1956:7–9), each pair of deities assigned to guard the center and the four primary direction is also assigned a day in the market week, a "city" of metal, a bird, and an "ocean" of liquid. Notably, the pair that guards the center

## Gong Forging/Soundscape

of the world, the most important point upon which the Tree of Life grows, is assigned a city of bronze and an ocean of muddy water, made hot from the cooling of the gongs (DeVale, in press).

13. These stances are exactly the opposite of those taken by the smiths in Semarang in 1906 reported by Jacobsen and van Hasselt ([1907] 1975:139).

14. Sam Quigley informed me (pers. comm., October 21, 1988), that Pak Tentrem said the ringing hammers allow him to negotiate with customers outside the factory while still hearing that work is progressing as usual. This was the only comment Pak Tentrem made when Quigley remarked on the individual pitches of the hammers.

15. I am grateful to Yoshihiko Tokumaru for the Pythagorean sources.

16. This is also true of all the *bonang* kettles Pak Sukarna makes. They are all the same weight, but differ somewhat in overall diameter and thickness, with perhaps the most significant factor being the various diameters of the flat surface of the kettle (surrounding the boss) before it slopes down to the rim. This, in turn, affects the width and the angle of the slope itself and thus the whole shape of the top of the kettle as well as its internal volume (i.e., its resonance chamber). Photo 3 shows a variety of *bonang* kettles.

17. In Central Java, Bali, and Sunda, gamelans and large gongs are often given proper names. The selection of a name is based on both the timbre and other sound qualities of the gamelan as well as philosophical considerations. For more information on the naming of gamelans, including the ritual surrounding it, see DeVale (1988:133–138).

18. Spectral analyses have revealed that these acoustical phenomena are inherent in the individual *saron* keys and *bonang* kettles in Field Museum gamelan (DeVale 1978; Savage, DeVale, and Kottick 1979).

19. On November 1, 1988, Ernst Heins sent me a letter documenting yet another set of hammers, those heard in a videotape of gong making at the factory of Empu Reksowiguno in Surakarta made by TVRI-Stasiun, Yogyakarta. Noting that they were barely audible on the tape, Heins still managed to transcribe three fragments. In the first segment, three hammers were being used in cycles at 126 MM; Heins gives their pitches as *g*, *eb*, and *d*. In the second segment, four hammers were used at 120 MM; their pitches were given as *e*, *eb*, *f*, and *d*, with Heins noting that the *e* and *eb* were extremely close in pitch. The third segment again used three hammers, this time at 142 MM; their pitches he gave as *ab*, *g*, and *e*. When comparing these pitches to those of Pak Sukarna's sets of hammers, it becomes evident that his are more widely spaced, both in the intervals between the hammers and in the overall range of the sets.

20. I am grateful to Kathryn Vaughn who provided the spectral analysis of this gong's *ombak*, made, through the kind courtesy of Edward Carterette, Professor of Psychology at UCLA, on the Hewlett Packard 7550-A Real Time Spectral Analyzer in his laboratory. For other information on *ombak* in Central Javanese gongs, see Giles (1974).

21. The Sundanese (and Javanese) awareness of the connection between the visual and aural soundscapes of their environment, apparent in their onomatopoeic names for such things as music instruments, the titles of some compositions, and animals (even *kretek*, clove cigarettes, are named after the crackle they make as they burn) is reminiscent of the aural/visual basis of the Kaluli concept of “lift-up-over-sounding” (Feld 1988).

### References Cited

DeVale, Sue Carole

i. p. “Cosmological Symbolism in the Design and Morphology of Gamelan in Java.” *Essays in Southeast Asian Performance*, ed. Kathy Foley. Berkeley, Calif.: Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of California.

1988 “Musical Instruments and Ritual: A Systematic Approach.” *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society* 14: 126–160.

