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## **The Palestinian music-making experience in the West Bank, 1920s to 1959: Nationalism, colonialism, and identity**

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## Chapter 1

### 1.1 Early Identity and Nationalism

Offering a clear definition of nation, nationalism, and identity has its challenges. Historians often label specific historical events or phenomena in a retrospective, to tag them as possible origins of national discourses. In some cases, such narratives provide new nations with legitimacy while potentially marginalizing others. When two or more emerging nations compete over the same geographical space, such scholarly interpretations may subsequently contribute to creating a different definition of the identities of these nations. However, the social fabric of such national groups may draw a different picture when compared to their proposed national identity, one which is potentially more homogeneous than different. Often, confrontations arise when such definitions contradict certain ideological agendas on either side. Such confrontations are often accompanied by political, nationalist, religious, or socioeconomic components, as well as external forces. As a product of modernist and colonial interventions, national identities and the establishment of nations are dependent upon a reordering of indigenous spaces for colonialist purposes that is rooted in supremacist ideologies. Therefore, national identity emerges as a constructed result of such discourses and historical processes and from the subsequent narratives which follow.

While the historical narratives and attributions concerning the nature and discourse of modern Palestinian national identity are debatable, the reality of it is not. Several monographs explore the story of how Palestinians acted and responded to Arabism, Zionism, Western ambitions, and three decades of British rule. I, therefore, see no reason to add another version of this story. Discussions about Palestinian identity and nationalism are only used here to establish a framework for identifying certain trends that had an impact on music.

Several factors seem to have shaped Palestinian nationalism during the 1930s and 1940s:

1. religious connections which were vital to Palestinians throughout the Holy Land (Khalidi 2010);
2. Ottoman reorganization of 1873 which established administrative boundaries in Palestine and remained in place until 1914 (Pappé 2003), see the map (figure 1 in the Appendix);
3. the common interests and fates which the inhabitants of these lands shared or were subjected to;
4. the establishment of colonial powers in the region and growing European interests; and
5. established cultural connections between communities beyond this region, which include shared linguistic, cultural, religious, and historical heritage.

Rashid Khalidi (2015) argues that the sense of Palestinian identity that emerged during this period included elements of Ottoman, Arab, Islamic, Christian, local Palestinian, and European ideologies. In another publication, Khalidi (2010) adds that such formations can be seen through the lenses of religion, nationalism, local patriotism, and affiliations of family and clan. Muhammad Y. Muslih (2005) points to various other emerging national identities that arose elsewhere in the region, at the same time, with which Palestinians were connected. He argues that the artificial borders that the mandatory governments imposed on the Arab populations in the region did not confine people to ideological boundaries. Consequently, various conflicting visions of the nature of this Palestinian nation started to emerge. Each vision came with a set of ideas and often presented itself to the public by imposition or appropriation. Two approaches that demonstrate such complexities are the cases of Kahlil Totah in 1932, and 'Ārif al-'Ārif in 1933.

Total attempted to achieve his vision through modern education, while al-‘Ārif tried to nationalize Bedouin culture. They both proposed a system for all communities in Palestine to adopt.

Khalil Total, a Quaker from Ramallah, was the headmaster of the Friends Boys’ School in Ramallah, a Christian missionary school. He was a member of the Board of Higher Studies, author of *The Contribution of the Arabs to Education*, and co-author of *The History of Palestine* and *The Geography of Palestine*, and formerly a principal of the Men’s Training College in Jerusalem (Total 1932). Total was aware of the dilemmas surrounding the formation of a new nation. At first, he expressed the need for a united and independent Palestine for all Muslims, Jews, and Christians (Ricks 2009). He believed that national leadership, political unity, and imaginative social strategies would lead all communities in Palestine to this goal.

