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'Ūd Taqsīm as a Model of Pre-Composition

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2. MAQĀM AND TAQSĪM: TERMINOLOGY AND FORM

The principal aim of this chapter is to present the main theoretical concepts and definitions that will guide the writing of this research project. It classifies the terms under two main categories: 1) terminology associated with *maqām*, and 2) terminology associated with *taqsīm*. In addition, the chapter discusses general features of a number of relevant *maqāmāt* in common practice, and presents basic knowledge of the general form of *taqsīm*, and how *maqām* develops in a *taqsīm*.

It should be emphasized that this dissertation does not attempt to solve or fill in any gaps between *maqām* practice and theory. Having said that, the *maqām* terminology presented here aims at providing the reader with a basic understanding of Arabic music theory. And, above all, it helps me deliver my main ideas in this research project in a clear and a comprehensible manner. The majority of the terms associated with *maqām* are based on the main theoretical sources of Arabic music in the 20th century, which are reviewed in Marcus' dissertation *Arab Music Theory in the Modern Period*.¹¹⁸

The terminology associated with *taqsīm* is a mixture of terms borrowed from prominent texts dealing with the genre, terms that are common among *taqsīm* practitioners, and a few original terms that I propose based on my comprehensive insight into al-Qaṣabjī and al-Sunbātī's *taqsīm* recordings alongside the recordings of several other musicians.

2.1 *Maqām* terminology

Fundamental scale: this applies to 'the seven notes that are considered to be the principal tones in Arabic music;'¹¹⁹ these are the tones C, D, E half-flat, F, G, A, B half-flat (Fig. 1).¹²⁰



Figure 1: the fundamental scale of Arabic music theory

¹¹⁸ Marcus, *Arab Music Theory*, 1989.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 73.

¹²⁰ Before adopting the western solfege system in the late 19th century, musicians and music theorists used Arabic, Ottoman, and Persian names for each and every pitch of the fundamental scale. For example, the word *dukāh* refers to the tone D4. The word *muḥayyar* on the other hand refers to the tone D5. The Arabic and Persian names for pitches are still in use today together with the western solfege system.

The fundamental scale is usually expanded to include two octaves starting from the tone G3 (Fig. 2).¹²¹

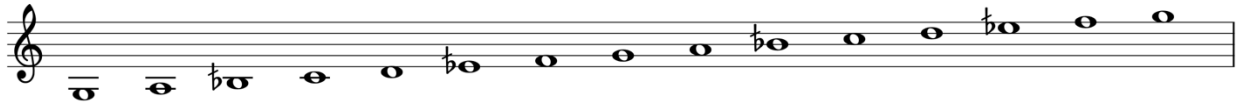


Figure 2: the fundamental scale of Arabic music theory over two octaves

General Arab scale: this concept is based on the convention that in Arabic music an octave is divided into 24 pitches, therefore it is also called the quarter-tones scale. Figure 3 illustrates the general scale in two octaves as it is presented in various theoretical sources¹²² (the semibreves or whole notes indicate the tones of the fundamental scale, and the un-stemmed crochets or quarter notes indicate the rest of the tones of the general scale).



Figure 3: the general Arab scale over two octaves

Jins¹²³ (lit. type; plural *ajnās*): this refers to groups of three, four or five successive tones ‘that are the building blocks with which the Arab *maqāmāt* are constructed.’¹²⁴ A number of recent theoretical sources classify nine principal *ajnās*:¹²⁵ ‘*ajam*, *rāst*, *nahāwand*, *nawā-athar*, *bayātī* (often spelled also as *bayyātī*), *ṣabā*, *kurd*, *ḥijāz*, and *sīkāh* (Fig. 4).¹²⁶

Each principal *jins* is associated with a root position on the fundamental scale, but could also be transposed to other tones. Figure 4 illustrates the nine basic *ajnās* in their associated root position.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 80.

¹²² Ibid., p. 99.

¹²³ The word *jins* is originally from the ancient Greek term *genos*. Alternatively, some Arabic theory sources use the word ‘*iqd* (plural ‘*uqūd*).

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 271.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 272.

¹²⁶ Another approach classifies eleven principal *ajnās* with the addition of *jins* ‘*irāq* (B half-flat–C–D) and *jins huzām* (E half-flat–F–G–A flat); ‘*irāq* and *huzām* ‘can be conceptualized as variants of the Sikah threechord’. Ibid., p. 273.