1978 “The Tuning of a Sundanese Gamelan: 1893 and 1977.” Paper presented at the joint meeting of the Acoustical Societies of America and Japan. Abstract in *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 64 (suppl. 1): s150.

Feld, Steven

1988 “Aesthetics as Iconicity of Style, or ‘Lift-up-over-Sounding’: Getting into the Kaluli Groove.” *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 20: 74–113.

Giles, Ray

1974 “Ombak in the Style of Javanese Gongs.” *Selected Reports in Ethnomusicology* 1: 159–174.

Heins, Ernst

1970 “Folk Music from West Java.” Recordings, photographs, and notes by Ernst Heins. Paris: Office de Radiodiffusion Télévision Française, OCORA 46.

## Gong Forging/Soundscape

Huyser, J. G.

1939 "Oud-Javaansche koperleveringen." Leiden:  
*Cultureel Indië* 1.

IJzerdraat, Bernard

ca. 1955 "Chants and Danses d'Indonesia." Recorded by  
Bernard IJzerdraat, notes by Etiennette Benichou.  
Paris: Chant du Monde, LDY 4179.

Kunst, Jaap

1973 *Music in Java*. 3d ed., ed. E. L. Heins. The Hague:  
Martinus Nijhoff.

Jacobson, E. and J. H. van Hasselt

1907 *De Gong-Fabricatie te Semarang*. Rijks  
Ethnographisch Museum, series 2, no. 15. Leiden:  
E. J. Brill. Trans. Andrew Toth, 1975 as "The  
Manufacture of Gongs in Semarang." *Indonesia*  
19: 127-152.

Levin, Flora R.

1975 *The Harmonics of Nicomachus and the Pythagorean  
Tradition*. State College: American Philological  
Association.

Probohardjono, R.S.

1956 *Pakem Wajang Purwa, Djilid 1*. Solo: Ratna.

Quigley, D. Samuel

1989 *Copper, Tin, and Fire: Gong Smithing in Java*.  
Videotape, color, 47 minutes. Self-distributed.

Savage, William R., Sue Carole DeVale and Edward L. Kottick

1979 "Vibrational Characteristics in Saron Barung Metal-  
lophones in the 1893 Field Museum Gamelan." Paper  
presented to the Acoustical Society of America.  
Abstract in *Journal of the Acoustical Society of  
America* 64, suppl 1: s18.

Simbriger, Heinrich

1939 "Gong und Gongspiele." *Internationales Archiv für  
Ethnologie* 36: 1-180. Leiden: E. J. Brill.

Suhastjarja, R.M. AP. (M. Mus.), and Drs. Soeroso

1986 *Pembuatan Gong Besar oleh Empu Resowiguno di Wirun, Mojolaban, Sukoharjo, Surakarta*. Proyek Penelitian dan Pengkajian Kebudayaan Nusantara (Javanologi). Yogyakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Direktorat Jenderal Kebudayaan.

Scott-Kemball, Jeune

1976 "Honeyed Thunder." *Hemisphere* 20(9): 22–25.

Toth, Andrew

in. prep. Color videotape of gongmaking in Bali, ca. 60 minutes.

Walther, Johann Gottfried

1708 *Praecepta der Musicalischen Composition*. Reprint ed., 1955, ed. Peter Benary, vol. 2 of *Jenaer Beiträge zur Musikforschung*, ed. Heinrich Bessler. Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel.



## Reviews

Kartomi, Margaret J. *Musical Instruments of Indonesia: An Introductory Handbook*. Foreward by Hugh O'Neill. Melbourne: Indonesian Arts Society, 1985. 60 pp., photographs, drawings, map.