To achieve this, Total defended the critical role of education and development of joint schooling for Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Palestine; he even expressed this on the record before the Peel Commission, formally known as the Palestine Royal Commission. However, according to Thomas Ricks, Zionist opposition to all mixed or cooperative educational systems “defeated [the] repeated attempts by the Mandate Department of Education to use the schools and educators to build bridges between the European Jewish colonies and Jewish Agency, and the indigenous Palestinian communities” (2009, 52). However, according to Ylana Miller (1985), the British designed the education system in Palestine to deny the validity of ideological movements and forces among Palestinian Arabs. They gave autonomy to the Jewish Vaad Leumi or National Council, which developed a curriculum that promoted Jewish nationalism (Ricks 2009).

The British considered mixed schools as notable achievements while acknowledging their limitations (Peel 1937, 341). To fulfill the vision that Palestine would become a home for the Jews, the British separated the concepts of citizenship from the cultural base of Palestinian Arabs and treated them as religious minorities (Miller 1985). They praised the attempts by Christian missionary schools for embracing such schooling and encouraged Western educational ideals and methods and their Christian-type character. Such schools, according to the Peel Report, did not promote Jewish or Arab nationalism, “not so much by suppression of such aspirations as by diversion of interest into other channels” (Peel 1937, 341). The “unifying interests of school life have found on the whole more powerful than the political antipathies of the parents” (ibid.). The British hoped for a subdued educational system for the Palestinian Arabs, one that acted as a vehicle for controlling their nationalist sentiment and emphasizing religious identities.

By 1936, Totah’s vision was no longer viable. The question that he faced was how to champion modernity while advocating for nationalism based on shared traits amongst the various Palestinian communities. He believed that education must also play a leading role in achieving this balance. He argued that all schools in Palestine needed radical changes and that rural education must focus predominantly on agriculture and town schools on vocational. In the concluding section of his article, Totah praised the British for what they offered and said that it would “behoove” Palestinians to learn all they can from them (Ricks 2009, 165). Elizabeth Brownson (2014) argues that providing elementary education to the rural masses during that period was meant to arbitrate the preservation of the privileged status of notable Palestinian families. Advocacy for a secular version of Arab nationalism seems to have also challenged Islamic nationalism (see McMeekin 2012). It was during this period that al-‘Ārif, an author of many books about Bedouins, advocated for the modern Arabs to adopt Bedouin values and

customs. He argued that Bedouins represent the pure and unaltered past. Adopting Bedouin law, according to al-‘Ārif, offered a middle ground where Islam would not become the basis for nationalism, rather tribal traditions, culture, and values (al-‘Ārif 1933). However, to reconcile the contradictions between West and East, modernity and tradition, al-‘Ārif’s version of nationalism also attempted to appropriate Bedouins through a Western colonial discourse while extending their culture to an Arab nationalist cause. In his view, this approach constituted the most authentic source of Arabness (Likhovski 2006). Essentially, both Totah and al-‘Ārif attempted to redefine populations according to a predetermined set of values. Despite their efforts to reconcile the various identities through a specific nationalist vision, their idea can still be seen as cultural appropriation, one that is in line with the colonial discourse.

According to Khalidi (2015), local communities in Palestine reacted differently to the general interests of the West. During that time there were three different attitudes among Palestinian Arabs: 1) disadvantaged or unprivileged groups who fought the colonial powers using arms; 2) an educated class of nationalists who resisted the British through rhetoric; and 3) notable families who accommodated the British and condoned the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine (58, 85). There is no doubt that Palestinian society suffered from deep internal divisions in the decades before 1948. Such divisions can be seen as mere differences between the lifeways among the various communities that inhabited Palestine at that time. The attitudes of such communities in the years following the beginning of the British Mandate reveal a great deal about how colonial powers managed to exploit such differences and maintain control of the general population. For example, the large landholding class which dominated Palestinian society at the time was “largely made up of notable traditional families who had held high religious offices and served as intermediaries between the Ottoman authorities and the

population” (Khalidi 2015, 20). The same class expanded rapidly under the British and started to include new merchant entrepreneurs who had purchased land with their newfound wealth (ibid.).