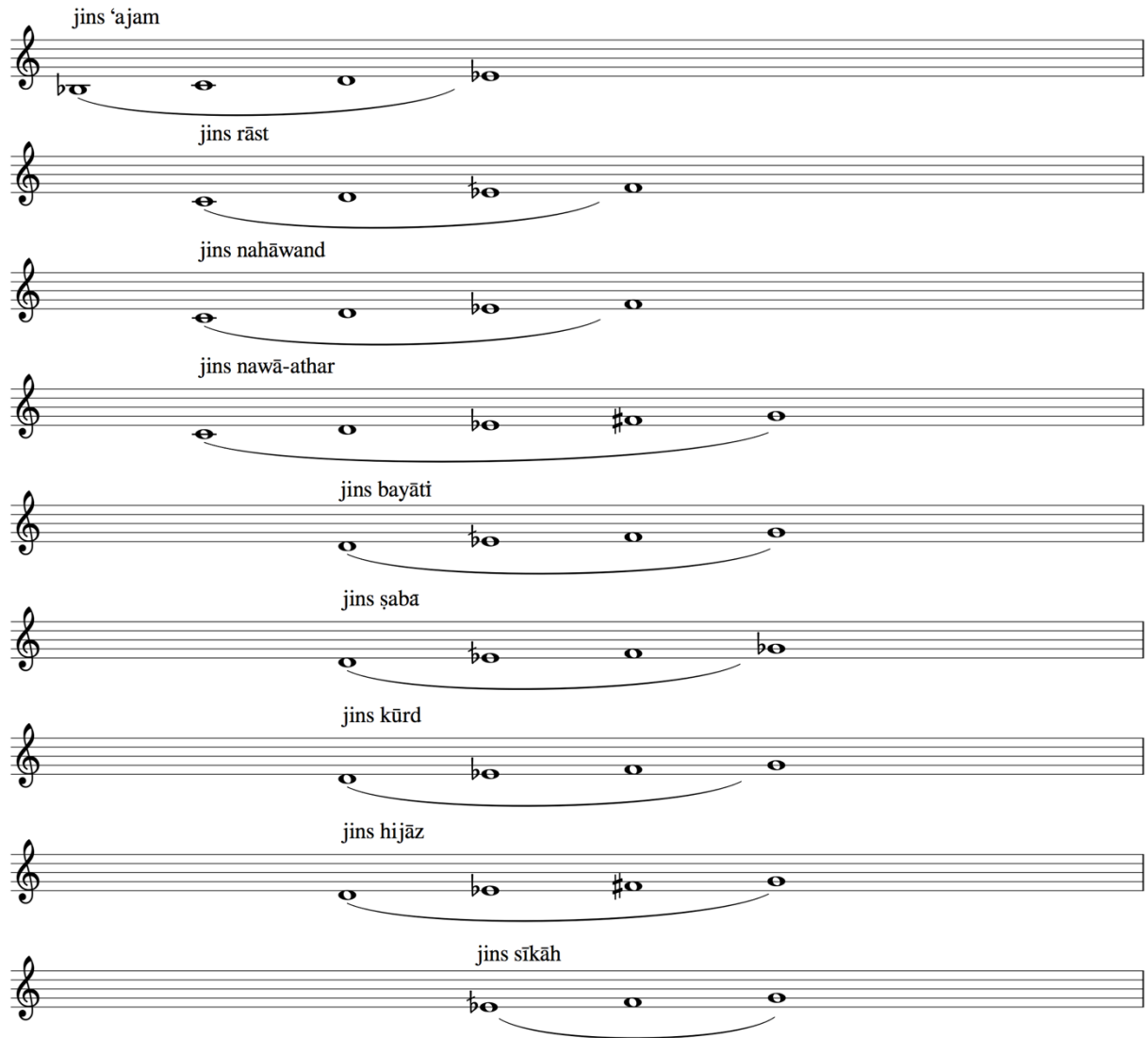


Figure 4: nine principal *ajnās* in their root position

In the theoretical sources of the 20th century, *ajnās* are mostly presented as groups of tetrachords.¹²⁷ In practice, *ajnās* could appear in groups of three, four or five tones (for instance, *jins nahāwand* in Figure 5).



Figure 5: *jins nahāwand* as three, four, and five tones

Maqām scale: the scale is the most abstract definition or representation of a *maqām*, and became a central concept in 20th-century Arabic music theoretical sources. A *maqām* scale is

¹²⁷ The presentation of *ajnās* as groups of tetrachords resembles the ancient Greek modal theory.

comprised of two (or more) *ajnās* joined together in a disjunct, conjunct, or an overlapping manner.¹²⁸

For example, *maqām rāst* scale (Fig. 6), which has the same name of its first *jins*, is comprised of *jins rāst* in its root position (the tone C4) plus *jins rāst* transposed to the tone G4, joined together in a disjunct manner. *Bayātī* scale (Fig. 7), is comprised of *jins bayātī* in its root position (the tone D4) plus *jins nahāwand* transposed to the tone G4, joined together in a conjunct manner.

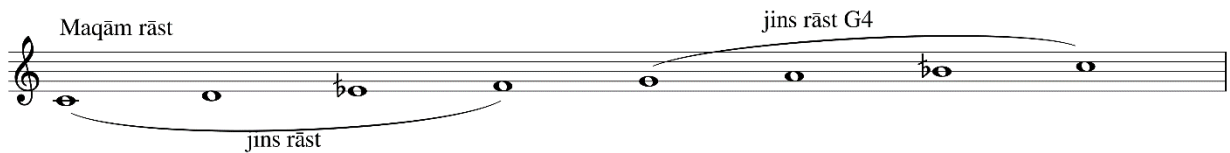


Figure 6: *maqām rāst* scale

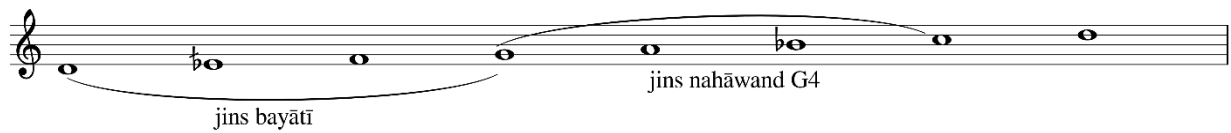


Figure 7: *maqām bayātī* scale

Maqām scales are commonly classified and presented according to key signatures. For example, the key signature of *maqām rāst* includes B half-flat and E half-flat (Fig. 8).

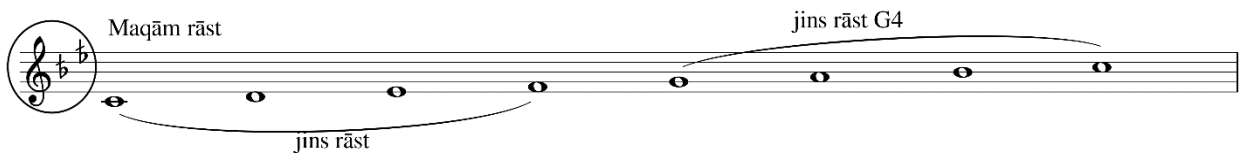


Figure 8: key signature of *maqām rāst*

Root *jins*: this refers to the first *jins* in a *maqām* scale. The root *jins* ‘establishes the essential character of the mode.’¹²⁹ For example, the root *jins* of *maqām rāst* is *jins rāst* (Fig. 8).

Secondary *jins*: this refers to the second *jins* in a *maqām* scale. For example, the secondary *jins* of *maqām rāst* is *jins rāst G4* (Fig. 8).

Alternative (secondary) *jins*: in performance practice, some *maqāmāt* are characterized by alternating their secondary *jins*. The alternative *jins* is mostly a result of altering the third tone

¹²⁸ The one-octave scale presentation of a *maqām* follows the approach of recent sources, while early sources (such as D’Erlanger 1949) present the *maqām* as two-octave scales.

¹²⁹ Marcus, *Arab Music Theory*, pp. 314-315.

in the original secondary *jins*. In early sources, alternative secondary *ajnās* often take expression in the scalar presentation of a *maqām*.

For example, one of the characteristics of *maqām rāst* is to alternate the tone B4 half-flat with the tone Bb4 (Fig. 9), which results in an alternative secondary *jins nahāwand* G4 (the alternating tone and secondary *jins* are indicated between brackets).

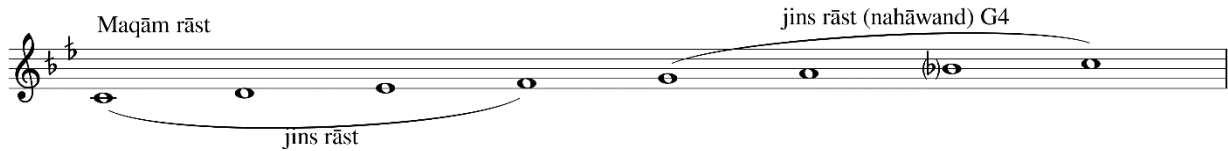


Figure 9: alternative secondary *jins nahāwand* in *maqām rāst*

In later sources, on the other hand, alternating or changing the secondary *jins* might result in classifying the *maqām* under a different name. For example, the combination of root *jins rāst* and secondary *jins nahāwand* illustrated in Figure 7 is classified as *maqām suzdalāra*.¹³⁰

Prominent tones: these are the important pitches or structural tones in a *maqām*. Prominent tones are the initial tones of the *maqām*'s main *ajnās*. In the majority of *maqāmāt* there are two main prominent tones, the tonic and the dominant. The octave of the tonic is largely considered as a prominent tone.¹³¹

Tonic:¹³² this is the initial tone of a *maqām*'s root *jins* (and is also considered the initial tone of the *maqām*). The tonic's most significant feature is being a finalis in a given composition or improvisation.¹³³ In the course of a composition or an improvisation, 'the melody often returns to the *qarār* [tonic] to confirm its predominance.'¹³⁴ When a phrase ends on the tonic, it achieves a sense of a complete melodic resolution. For example, the tonic of *maqām rāst* (Fig. 10) is the initial tone of its root *jins*, the tone C4 (the prominent tones in *maqām rāst* are indicated with semibreves or whole notes, while the rest of the tones are indicated with unstemmed filled note-heads).