Margaret Kartomi's handbook of sixty pages is partially devoted to generally describing instruments found throughout Indonesia and partially devoted to analyzing instruments collected for the exhibition of Indonesian musical instruments held in Melbourne in 1985. The book aims to present a well-organized and thorough organological catalogue of instruments throughout Indonesia and to add a conceptual framework in which to understand musical history and cultural context. The goals of this approach, though, are only partially realized. While the handbook exhibits depth and breadth beyond the level of most museum catalogues and the work is original and refreshing in design, the instrument analyses are inconsistent and the conceptual framework is not sufficiently defined. The handbook nevertheless contains many good photographs and diagrams and is a helpful publication for both non-specialists and specialists on Indonesia.

The first part of the handbook (pp. 5-22) introduces the reader to Kartomi's historic framework for musical instruments in Indonesia which contains four "strata" established by religious and cultural influences. Instruments are defined chronologically by the animist (or pre-Hindu), Hindu (or pre-Muslim), Islamic, or Colonial (or Western) stratum into which they fall. The pre-Hindu instruments, for example, include ancient bronze drums and virtually all non-bronze instruments such as bamboo flutes, shaken idiophones, and wooden slit drums. These instruments are described as functioning in the animist or pre-Hindu stratum still partially extant in contemporary Indonesia.

The pre-Muslim or Hindu stratum introduces gongs, gamelan, drums, winds, plucked strings, and bowed strings, together constituting the musical culture generally associated with Indonesia. The information in this section provides a good overview of the instruments of this primary stratum and some of it is bravely controversial. For example, many scholars would disagree with her notion that the *rebab*, the bowed lute used in Javanese and some Sundanese and Balinese gamelan, may not have entered Indonesia with the spread of Islam nor even have originated in the Near East. Nevertheless, she correctly states that there are no truly Islamic

contexts for the *rebab* (p. 16). She also suggests that a group of shawms with related names—the *tarompét*, *tetepret*, *selompret*, and *preret*—may have a common indigenous origin (p. 14), in contrast to those with names resembling those of shawms in the Near East and India, such as the *sarunai* and *saronen*. Though this might be food for argument in some circles, she is rightfully questioning long-held and not fully supportable beliefs.

The “Instruments Associated with Islam” section which follows is disappointingly short and consists only of a listing of a few instrumental types, especially membranophones, and a few Islamic theater and religious performances in Sumatra—as if music associated with Islam existed nowhere else. An inaccuracy here is that the Islamic stratum is static and historical. In fact, this stratum continues to evolve and expand as Indonesian Muslims are further exposed to arts of the greater Islamic world and seek to emulate them. The *rebana qasidah* (membranophone) and *tar* (frame drum), for example, are two recently imported instruments found throughout much of Lombok.

The fourth stratum falls under the section, “Instruments of Recent European and Other Contact,” which incorporates everything after the Islamic period up to the present day. Here she mentions the instruments of the *kroncong* orchestra; the newly introduced violin, melodeon, and harmonium; the influence of Western harmony on nationalist and regional songs; and the electronic instruments of rock music. Though Kartomi may be correct in including contemporary Indonesia into the Western or colonial stratum of influence regarding musical instruments, this does not completely apply to cultural influences. Internal socio-cultural influences active in Indonesia since independence (1945) have led to new aesthetic concepts, new combinations of traditional material, and even outright new art forms. Some examples include the *sendratari* theater forms of Java and Bali, *drama gong* in Bali, *teater daerah* and the *kecimol* ensemble in Lombok, and a myriad of new music and dance types throughout Indonesia. These innovations reflect a contemporary Indonesian identity and are not simply a further development of the colonial period. The addition of a fifth cultural stratum of post-independence Indonesia might better distinguish Western and modernizing influences of the colonial period from those selected by Indonesians themselves for their own use.

The strata concept flavors most of Kartomi’s work and is best described in her article, “Musical Strata in Sumatra, Java, and Bali” (May 1980:111–133). In this article she describes how art forms and religio-cultural elements belonging to earlier strata can co-exist

with those of later strata, how elements from two or more strata can merge within single art forms, and how, within these mixed art forms, elements of one stratum may predominate. The handbook, however, does not relate the whole concept, creating problems in several instrument descriptions. For example, the violin is introduced as an Islamic stratum instrument, then is again introduced as an instrument of the colonial stratum. The instrument was introduced during the colonial period and then was incorporated into music associated with Islam, but readers could not comprehend this from the information given.