Britain had made a series of promises to support Arab independence. However, when it came down to Palestinian Arabs, the British demanded acceptance of the Mandate by the Palestinians, which meant recognizing the privileged national rights of the Jewish community, “and formal acceptance of their own legally subordinate position, indeed of their nonexistence as a people” (33). As Khalidi puts it,

Seeing this strikingly disparate behavior on the part of the colonial powers [granting independence to Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon] [...] the primary response of the Palestinian elite (unlike many of their counterparts in Egypt and Syria) was to beseech, petition, and beg the British to give them what they considered to be their natural entitlement. The idea of mobilizing the Arab population of Palestine against the British on a sustained basis was thoroughly alien to most of them, for notwithstanding their modern Western educations, they were deeply imbued with the top-down traditions that permeated Arab society and the Ottoman political system, and were strongly influenced by their upper-class origins, and by the networks of ties with the British mandatory authorities that had developed since 1920. (49)

Despite all signs of unfair British policies, the notable class assumed that sooner or later the British would come to their senses and deal with them as the “natural rulers” of Palestine (48).

## **1.2 Class, Ottoman Reforms, and Schools in the Nineteenth Century**

The Ottoman transformations of the nineteenth century forged new lifeways and statuses. They changed not only the political dynamics in the region while still part of the Ottoman Empire (1516 to 1917), but also the fundamental socioeconomic foundation of many of the communities, particularly in Palestine (Horner 1993; Hanioğlu 2010). During that period, Palestine faced several daunting changes, including industrialization, urban development, territorial disputes, land purchases, nationalism, Christian mission activity, and class conflicts



(Frantzman and Kark 2013; Beinin 1990; Stein 1984). It also experienced immigration, slavery, migration, and human colonization. Such changes influenced local communities in profound ways. Issues of class, religion, socioeconomic status, language, and political power gradually stirred into conflicts. An example demonstrating the disparities of the time is the widening socioeconomic gap between rural and urban communities in Ottoman Palestine, a state which continued well through the twentieth century (Horner 1993). Such conditions were due in part to the Ottomans' neglect of rural areas in terms of development, as well as the expanding socioeconomic and political powers of notable local families and the massive wealth which they have accumulated through land ownership, trade, and business. Most of such families resided in urban centers and operated as loyal servants to the central government in Istanbul and were actively engaging in business and trade (Horner 1993). Such a gap in wealth and status enabled notables to decide the future of their subjects, the poor.

One of the most important vehicles for the change was the *Tanzimat* or reforms. The reforms were a series of proclamations issued between 1839 and 1876 and intended to transform and modernize the Ottoman Empire based on European models (Hanioğlu 2010). While they were directed at Europe to suggest that the Ottoman Empire belonged among the European nations, the reforms were considered the first undertaking towards secularism in the Empire (ibid.). The proclamations' main objective was to establish a uniform and centralized administration linked directly to each Ottoman citizen while following national principles of justice, which applied equally to all (ibid.). The reforms, however, were not favored by notable families, including Palestinian ones. These families derived their power from religious status, heroic lineage, wealth, and lineage to the Prophet Muhammad, or through becoming willing agents of Istanbul's policies (Horner 1993). The consequences of such proclamations threatened

to diminish the independent power of the notables (Hourani 1993). Mostly, the reforms instigated the gradual development of a public consciousness among specific communities who were no longer willing to be ruled and wished to take part in the political process (Horner 1993). As the reforms represented a general disposition toward a more civil and secular future of the Ottoman Empire, structural changes to how Ottomans ruled their subjects were inevitable. According to M. Şükrü Hanioglu,

The state came to stand for Ottomanism, an inherently secular ideology. It began to appoint non-Muslims to important bureaucratic positions. Likewise, it undermined the traditionally dominant position of the clergy within the various communities by organizing representative assemblies to manage community affairs; in these a new balance between laymen [laypeople] and clergy was established. (2010, 76)