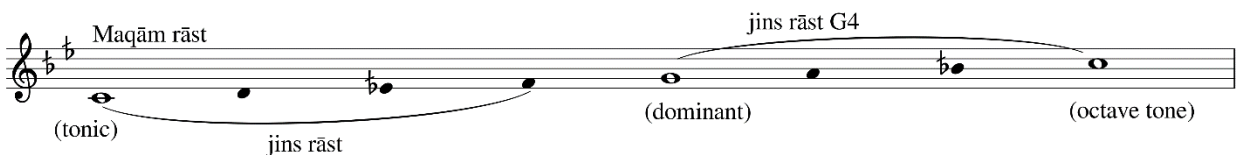


Figure 10: prominent tones in *maqām rāst* scale

¹³⁰ Ibid. p. 842.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 538.

¹³² Arabic music theory often refers to the tonic as *qarār* (lit. base).

¹³³ Ibid., p. 438.

¹³⁴ Van Oostrum, *The Art of Nāy Playing*, p. 155.

Dominant:¹³⁵ this is the initial tone of a *maqām*'s secondary *jins*.¹³⁶ Therefore, it might be either the third, fourth or fifth tone in a *maqām* scale. The dominant 'has attraction exerted by it on the other notes of the scale.'¹³⁷ It functions as 'a resting tone for musical movement'¹³⁸ and/or as a common tone for modulation (this term is discussed below).¹³⁹ For example, the dominant of *maqām rāst* is the initial tone of its secondary *jins*, the tone G4 (Fig. 10).

Octave tonic:¹⁴⁰ this alludes to the octave of the *maqām*'s initial tone. The octave tonic has a similar function as the dominant. It should be noted however that unlike the tonic, the octave tonic does not function as a finalis. For example, the octave tonic of *maqām rāst* is C5 (Fig. 10).

Characteristic melodic progression:¹⁴¹ this is a prominent concept that describes a specific melodic execution when presenting a *maqām*. In Turkish music, 'the progression of a makam, in its basic form, can be described in terms of the relationship between the two main central tones, the entry tone and the finalis. The relative position of these two tones shows the melodic direction of the progression.'¹⁴² Karl Signell an American musicologist with expertise in Turkish music, classifies three terms that describe different options for the melodic direction:¹⁴³

1) **ascending direction:** 'the melody begins around the tonic, gradually rises to the dominant and eventually returns to the same tonic.'

2) **descending direction:** 'the melodic line must begin around the secondary tonic, then descend to the dominant midway in the progression, and finally makes a cadence an octave below the initial entry.'

3) **ascending-descending direction:** 'the melodic line will begin around the dominant, then explore the regions both above and below that point before making another stop on the same tonal center, and then proceeds to the final cadence on the tonic.'

Modulation: this 'is the practice of moving from one maqam to another within a given piece

¹³⁵ Arabic music theory often refers to the dominant as *ghammāz* (lit. key).

¹³⁶ Marcus, *Arab Music Theory*, p. 548.

¹³⁷ Iino, Lisa. "Inheriting the Ghammāz-oriented Tradition: D'Erlanger and Aleppine Maqām Practice Observed." *Ethnomusicology Forum*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 2009, p. 268. Taylor & Francis Online, doi:10.1080/17411910903141932. Accessed 20 March 2015.

¹³⁸ Van Oostrum, *The Art of Nāy Playing*, p. 155.

¹³⁹ Marcus, Scott Lloyd. "Modulation in Arab Music: Documenting Oral Concepts, Performance Rules and Strategies." *Ethnomusicology*, vol. 36, no. 2, spring-summer 1992, p.177. JSTOR, doi:10.2307/851913. Accessed 01 September 2020.

¹⁴⁰ Arabic music theory often refers to the octave tonic as *jawāb* (lit. answer).

¹⁴¹ Characteristic melodic progression is also a prominent concept in Turkish music until today, and is often referred to with the term *seyir*, from the Arabic word *sayr* (lit. movement).

¹⁴² Signell, Karl. *Makam: Modal Practice in Turkish Art Music*. Da Capo Press, 1986, p.50.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

of music.’¹⁴⁴ Modulation is a significant aspect of *maqām* practice, and its importance ‘is also recognized in statements which present modulation as one of the primary ways for a musician or composer to exhibit his intellectual and technical mastery of his art.’¹⁴⁵ Modulation plays a structural role in the different genres of Arabic music.¹⁴⁶

There are three common types or techniques of modulation. The first technique keeps the root *jins* of the original mode and changes its secondary *jins* only. The conventional theory considers such a modulation as a move to a new *maqām*, or to a new *maqām* scale. For instance, by changing the secondary *jins* in *maqām rāst* to *ḥijāz* G4, the modulation is defined as a move to *maqām suznāk* (Fig. 11). However, as put by Johnny Farraj and Sami Abu Shumays – two New York-based musicians and Arabic music scholars – such ‘modulations rarely involve a full maqam scale [...] This is because the vast majority of melodic phrases in Arabic music are confined to the range of just a few notes.’¹⁴⁷ Therefore, in this research project, when a melody is mainly confined to the second *jins* and does not explore the full scale of the new *maqām*, I call or define the modulation by the name of the new *jins*. For instance, the modulation in Figure 11 is to *ḥijāz* G4.

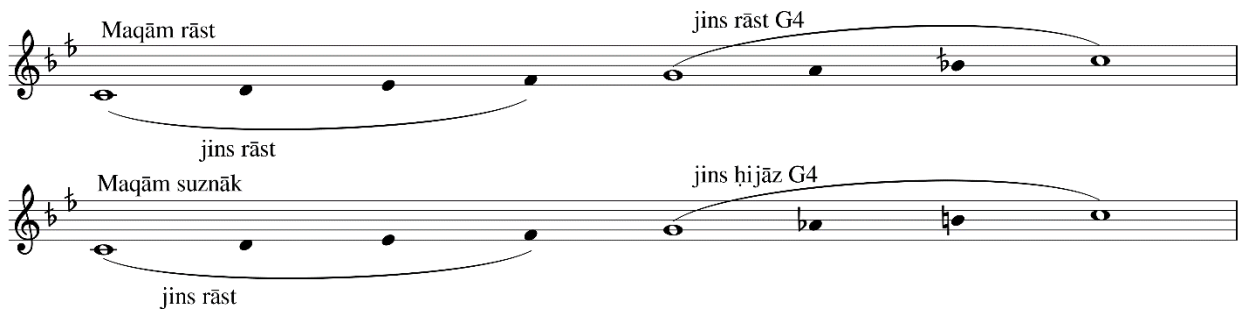


Figure 11: *maqāmāt rāst and suznāk* scales

The second type of modulation keeps the same tonic but changes the root *jins*. For instance, a modulation from *maqām rāst* to *maqām nahāwand* (Fig. 12), a *maqām* which also has the tone C4 as its tonic.