Because the strata are not fully articulated in the handbook, the sections sometimes fuse together without completely clear divisions. The pre-Hindu or animist stratum is fairly clear and basic, but the stratum that follows is called "pre-Muslim" and not Hindu. This is because the instruments associated with the Hindu stratum may also be linked to the pre-Hindu stratum but not with the Islamic stratum. In fact, most of the pre-Hindu and Hindu strata instruments are indigenous, in contrast to the imported instruments of the Islamic and colonial strata. Kartomi does not explain this important distinction in the handbook even though it would seem to constitute an important criterion for determining and presenting strata.

Kartomi includes many instruments from remote and lesser-known areas of Indonesia in the discussion and I believe she tries to present the concepts and information evenly. This is admirable when we consider that most scholars begin with Java when discussing music and instruments in Indonesia, then incorporate the neighboring islands of Bali and Sumatra and perhaps extend outward a bit more. This approach represents the classical Javanese diffusionist theory, that everything began in Java and diffused outward. Kartomi, on the other hand, tends to emphasize Sumatra, which is not surprising since she is the leading ethnomusicologist on that region and an expert on Islamic music in Indonesia. She also has a strong command of instruments and music in Java and an adequate knowledge of Bali.

There are three errors concerning Balinese gamelan that should be noted. The first two are found in a brief description of the instrumentation of the *gamelan gong kebyar*, which "consists of pairs of large and small gongs, a single small horizontal gong, a gong chime (*reyong*), drums and a flute, with cymbals and slab metallophones added" (p. 10). The pair of small gongs Kartomi refers to are the *kempur* and *bende* but they are not a pair and their musical functions are entirely different (this mistake is repeated on p. 31). Though she states that slab metallophones "are added" to the

*gamelan gong kebyar*, there are no slab metallophones in this gamelan and the floating-key metallophones which are used are not simply added but paramount in the instrumentation. The third error occurs when she incorrectly identifies *gangsapa pemade* and *gangsapa kantil* as slab metallophones (p. 11). These two terms refer to floating-key metallophones, not to slab metallophones. It could also be argued that her inclusion of the *gamelan gong kebyar* in the pre-Muslim stratum is misleading since this ensemble did not develop until the colonial period (1915).

The second part of the handbook (pp. 23–60) describes the instruments collected for the “Exhibition of Indonesian Musical Instruments.” Since various individuals and museums contributed instruments, the information provided is often inconsistent and some citations are very sparse. Nevertheless, most entries include materials used in construction, physical dimensions, playing technique, instrument origin and related instruments, performance context, and anthropomorphic significance. Perhaps due to the varied sources for the citations, there are some unusual representatives for particular instruments. For example, the *preret* of Lombok is indicated as a shawm with six front fingerholes and a pirouette of tortoise shell or aluminium (p. 47). While I have no doubt that the instrument collected for the exhibit matches these descriptions, most *preret* have seven front fingerholes and pirouettes of coconut shell or wood. Despite the inconsistencies, the entries bring together a diverse and remarkable collection of Indonesian instruments. The photographs and diagrams handsomely decorate and supplement the written information.

Kartomi has rarely received due recognition as a scholar outside of Australia and this handbook will not help her to achieve it. However, if one examines her list of publications and her thorough work, particularly in Sumatra among the Minangkabau and Batak, her work is impressive. She has contributed solid ethnomusicological research on Sumatra, Java, and, to a lesser degree, Bali, Sulawesi, and a number of other islands. She has also taken an original approach to understanding the relationship between music and Islam in Indonesia. Her strata concept clearly illustrates that relationship, especially in areas like Sumatra, where peoples were subjected to such strong foreign influences as Hindu-Buddhism, Islam, colonial intrusion, and Christianity. Kartomi has always related music and instruments directly to culture and examined the interaction between music, religion, context, and meaning. Though this brief contribution does not measure up to some of her

other work, she deserves to be congratulated as a thorough and original scholar.