Palestinian notables, especially in Nablus and Jerusalem, felt threatened and vulnerable. They, however, managed to adjust their positions and benefit even further from the reforms system and the new changes which came along with it. In Paul Horner's words:

The notables of Jerusalem and Nablus not only successfully adapted themselves to these new structures but most often were able to redefine them in a manner that served both theirs and the central government's interests. Through their near-monopoly over positions on the various civic councils established during the second half of the nineteenth century, the Palestinian Arab notables of Jerusalem and Nablus ensured that the administrative and fiscal reforms initiated by Istanbul did not have an overly negative effect on themselves or their allies. (1993, 30)

The momentum towards a secular Ottoman Empire necessitated the establishment of a school system that was consistent with the aim of the reforms. However, it was not until 1869 that the Ottoman government succeeded in establishing a network of elementary and secondary public schools that followed the French curriculum (Abu Saad 2006). These schools, however, were not successful in attracting the Palestinian Arab population since all textbooks were

translated from French into the Ottoman language, instead of Arabic. Subsequently, such schools attracted the children of leading families to prepare them for future careers as civil servants within the Ottoman state (Khalidi 2010). According to John Coatsworth et al. (2015), the Ottoman language was “little studied in the Arabic-speaking provinces except by local provincial officials and high elites” (295).

During the same period, various Christian churches and mission organizations established hundreds of private schools in Palestine, mostly on lands which they purchased (Kark 1984). These private schools taught in Arabic in addition to at least one European language, which attracted the Arab Christian population (Abu Saad 2006). During the second half of the nineteenth century more schools were established by Christian mission organizations in Palestine, which resulted in expanding their networks substantially (ibid.). Such schools played a significant role throughout the region in the education of Christians. However, it was not until the latter part of the nineteenth century that the Ottomans allowed Muslim students to enroll in them (Davis 2002). Overall, the presence of such schools raised literacy and education rates for Christians considerably higher than for Muslims (Robson 2011). According to Ismael Abu Saad (2006), by the end of the Ottoman period only 22.2% of the Muslim population in Palestine attended schools, of whom 50% studied in private schools.

The resulting exposure to European educational systems, languages, and attitudes had a great impact on the lives of notable Palestinian families, and both at the social and political levels (ibid.). This influence demonstrated itself in different ways, including attire, taste in music and literature, and fields of study. Missionary schools had varying educational goals and sociopolitical orientations, a situation which also resulted in increased educational opportunities for the poor and girls, as shown in table 1 below:

Table 1. The number of students in Jerusalem schools in 1882 by type of school and gender (Davis 2002)

	Girls	Boys	Total
Christian schools	926	861	1,787
Christian schools for Jewish students	?	?	138
Jewish schools	160	1,547	1,707
Muslim schools	0	360	360
Total Number of Students	1,086	2,768	3,992

Demographically, the rural and Bedouin stagnant isolation and limited interaction with the urban centers of the Ottoman Empire was also about to change (Kushner 1986). The thirty-fourth Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Abdul Hamid II, wanted to integrate Arabs into modernity (ibid.) and to pacify Bedouins (Frantzman and Kark 2011, 2013). The completion of a telegraph link with Istanbul in 1865 reveals the importance that the Ottomans placed upon linking the central government to the villages and towns of Palestine (Horner 1993). However, such efforts were not always benevolent. The authorities and contemporary writers alike viewed such efforts as a control contest between Arab Bedouins in particular, and the Ottoman state (Frantzman and Kark 2011, 2013).

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the policies of Sultan Abdul Hamid II continued to aim to control Bedouins and to increase security and government income in the Empire, including in Transjordan and Palestine (ibid.). From 1838 to the early 1900s the Ottoman governors of Jerusalem complained that bloody clashes between the different Bedouin clans inflicted a state of desperate poverty on the region and its people. This subsequently led to a dramatic decrease in government revenue (ibid.). The Ottoman government, therefore, established settlement sites in Baysan, Marj Bin ‘Āmir, Jericho, and on the borders of the desert of Naqab (Frantzman and Kark 2011); first, to discipline the Bedouins and extend control over

their strongholds, and secondly to force Bedouins to abandon their lifeways and declare loyalty to the Ottomans. The Ottoman government took further steps to weaken Bedouins and placed “dependable” and “more loyal” Muslim immigrants from the Balkans (Bosnians) and the Caucasus (Circassians), as well as Egyptians in the same areas dominated by such Bedouins tribes (6).