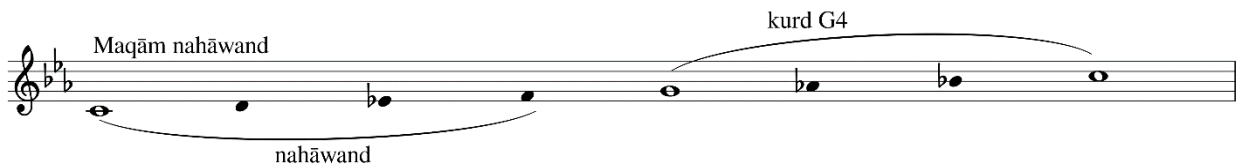


Figure 12: *maqām nahāwand* scale

¹⁴⁴ Marcus, “Modulation in Arab Music,” p. 171.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 175.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p.173.

¹⁴⁷ Farraj, Johnny, and Sami Abu Shumays. *Inside Arabic Music: Arabic Maqam Performance and Theory in the 20th Century*. Oxford University Press, 2019, p. 309. Farraj and Abu Shumays propose an alternative approach to *maqām* theory. They conceptualize each *maqām* as a network of *ajnas*, and musicians and performers mostly follow prominent pathways within this network. See Ibid., pp.266-285.

In the third type, the modulation occurs on a new tonic. The most common practice of this technique is moving to the dominant tone of the primary *maqām*. For instance, a modulation from *maqām rāst* to *maqām bayātī* G4.¹⁴⁸

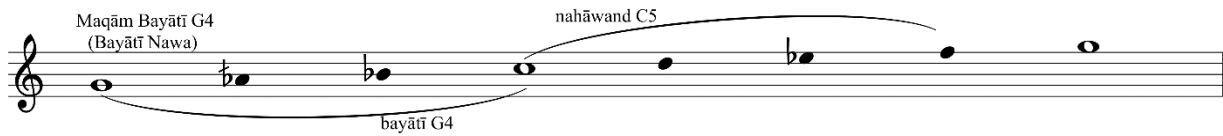


Figure 13: *maqām bayātī* G4 scale

Marcus specifies several concepts that classify modulations according to different criteria. Below are some of the concepts that are most relevant to this research project:

1) **gradual modulation** vs **sudden modulation**: a gradual modulation occurs in a middle of a phrase, while the melody often begins with the new *maqām*'s secondary *jins* and gradually descends to its root *jins*.

In a sudden modulation, the two *maqāmāt* are contrasted in an immediate juxtaposition, and usually the new *maqām* is presented after a cadence in the primary *maqām*.

2) **common modulation** vs **rare modulation**: the most common modulations are the ones to new *maqāmāt* on the dominant of the primary *maqām*. Other common modulations are to *maqāmāt* which share the same tonic with the primary *maqām*.

‘Rare or unusual modulations might involve unusual transpositions [...], or a direct modulation between modes that are generally perceived as being distant from one another.’¹⁴⁹

3) **passing modulation** vs **full-fledged modulation**: ‘the criteria for characterizing a given modulation in these terms include the amount of time one spends in the new mode and whether there are any major cadences in this mode.’¹⁵⁰ In a full-fledged modulation, the melody will spend a considerably long time within the new mode, and might involve a cadence on the new mode's tonic.

‘Passing modulations are commonly dismissed with the comment: “This is not a real modulation; it’s just a *ḥarakah*,” that is, roughly “a brief movement”.’¹⁵¹ ‘Passing modulations play an important role since it is often only in these brief phrases that some of the rarest and least-used modes ever appear in practice.’¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ *Bayātī* G4 is widely known by the name *bayātī nawa*.

¹⁴⁹ Marcus, “Modulation in Arab Music,” p. 173.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 180.

Accidental tones: accidental tones are ‘characteristic features of the *maqamat* in which they occur.’¹⁵³ Marcus classifies three types of accidentals:

1) **lower neighboring tones:** these ‘are accidentals which are approached from and followed by the same note, this note being a half step above the accidental itself, e.g., F E F, G F# G, Bb A Bb.’¹⁵⁴

2) **chromatic tones:** in this type of accidentals ‘the original note and its altered version appear in immediate succession. The resulting movement (D Eb E F in maqam Nahawand) is what we are referring to as a chromatic movement.’¹⁵⁵ ‘Such chromatics are limited to two tetrachords, Nahawand and Kurd.’¹⁵⁶

3) **secondary leading tones:** these are ‘generally approached and followed by the same note, this note being a half step below the accidental itself, e.g., F Gb F or G Ab G.’¹⁵⁷

2.2 General features of a number of *maqāmāt* in common practice

In spite of the prominence of the concept of scale in the 20th-century Arabic music theoretical sources in presenting the different modes, in practice, ‘Arab modes seldom exist in extended states of modal ‘purity’ (such as found in Indian music):’

The idea that the definitions of the individual *maqamat* should be flexible enough to allow for accidentals and other temporary phenomenon is, in fact, consistent with the way most musicians conceptualize the individual modes [...] In practice, accidentals and elements from neighbouring modes are commonly mixed into the presentation of a given *maqam* in order to enrich and enhance its features. Musicians have developed an understanding of the boundaries of the individual modes which reflects this aspect of the performance practice. In so doing, they commonly recognize fewer modes than do theorists.¹⁵⁸

Perhaps the closest expression of this notion in *maqām*-related literature, is the prominent approach of classifying the modes according to their root *jins*. In this approach, *maqāmāt* that share the same tonic and root *jins* are considered as belonging to the same family.¹⁵⁹ *Maqām* families have the principal *ajnās* at their root. For example, the *maqāmāt rāst* and *suznāk* presented above (Fig. 11) belong to the family of *rāst* G4.

¹⁵³ Marcus, *Arabic Music Theory*, p. 627.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 612.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 616.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 617.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 355-357.

¹⁵⁹ Late 20th-century theoretical sources classify up to eleven basic *maqāmāt*; these are ‘*ajam*, *rāst*, *nahāwand*, *nawā-athar*, *bayātī*, *ṣabā*, *kurd*, *hijāz*, *sīkāh*, *huzām* and ‘*irāq*. See Marcus, *Arabic Music Theory*, p. 333.

In the following paragraphs, I will present general features of common practice in few *maqāmāt* that are of relevance to this research project. The *maqāmāt* I chose to present are *rāst*, *nahāwand*, *bayātī*, and *ḥijāz*; they are widely considered to be among the principal *maqāmāt* in Arabic music, i.e., ‘maqāmāt which make up the core of the common performance practice’¹⁶⁰ (and cover many of al-Qaṣabjī and al-Sunbātī’s commercial recordings repertoire). They have the principal *ajnās* in their roots, and are named after them. In other words, these *maqāmāt* are the major *maqāmāt* of their respective families.