However, why was this publication limited to a sixty-page handbook? Although any exhibit catalogue must present a limited format, ten more pages might have clarified Kartomi's strata concept and the confusing overlapping and inconsistent criteria. A few more pages could also have made the organological entries more uniform and insightful. Kartomi obviously has a wealth of knowledge of Indonesian instruments and the organological expertise to write a major work on Indonesian instruments. If she is planning one, the handbook can be viewed as a forerunner for this potentially greater work.

David Harnish  
University of California, Los Angeles

### Reference Cited

Kartomi, Margaret J.

1980 "Musical Strata in Sumatra, Java, and Bali." In *Musics of Many Cultures: An Introduction*, ed. Elizabeth May, pp. 111–133. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Jean During. *La musique traditionnelle de l'Azerbayjan et la science des muqâms* (The traditional music of Azerbaijan and the science of muqâm). Baden-Baden: Collections d'études musicologiques no. 80 (1988). 220 pp., figures, notes, references, index. DM.48.

*La musique traditionnelle de l'Azerbayjan et la science des muqâms* is a valuable contribution to the literature on Islamic music theory. During presents a comprehensive description of Azeri modal theory, compares it with neighboring musical theories, and finds a connection between contemporary Azeri *muqâmlar* and the medieval treatises of Safi al-Din and others. His musicological framework implicitly suggests the existence of a distinct Azeri *muqâm* ("mode," pl., *muqâmlar*) tradition that is firmly allied to Iran by virtue of historical and religious ties and separated from an Arabic and Turkish musical heritage. Employing a cross-cultural methodology, the author uses Azeri *muqâm* as the cornerstone of a sophisticated musicological comparison of theoretical practices in the context of Islamic music.

A sizable portion of the book is devoted to the description and synchronic comparison of the multiple facets of *muqâm* theory. Azeri *muqâmlar* have a distinctive scalar structure founded on intervallic values unusual in the region. There is an absence of 3/4 and 5/4 tones, a predilection for a high third, and a variability in the intonation of individual interpretations. During connects these differences to a complex interaction of bardic (*'âshuq*), Armenian, Georgian, and Gypsy influences, suffused with a Western sense of temperament percolating into the Caucasus. He analyses individual *muqâm* in terms of scalar structure, melodic polarization, modulation, and tonal fluctuation, and compares these with Iranian, Turkish, and Arab theories. There are many differences that distinguish Azeri *muqâmlar* from their Persian roots. The use of certain *muqâmlar* of Turkish derivation (*Segâh* and *Râst*), the sequences of *sho'be* and *gushe*, the brevity of performances, and the fragmented nature of formal structure all serve to underline the distinctiveness of *muqâmlar*.

During sets *muqâm* theory in a diachronic perspective. He critically analyses the contribution of Safi al-Din's Pythagorean model to Persian and Azeri theory by way of a seventeen-note octave and a hierarchy of modes. He traces the cleavage that grew between Ottoman and Safavid musical theory (ca. 1500), the appearance of *gushes* as part of an organized hierarchy of modes, and the growth of symbolic significance in the wake of Sufi conscious-

ness. The nineteenth century heralded a divergence between the two traditions. According to Düring, Persian theory (*radif*) was purified by the expulsion of foreign modes, standardized in a hierarchy of *dastgah* and *gushes*, and centralized by the fusion of disparate ethnic musical elements into a single theory. Azeri music, by comparison, was a theoretical anachronism, infiltrated with cosmopolitan musical elements and lacking a courtly patronage. The result was a theoretical frame less strictly organized and more fragmented than its Persian counterpart. The diachronic perspective allows Düring to form his ideas on the historic theoretical cleavage existing in the Near and Middle East. Persian *radif* represent a prescriptive and linear musical expression while Turkish *makamlar* and Arab *maqāmāt* are descriptive and structural. Both concepts reveal two views of the same musical reality, with a common root in medieval Islamic musical treatises. Azeri *muqâmlar* are formalized in a linear Persian manner and organized in an Arabic and Turkish fashion. Here lies the importance of the tradition as a bridge between the Ottoman and Safavid musical legacies.