Such changes in Palestine demonstrate that demographic movements were not only taking place as internal migrations. The change in Ottoman laws opened the door for European interests and immigration as well, which started to emerge and proliferate rapidly (Kark 1984). By the end of the nineteenth century, Palestine consisted of a mix of ethnicities and widely dispersed populations and communities. Based on such demographic diversity, one cannot make generalized statements about music in Palestine, rather more specific ones that pertain to each community separately.

It seems likely that musical practices in rural and Bedouin settings were just as Dalman described them in 1901. His findings are consistent with all subsequent research, including that of Cohen and Katz (2006). While most musical practices in such contexts can be seen as traditional presentations, Western models found their way to local Christian communities through Christian mission. These communities gradually embraced Western values, including Western music. Such interaction was supported by various publications, including a book that was published in 1885 in Beirut entitled *Mazāmīr Wa Tasābīḥ Wa Aghānī Rūḥīyya Muwaqqā‘a ‘ala Alḥān Muwāfiqa* (Book of Psalms and Praises and Spiritual Songs Conditioned to Suitable Melodies).

### 1.3 Arabism, Local Nationalism, Islamism

Though offering a definition of nationalism, culture, and identity is never a straightforward task, Khalidi argues that the composition of Palestinian Arab society during that period was culturally and linguistically homogeneous (Khalidi 2015). This assessment is debatable. Nevertheless, the events of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries prompted reactions and actions among the Arabs in Palestine. Some came through as embracing the ideals or ideologies of Arab nationalism, Islamism, secular European nationalism, or as mere patriotic resistance to Zionist colonization.

Although the Great Arab Revolt of 1916 against the Ottomans appeared to be a rebellion rooted in a secular Arab nationalist ideology, it was not described as such by Sharīf Ḥusain bin ‘Alī (McMeekin 2011). Instead, he accused the Young Turks of embracing a European style reform party that violated the sacred tenets of Islam (ibid.) Strategically Ḥusain wanted to appeal to populations where pan-Islamic sentiments had grown (Commins 2006; Yamani 2009). On the one hand, this positioned the Hashemite family at the center of the struggle for an independent Greater Syria and placed Islam as a vehicle for resistance (Khalidi 2015). Pan-Islamic sentiment competed heavily with secular trends, and regional nationalisms were emerging as an alternative to a broader form of Arab nationalism (Cleveland 2015).

On August 13, 1932 fifty Arab delegates from North Africa, Egypt, the Arabian Peninsula, and the Fertile Crescent convened in Jerusalem to discuss Arab matters (Shabīb 1981). The representatives focused on three main themes: 1) to consider all Arab countries as an integral and indivisible whole; 2) achieving complete independence required each Arab country to gear its efforts towards that aim; and 3) the Arab nation would oppose and fight imperialism with all the means available to it. During the conference, a group of notable Palestinian delegates

met in Jerusalem and established the Istiqlāl Party (ibid.).<sup>4</sup> ‘Ajāj Nuwayhid, a later important figure in steering music-making in Palestine, was among the founders. The goal of the party was to seek independence for all Arab countries, with the basic understanding that Palestine was part of Greater Syria historically and geographically (ibid.).

In 1936, the Arab Revolt in Palestine erupted against the British administration, demanding Arab independence and the end of the policy of open-ended Jewish immigration and land purchases. In mid-1937 the Peel Commission proposed to divide Palestine into a small Jewish state (20 percent of the British Mandate for Palestine) and to annex the remaining land to Transjordan (ibid.). King ‘Abdullah supported the Peel Commission, a position which increased his importance to the West as a significant player in the region (Morris 2008).