Following the steps of Marcus, the presentation of each *maqām* addresses general features such as the common tones beyond the basic scalar presentation (or the *ajnās* below and above the *maqām*’s central octave), its common accidental tones (or its alternative secondary *jins*), its basic melodic progression, and its most common or most ‘clichéd’ modulations:

In practice, [...] a more complex and dynamic definition of the individual modes emerges, involving such considerations as the notes not duplicating at the octave [...] a common progression or path for moving through the various regions of a mode’s scale, additional tetrachords beyond those indicated in the simple scalar presentation of the mode, characteristic accidentals, and a set of standard modulations to other modes. The presence and persistence of this considerably denser definition of the modes in practice speak both to the existence of distinct traditions of music theory and music practice and to another important aspect of traditional Middle Eastern music culture: that performers and composers absorb a "common practice" understanding of the various melodic modes and then seek to work within the existing modal tradition, while improvising or creating fixed compositions.¹⁶¹

Maqām rāst

As previously mentioned, the scalar presentation of *maqām rāst* includes the root *jins rāst* and a secondary *jins rāst* G4 (Fig. 14). In practice, the tone B4 half-flat is often altered with B4 flat. In terms of *ajnās*, this results in an alternative *jins nahāwand* G4.

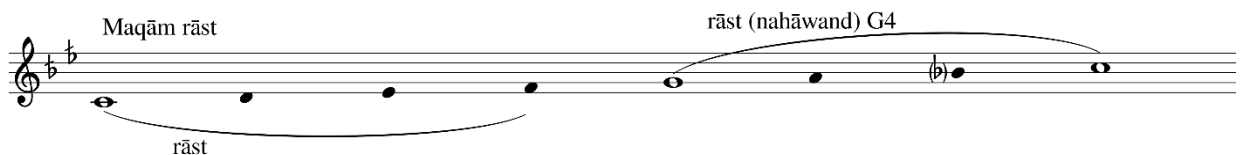


Figure 14: *maqām rāst* scale including its alternative secondary *jins*

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 334.

¹⁶¹ Marcus, “The Eastern Arab System of Melodic Modes,” pp. 67-68.

It is widely accepted that the tones below the tonic are comprised of *jins rāst* G3 (Fig. 15). In fact, according to *maqām* authors such as D’Erlanger (1949), one of the main characteristics of this *maqām* is to use *jins rāst* G3.¹⁶² *Maqām rāst* also duplicates itself at the octave tone.

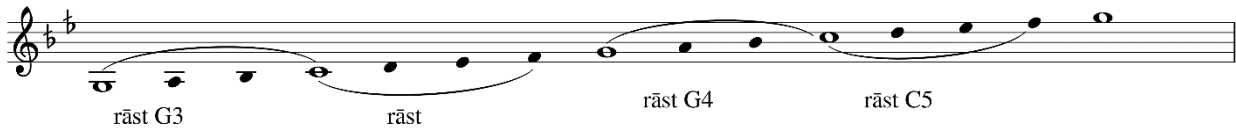


Figure 15: *maqām rāst* below the tonic and above the octave tone

Perhaps the most common modulation in *maqām rāst* is to *maqām suznāk* or *jins hijāz* G4 (this was previously presented above in Fig. 11). Finally, *rāst* is widely practiced as an ascending *maqām*, which means that a musical piece in this *maqām* will mostly begin around the tonic while operating in the root *jins* together with *jins rāst* G3 (or at least part of it).

Maqām nahāwand

The most common scalar presentation of this *maqām* includes a root *jins nahāwand* plus *jins kurd* on the 5th tone (Fig. 12). *Nahāwand* duplicates itself in the second octave (Fig. 16). The tones below the tonic are comprised of *jins hijāz* G3. When the melody shifts towards the area of the octave tone, the secondary *jins* is altered to *hijāz* G4 (the tone Bb4 is altered with B4 natural). One of the most common modulations in *maqām nahāwand* is to *bayātī* G4 (Fig. 13).

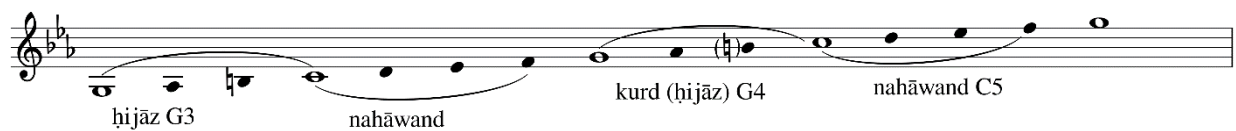


Figure 16: *maqām nahāwand* below the tonic and above the octave tone

Musicians today widely practise *nahāwand* as an ascending *maqām*. In the phonograph era, on the other hand, *nahāwand* was widely practised as an ascending-descending *maqām*.

*Maqām bayātī*¹⁶³

The scalar presentation of *maqām bayātī* (also known as *bayāt*) includes the root *jins bayātī* and the secondary *jins nahāwand* on G4 (Fig. 17). The tones below the tonic consist of *rāst* G3 (Fig. 18). When the melody moves to the range of the octave tone, *bayātī* duplicates itself, and

¹⁶² D’Erlanger, Rodolphe. *La Musique Arab*. Vol. 5, Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1949, p. 178.

¹⁶³ One example of the change in *maqām* practice and the gap between theory and practice in Arabic music, can be implied from the description of *bayātī*’s melodic progression in the Book of Arab Music Congress, where this *maqām* is an ascending-descending *maqām*. See *Kitāb Mu’tamar al-Mūsīqā*, 1933, p. 265. Alternatively, al-Qaṣabjī’s two *taqāsīm* in *maqām bayātī* which were recorded several years before the Congress was held in the 1920s (and which will be discussed in the next chapter), display an ascending direction.

the secondary *jins* is replaced with *jins rāst* G4 (the tone Bb4 is altered with Bb4 half-flat). *Maqām bayātī* also duplicates itself at the octave tone.

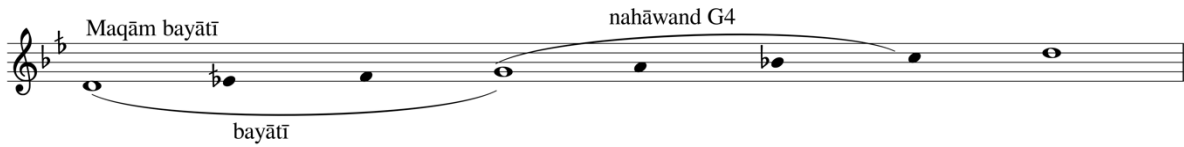


Figure 17: *maqām bayātī* scale

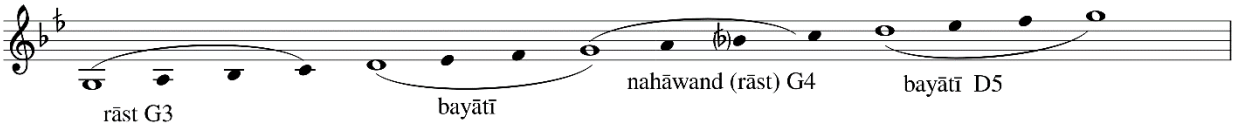


Figure 18: *maqām bayātī* below the tonic and above the octave tone

One of the most common modulations in *bayātī* is to *bayātī shūrī* (Fig. 19).¹⁶⁴ This modulation involves changing the secondary *jins* to *hijāz* G4 while keeping the *bayātī* in root *jins*. It is mostly practiced as a passing modulation.