Düring encases his evaluation of *muqâm* theory in a contextual setting. *Muqâmlar* are played by an instrumental trio (*târ*, *kamânche*, and *daf*) for a bourgeois audience at weddings (*toy*) and private functions (*majlis*). He examines the role of education, performance practice, and the nature of patronage. From an ethnomusicological perspective, it is a pity that he does not fully integrate *muqâm* theory into his contextual framework. The role of Marxism is only implicitly discussed in his evaluation of Hajibeyov's (1985: 2,146) Westernization of *muqâmlar* for the purposes of composition. Musical change is largely divorced from the political segmentation of Azerbaijan into Russian and Persian sectors and the musicological consequences of Russification, well documented by Slobin (1969:9) in Soviet Central Asia. An extension of the contextual frame might shed light on the nature of Azeri musical experience in a manner outlined by Düring (1984:207–212) in the case of Iran: for example, highlighting the significance of Azeri identification with the *muqâm* heritage; the symbiotic relationship between 'âshuqlar, Armenians, Western composers, and *muqâm* practitioners; and a fuller integration of a music-cultural approach suggested by his terms "cooperation," "conviviality," and "complicity."

Düring himself admits that this book is not a comprehensive survey of Azeri musical performance. It is, rather, an evaluation of the place of Azeri and Persian modal theory in the context of *muqâm* science with its essentially musicological bias. In

Review - During

this respect, *La musique traditionnelle de l'Azerbayjan et la science des muqâms* is an eloquent, concise, and interesting account of Azeri *muqâmlar*.

### References

During, Jean

1984 *La musique iranienne: Tradition et evolution*.  
Bibliothèque iranienne no. 29. Paris: Editions  
recherche sur les civilisations.

Hajibeyov, Uzeyir

1985 *Principles of Azerbaijan Folk Music*. Baku: Institute of  
Architecture and Art of Academy of Sciences of  
Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic.

Slobin, Mark

1969 *Kirghiz Instrumental Music*. New York: Society for  
Asian Music.

## Contributors to This Issue

Dwight Reynolds is a doctoral candidate at the University of Pennsylvania in the Department of Folklore and Folklife, and is currently a Junior Fellow at the Harvard Society of Fellows in Arabic Literature and Comparative Oral Epic Studies.

Anne Rasmussen is completing her Ph.D. in ethnomusicology from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Scott Marcus recently completed his Ph.D. in ethnomusicology at the University of California, Los Angeles, and is presently teaching in the ethnomusicology program at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Virginia Danielson is completing her Ph.D. in musicology from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, and is also project manager in the Eda Kuhn Loeb Library, Harvard University.

Paul Humphreys teaches musicianship and theories of music in the Department of Ethnomusicology and Systematic Musicology at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Sue Carole DeVale is professor of ethnomusicology and systematic musicology at the University of California, Los Angeles.

## Information for Contributors

The *Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology* accepts original, double-spaced, typed manuscripts of up to thirty pages in length on topics relating to ethnomusicology. Authors whose manuscripts are accepted for publication will be encouraged to submit their work on diskette. Guidelines for the preparation of soft copy are available from the editors. For questions of style, consult issues of this journal. Manuscripts should be sent in duplicate to:

**Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology**  
Ethnomusicology Program  
Schoenberg Hall  
University of California  
Los Angeles, CA 90024