Jewish Zionism put Palestine’s Arab population in an unavoidable oppositional stance. Ultimately, both Christians and Muslims had no place in the Zionist project. Therefore, promoting Arab nationalism became an endeavor which offered an alternative from colonization and potentially the means to confront external threats. The period shows a significant impact by nationalist Palestinian Christians who took the lead in promoting national identity for Palestinian Arabs. The religious rhetoric of the period, however, continued to highlight an Islamic narrative of the conflict, which Arab Christians supported but only as a component of a broader Arab nationalist discourse. Yet, familial, tribal, geographic, religious, economic, and political divisions branded Palestinian identity. Such divisions were manifested through the continuous shortcomings of the Palestinian leadership during that period, and even earlier, leading to the events of 1948. Khalidi argues that “Arabism, Palestinian patriotism, local Jerusalem loyalties,

<sup>4</sup> For further reading see ‘Abd al-Wahhāb Kayyālī’s *Palestine: A Modern History* (2000).

and Ottomanism were overlapping identities which complemented one another and could be reconciled when a contradiction between them arose” (2010, 85). He claims that the impact of nationalist ideologies was less widespread among Palestinians, and the few who were affected by it tended to be influenced by Western European models (ibid.).

### *1.3.1 Arabic Language and Music as a Reagent of Christian Mission*

The Protestant Christian communities in Palestine emerged from Christian missionary activity beginning in the mid-nineteenth century (Robson 2011). The Church Missionary Society (CMS) was founded in 1799 and commenced its operation in the Middle East in the 1820s and sent its first missionary to Jerusalem in 1826 (ibid.). As missionaries navigated the region looking for ways to spread their religion, they encountered many obstacles and dilemmas. At first Christian missionaries arrived in Palestine intending to proselytize the Jews. But since they achieved little success, it soon led them to focus their attention on Palestine’s indigenous Christians. They invested in developing Arab Christian communities through schools, charities, hospitals, and other institutions despite the relatively small number of converts. Laura Robson writes:

By the late nineteenth century, Palestinian Christian populations were involved with the European powers in an unprecedented way. The links between Palestinian Christians and this European religious presence assisted the emergence of sectarian urban geography, as Palestinian Christians took advantage of land, housing, and jobs available to them from these new European institutions. At the same time, though, the foreign-driven expansion of Palestine’s cities also assisted the emergence of multi-religious, middle-class neighborhoods and public spaces. (2011, 21)

Many secondary schools were run by Christian missions, including German, Russian, French, American, and British institutions. Although deviating widely in their academic offerings, the foundation of their curriculum was strictly European, and often included vocational training (ibid.). In their schools, missionaries used Arabic instead of the Ottoman language as the



primary language of instruction and the most vital tool of proselytization. During the second half of the nineteenth century, a group of American Presbyterian missionaries based in Beirut embarked on a mission to translate the Bible into Arabic. One of their main objectives was to confront Muslim growth and doctrine, and direct Evangelical mission to the indigenous population. This endeavor of translating the Bible was pursued first by Eli Smith (1801–1857) in 1847, a major missionary figure who was based in Beirut (Jessup 1885). After Smith's death, Cornelius Van Alen Van Dyck of the Syrian mission completed the task. Others, including Naṣīf al-Yāzījī, Butrus al-Bustānī, and Yūsuf al-‘Asīr aided him.

During this period many Christian missionaries rigorously worked on mastering their Arabic skills in preparing for the Arabic translation. Based on the accounts of Henry Jessup the circle of those utilizing Arabic as a tool for Christian mission expanded and included many local poets and scholars. Many of them previously got involved in translating hymns and psalms into Arabic as well as writing their own.

The Beirut mission realized early on that knowledge of Arabic, and having an Arabic Bible, as well as setting hymns and psalms in Arabic, was key to the success of their undertaking, and a significant step for affirming their presence in the region. They were also careful not to impose new linguistic terms on Arab converts. For example, Jessup openly opposed introducing the word “Presbyterian” or the Arabic “Evangelical” Church altogether. Instead, it was called *al-Majma‘ al-Mashīkhī* (Congregation of the Elderly).