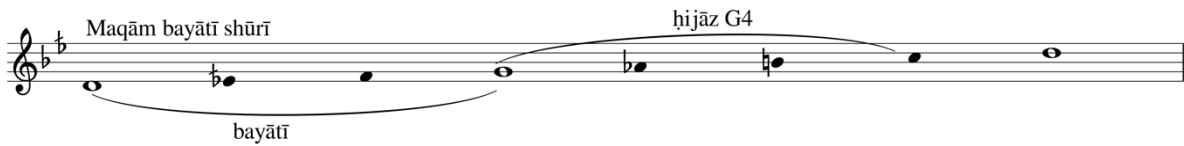


Figure 19: *maqām bayātī shūrī* scale

Another common practice in *maqām bayātī* is to modulate to *rāst* G4. This modulation often adds at least a few tones from *ajnās* that are typical of *maqām rāst* G4, especially *jins rāst* D4 (Fig. 20).

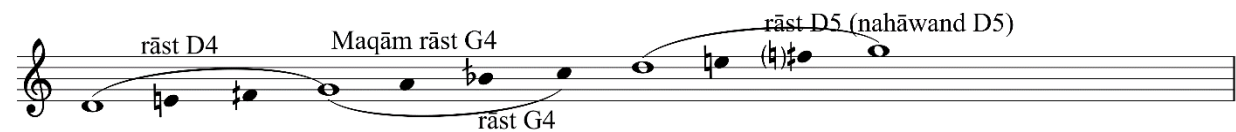


Figure 20: *maqām rāst* G4

Maqām hijāz

The scalar presentation of *maqām hijāz* (also referred to as *hijāzī*) includes *hijāz* as the root *jins* and *nahāwand* G4 as the secondary *jins* (Fig. 21).

¹⁶⁴ Marcus, “The Eastern Arab System of Melodic Modes,” p. 41.

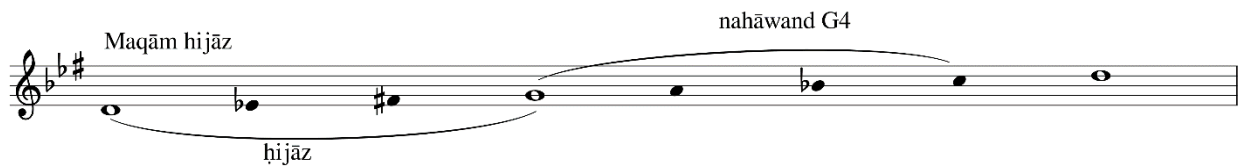


Figure 21: *maqām hijāz* scale

Hijāz is widely practiced as an ascending *maqām*. Like *bayātī*, the *jins* below the tonic is *rāst* G3. When the melody shifts towards the octave tone, the secondary *jins* is replaced with *rāst* G4 (or the tone Bb4 is replaced with B4 half-flat). *Hijāz* could either duplicate or not duplicate itself at the octave.¹⁶⁵ In the latter option, the *jins* or the scale becomes *nahāwand* D5.

Rāst G4 is commonly practiced as a modulation. Another common modulation or tone alteration in *hijāz* involves the tone C5#. In D'Erlanger's presentation of this *maqām*, the tone C5# forms part of *hijāz* A4.¹⁶⁶

2.3 *Maqām* in the *taqsīm* genre

The description and definition of *taqsīm* is often tied with *maqām* and vice versa. Touma refers to improvisation and *maqām* as two aspects of the same phenomenon.¹⁶⁷ Feldman describes the *taqsīm* genre as 'a vehicle for the expression of the melodic progression (*seyir*) and modulation within the makam system.'¹⁶⁸

The Arabic Music Conference adopted about a hundred transcriptions of *taqāsīm* 'to represent the form, and as examples of the different maqāmāt.'¹⁶⁹ These *taqāsīm* – which were provided by 'Alī Darwīsh – a renowned Syrian musician and *nāy* player – 'represent a majority of the maqāmāt which the delegates to that conference agreed were representative of the Arabian musical tradition.'¹⁷⁰ Darwīsh's transcriptions were also included in D'Erlanger's book on *maqām*.¹⁷¹

The development or unfolding of a *maqām* in a *taqsīm* performance is often described as having a form or shape of an arc. The arc-shape is best described in the words of Touma:

The *maqām* is essentially based upon a systematic realization of the tone-levels which gradually move upwards from the lower to the higher register, or downwards from the upper to the lower register, gradually ascending to the higher registers [...] The aggregate of phases determines the form of the *maqām*, a form which is shaped by the succession of the central tones of the tone-levels. Each central tone

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 518.

¹⁶⁶ D'Erlanger, *La Musique Arabe*, p. 278.

¹⁶⁷ Touma, "The Maqām Phenomenon," pp. 38-48.

¹⁶⁸ Feldman, "Ottoman Sources on the Development of the Taksīm," p. 22.

¹⁶⁹ Al-Faruqi, *The Nature of Musical Art of Islamic Culture*, p. 201.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

is enriched by neighboring tones and is sustained for a duration determined by the musician. One musician may take seven seconds to present a tone level, another forty seconds [...] The succession of the central tones of the tone-levels can be reduced to the contour of an arc.¹⁷²

To give an example, Figure 22 is ‘Alī Darwīsh’s transcription of a *taqsīm* in *maqām rāst* as it is presented in D’Erlanger’s volume on *maqām*.¹⁷³ The arc-shape is realized through four basic tone levels or phases:

- 1) tonic level or phase: the melody operates in the area of the root *jins* and *jins rāst* G3; the tonic is the center of the melodic activity or the tonal gravity.
- 2) dominant level or phase: the melody mainly operates in the secondary *jins rāst* G4 while touching the root *jins*; the dominant is the center of the melodic activity or the tonal gravity.
- 3) octave tone level or phase: the melody mainly operates in the area of the octave using the full scale *rāst* above this tone, and partially using the secondary *jins*. The octave tonic is the center of the melodic activity or the tonal gravity.
- 4) Closure: the tonal gravity is gradually shifted back towards the tonic, the finalis. The melodic descent alternates the tone B4 half-flat with Bb4 (or goes through the alternative *jins nahāwand* G4).

It should be emphasized, though, that Darwīsh’s pure representation of *maqām rāst* is an abbreviated illustration, and that in practice a *taqsīm* in this *maqām* will most probably differ significantly.¹⁷⁴ This illustration serves as a starting point to investigate and describe the structure of *taqsīm* in the recording repertoire discussed in this research project.

One significant element that will most probably occur in practice, is the inclusion of a variety of *ajnās*, especially in the dominant and octave tone phases. In the dominant phase for instance, as stated in the previous subchapter, it is very common to use the tone Bb4 instead of the tone B4 half-flat, or it is very common to utilize the alternative *jins nahāwand* G4. Moreover, a modulation to *hijāz* G4 is very common at this stage of the *taqsīm*.

¹⁷² Touma, “The Maqam Phenomenon,” pp. 41-43.

¹⁷³ D’Erlanger, *La Musique Arabe*, p. 179.

¹⁷⁴ On Darwīsh’s transcriptions from the point of view of performance practice, al-Faruqi writes: ‘One wonders, however, if these sample taqāsīm are transcriptions of actual performances. Their uniform length and brevity make them suspect. Instead, they are probably composed by Shaikh ‘Alī Darwīsh for illustrating the maqāmāt and were not meant to be descriptive notations of real performances. Recorded and live performances differ from these sample taqāsīm by giving evidence of a gradual increase in length of fawāṣil as well as in intricacy of the melodic and rhythmic patterns.’ See al-Faruqi, *The Nature of Musical Art of Islamic Culture*, p. 211.

27— Taqsīm en: RĀST

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled "27— Taqsīm en: RĀST". The score is written on seven staves of music, each containing a different melodic line. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals. Four specific sections of the score are highlighted with red boxes and labels:

- Tonic level**: Located at the top of the first staff.
- Dominant level**: Located on the third staff.
- Octave tone level**: Located on the fourth staff.
- Closure**: Located at the bottom of the seventh staff.

Below the staves, the text "Fig. 72 bis" is printed.

Figure 22: *taqsīm* in *maqām rāst* by ‘Alī Darwīsh

Another element of common practice is the melodic emphasis on a variety of tones in the different phases. In the tonic phase, for instance, the melody might highlight a number of tones in the root *jins* such as D4, E4 half flat and F4. In addition, the dominant level might include an intermediate closure, i.e., a descent to and ending on the tonic (the reference to the tonic in the dominant level occurs in all the *taqsīm* recording repertoire that I have encountered in this research project).

The phases as they are described above are typical of ascending *maqāmāt*. An ascending-descending *maqām* will typically begin with the dominant, and continue with the same level, or/and move to the octave tone phase. A descending *maqām* will typically begin with the octave tone and will most probably continue developing the same range or extend it to include several other tones.

Finally, it should be noted that the full realization of an arc-shape with all its phases is mostly found in an exploratory *taqsīm* (i.e., a *taqsīm* that is performed as an independent piece).

2.4 *Taqsīm* terminology

Pause: ‘a pause is defined as a temporal unit in which no melodic or rhythmic activity is taking place.’¹⁷⁵ The perception of a pause relies on the rhythmic materials that precedes and follows any lapse of time between two notes. In other words, a pause is determined not by its length alone, but by its length in relation to the surrounding rhythm.’¹⁷⁶

Figure (or melodic figure): ‘a short melodic idea having a particular identity of rhythm and contour, often used [...] in conjunction with other such ideas to build a larger melodic idea.’¹⁷⁷

Cell: the smallest recognizable unit or melodic figure.

Motif: a recurring melodic figure or melodic idea.

Tarjī‘āt (lit. returns): a technique or a specific way of using a pedal tone in which a melody is carried out after it (see the oval in Figure 23).¹⁷⁸



Figure 23: *tarjī‘āt* and *iqāma*

Iqāma (also spelled *iqāmah*; lit. stay; plural ***iqāmāt***): the act of stopping on a tone and repeating it a number of times (see the rectangle in Fig 23).¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁵ Arnon, “Improvisation as Verbalization,” p. 37.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 38.

¹⁷⁷ Drabkin, William. ‘Figure,’ *Grove Music Online*, 20 January 2001, edited by Deane Root, Oxford music Online, doi:10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.53712. Accessed 25 March 2019.

¹⁷⁸ Abdallah, Tarek. “L’art égyptien du *taqsīm mursal* au ‘ūd de Sayyid a-s-Suwaysī à Muḥammad al-Qaṣabgī.” *Revue de Traditions Musicales de Monde Arabe et Méditerranéen*, no. 9, 2015, p. 84-85.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 83.

Zīr-bamm (from Persian; lit. high-low): a simple type of polyphonic texture that involves playing a drone (mostly an open string) in the high register while playing a melody in the low register (Fig. 24).



Figure 24: zīr-bamm

Fāṣilah (lit. passage; plural **fawāṣil**): this term is borrowed from al-Faruqī and refers to music material that is demarcated by two pauses:

Some of them (fawāṣil) are complete musical periods, analogues to a full idea or sentence. These end on one of the marākiz tones (tone centers) or on the qarār (tonic) of the maqām. The setting on this tone provides a temporary resting place, and is followed by a long waqfah or period of silence to set the concluded fāṣilah apart from which follows. In other performances, several fawāṣil, comparable to phrases, combine to form a complete musical idea. The intra-period waqfāt (pauses) are relatively shorter periods of silence through which the listener's feeling of aesthetic tension remains suspended until the melodic activity resumes with the next passage.¹⁸⁰

To give an example, Figure 25 shows the first two *fawāṣil* in al-Qaṣabjī's *taqṣīm hijāz* on Odeon. *Fawāṣil* are indicated with numbers on the left side of a staff in the score; the length of a *fāṣilah* includes the length of the pause following it; the length of a pause is indicated above the fermata.

¹⁸⁰ Al-Faruqī, *The Nature of Musical Art of Islamic Culture*, p. 199.

$\text{♩} = \text{c. } 160$

Figure 25: al-Qaşabjī's *taqṣīm ḥijāz* on Odeon [00:04-00:49]

Phrase: Arnold Schoenberg's definition of the term 'phrase' forms a general guideline in determining phrases in this research project. As he writes in his book *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, the phrase is:

A kind of a musical molecule consisting of a number of integrated musical events, possessing certain completeness, and well adapted to combination with other similar units. The term phrase means, structurally, a unit approximating to what one could sing in a single breath. Its ending suggests a form of punctuation such as a comma [...] Rhythm [...] is often the determining factor in establishing the unity of a phrase [...] Phrases endings may be marked by a combination of distinguishing features [...] The length of a phrase may vary within wide limits.¹⁸¹

Phrases are indicated with the number of *fāṣilah* plus the number of phrases in the score. For instance, the first *fāṣilah* 1 in al-Qaşabjī's *taqṣīm ḥijāz* by Odeon (Fig. 25) includes five phrases, units 1.1-1.5. In some cases, one *fāṣilah* is equivalent to one phrase only.

Semi-phrase: a coherent melodic fragment or segment that is smaller than a phrase. Semi-phrases are indicated in Latin alphabets after the number of phrases. For example, phrase 1.1

¹⁸¹ Schoenberg, Arnold. *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*. Faber and Faber LTD, 1967, p. 3.

in al-Qaṣabjī's *taqsīm ḥijāz* (Fig. 25) includes two semi-phrases, units 1.1a and 1.1b.

The analysis or the division of *fawāṣil* into phrases or semi-phrases (for instance, 1.1 or 2.2b etc.) is determined by a certain 'logic' behind the movement or the progression of a melodic line. To give an example, let us re-examine *fāṣilah* 1 in al-Qaṣabjī's *taqsīm ḥijāz* (Fig. 25). Here, al-Qaṣabjī typically begins the *taqsīm* with establishing the tonic level and exploring the root *jins ḥijāz* and the *jins* below the tonic, *rāst* G3. The melodic line could generally be divided into three parts. The first part is a general descent from the root *jins* to the *jins* below the tonic; it occupies the first staff in the score. The second part is a gradual ascent back to the root *jins* followed by a 'stop' or *iqāma* on the tonic D4 (the *iqāma* is marked with a black rectangle). And the third part is a cadence ending on the tonic (it is marked with a red rectangle; see the definition of the term cadence below); the latter two parts occupy the second staff in the score.

Every part progresses through smaller melodic segments mostly having an ascending-descending direction. For instance, in the first part, the descent is executed through two ascending-descending melodic segments, phrases or units 1.1 and a 1.2: in unit 1.1a the melody ascends to F#4, and in unit 1.1b the melody descends to C4; in unit 1.2a the melody ascends to D4, and in unit 1.2b the melody descends to G3. *Fāṣilah* 1 progresses through several main pitches that are illustrated in Figure 26.

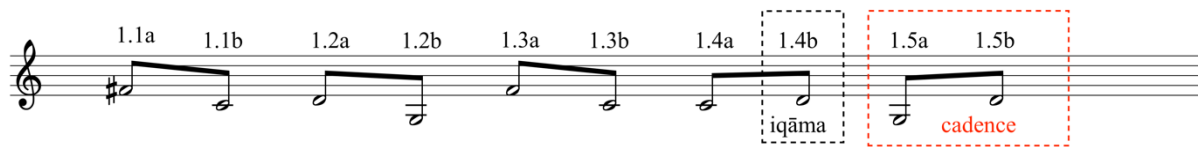


Figure 26: fundamental melodic line of *fāṣilah* 1 in al-Qaṣabjī's *taqsīm ḥijāz* on Odeon [00:04-00:23]

Fundamental melodic line: the main pitches or tones through which a melody progresses. These tones are located at the end of semi-phrases or phrases (see the paragraph above and Figure 26).

Cadence: a melodic unit that closes a *fāṣilah*. The common term for cadence in Arabic music is *qaflah* (lit. closure; plural *qaflāt*). When describing cadences Racy writes:

Cadences are recognizable motivic structures that mark the endings of major musical phrases and are typically followed by short pauses. In terms of overall stylistic content, the *qaflāt* (cadences) seem particularly dense and dynamic. They often pack many short notes, exhibit intricate accentual, rhythmic, melodic, and ornamental nuances, and display a relatively high level of melodic activity. Although largely improvised, *qaflāt* tend to be highly patterned, or cliché-like. These structures also vary in length, ranging from small motifs of one or few notes, to more elaborate configurations that span an octave or more [...] Furthermore, they inspire various degrees of finality or resolution. Some, for example, are suited for less conclusive or momentary stopping, whereas others, being associated with

a powerful sense of finality, would characteristically end on the tonic note and mark the termination of a major section if not an entire performance.¹⁸²

The degree of finality of a cadence is set according to its ‘size’ (phrase or a semi-phrase), its tone range, its ending tone, and according to its melodic-rhythmic character.

Conclusive cadence: a cadence with a coda-like function; they expand and reassure preceding music materials that reached a sense of resolution (the resolution mostly manifests itself with an *iqāma* on the tonic). Conclusive cadences with the strongest sense of finality mostly venture through the *maqām*’s central scale and might include a few tones above the octave tone. For example, unit 7.12 in al-Qaṣabjī’s *taqsīm ḥijāzkār* on Baidaphon (Fig. 27) is a conclusive cadence finishing with the *maqām*’s tonic. In addition, a common feature in conclusive cadences is to modulate.



Figure 27: al-Qaṣabjī’s *taqsīm ḥijāzkār* on Baidaphon [02:50-03:08]

Action: this new term is introduced here for a number of phrases or *fawāṣil* that emphasize or highlight one of the predominant tones. The *action* can employ the *maqām*’s structural *ajnās*, or it can carry out a modulation.

Closure: the process or the act of descending to and finishing on the tonic after an *action*. The closure process consists of at least a cadence, or might include a *resolution* (see below) followed by a cadence.

Resolution: this new term is used for a gradual descending melody within the closure process where the performer decides to retrieve to the tonic after an *action*. Said differently, in the *resolution* the center of tonal gravity is gradually shifted from a predominant tone back to the tonic. The *resolution* mostly ends with an *iqāma* on the tonic. If the *action* carries out a modulation, the *resolution* will mostly re-establish the principle or original *maqām*.

To illustrate the last three terms, Figure 28 presents *fawāṣil* 3 and 4 in al-Qaṣabjī’s *taqsīm ḥijāz* by Odeon. *Fāṣilah* 3 and phrases 4.1–4.3 form the *action*; phrases 4.4 and 4.5 form the *resolution*. And phrase 4.6 form a conclusive cadence.

¹⁸² Racy, *Making music in the Arab world*, p. 104.

Figure 28: *fawāṣil* 3 and 4 in al-Qaṣabjī's *taqsīm ḥijāz* on Odeon [00:49-01:32]

Fāṣilah 3 forms an introduction to the section; it highlights or emphasizes the dominant tone G4. In phrases 4.1 and 4.2, the melody gradually descends and modulates to *nawā-athar*¹⁸³ on the tone G3 (Fig. 29). Notable in this modulation is the replacement of the tone C4 with the accidental tone C4-sharp, and the tone B3 half-flat with Bb3 (it should be mentioned here that accidentals hold for the whole staff in which they appear, unless cancelled). Finally, phrase 4.3 descends back to and re-emphasizes the tone G4 and introduces the secondary *jins*.

Figure 29: *nawā-athar* G3

The closure process includes a *resolution* that shifts back the tonal gravity to the tonic with a gradual descent. It finishes with an *iqāma* on the tonic (unit 4.5b) while returning to *ḥijāz* (it reintroduces the tones C4 and the tone B3-half flat). Phrase 4.6 is a conclusive cadence which operates within the tone range of the root *jins*.

¹⁸³ We can also refer to this modulation as *maqām ṣulṭānī-yikāh*.

Section: a number of *fawāṣil* that form together a coherent or a complete part within a *taqsīm*. For example, *fawāṣil* 3 and 4 in al-Qaṣabjī's *taqsīm ḥijāz* (presented in Fig. 29 above) form a section.

Exposition section:¹⁸⁴ a *fāṣilah* or a number of *fawāṣil* at the beginning of a *taqsīm* that form a coherent part together; they introduce or establish the main *maqām*. In an ascending *maqām*, for instance, the exposition establishes the root *jins* and the tonic. In an ascending-descending *maqām*, on the other hand, the exposition highlights the dominant before descending and finishing on the tonic.

Development section:¹⁸⁵ a section that comes after the introduction of the exposition of the *maqām*. In the development sections, the *action* mostly highlights one of the predominant tones. Development sections are the parts where modulations might occur in a *taqsīm*.

Structural climax: a number of phrases or *fawāṣil* within a development section displaying a relatively high textural density within a *taqsīm*. The climax mostly occurs in the range above the octave tone and mostly includes the highest pitch of a *taqsīm*.

Final closure: the last closure process in a *taqsīm*.

¹⁸⁴ A similar use of this term appears in the book by Signell: 'its function is to realize the seyir (progression) of the nominal makam.' See Signell, *Makam*, p. 67. Arabic *taqsīm* practitioners might refer to the exposition as *istihlāl* (lit. introduction).

¹⁸⁵ Signell uses the term development to refer to: 'modulating to another makam or exploiting the high register'; it comes as contrast to the exposition. See Ibid.