In 1847, Eli Smith published a translation of Mikhail Mishāqa's book *al-Risāla al-Shihabiyya fī al-Ṣinā‘a al-Mūsiqiyya*. To this day the book is considered one of the essential

theoretical treatises on Arab music.<sup>5</sup> In the introduction of the translation, Smith himself states the purpose behind his endeavor:

The mission, with which I am connected, has not yet succeeded in introducing singing into Arabic worship. The obstacles, which have prevented, are two; *one*, the peculiarities of Arabic versification, the *other*, the equally strong peculiarities of Arab music. The former is such, that a hymn composed according to Arabic rules of prosody, would, in very few cases, if any, be adapted to our tunes; and one composed according to our rules would be still less adapted to Arab taste. (1847, 173)

In the process of translating Mishāqa's treatise, Smith consulted with various manuscripts, including *Kitāb al-Aghānī*,<sup>6</sup> al-Fārābī's book on music,<sup>7</sup> and a treatise by an anonymous author written in 1267.<sup>8</sup> At the end of his introduction, Smith says:

It is a matter of sincere regret to me, that the compilation of this article [sic] had not fallen to someone, capable of throwing and additional interest around it, from a personal acquaintance with the science of music. As it is, I claim only to have done the work of a translator and compiler; and it is possible that even in doing this, I may have fallen into errors, from ignorance of the science under discussion. (175)

In the summer of 1862 Henry Jessup supported the publication of a children's hymnbook published at the mission's press. He wrote to his musical friend Dr. Charles S. Robinson of New York:

It has sometimes been a question with me whether the Arab race is capable of learning to sing Western music well. (This is partially due to the one-third intervals between the whole notes as against our one-half intervals.) The native music of the East is so monotonous and minor in its melody (harmony is unknown), so unlike the sacred melodies of Christian lands, that it appeared to me at one time that the Arabs could not learn to sing our tunes. It is difficult for the adults to sing correctly. (Jessup 1910, 251)

<sup>5</sup> For further reading see Mishāqa, Mikha'īl and Izīs F. A. Jabrāwī (1996)

<sup>6</sup> See *Kitāb al-Aghānī* by Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī.

<sup>7</sup> See *Kitāb al-Mūsīqa al-Kabīr* by Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Fārābī (872-950).

<sup>8</sup> It is likely that he is referring to *Kitāb al-Adwār wa-l-Iqā'* by Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Urmawī.

In his letter to Robinson, Jessup complained that when Arabs sing Western tunes, they sing with passion but not with much understanding. He noticed, however, that children can sing anything, and “carry the soprano and alto parts with great success” (ibid.). He also described the children singing at school, in the street, at home, in the Sunday school, in public worship, and at the missionary society meetings. Jessup expressed what he felt when those children were singing and said that “[t]here is a tide and a power in children’s singing which carries onward the older people and not only drowns out the discords and harshness of older voices but actually sweeps away prejudice and discordant feeling from older hearts” (ibid.).

Jessup’s records indicate that missionary hymns and tune books sold thousands of copies. Teachers used them to train their students to sing at their schools. He also noted that pianos were common during this period and that the locals started to embrace European musical standards (ibid.). In 1862, Jessup’s records show that there were thirty-seven members of the Beirut church, 150 in Sunday school and 175 of the native missionary society. He also directed weekly singing classes of 350 children (Jessup 1910).

Jessup described how singing psalms and hymns was central to the lives of Christian missionaries in the area, and how it became central to the lives of the new Arab converts. He wanted to introduce musical harmony to the Arabs while recognizing that it was not, as he thought before, universal or natural. Nevertheless, he attests that through education a genuine musical taste was already on the rise among the young generation of Christian Arabs. He tells a story about an Arab teacher in Beirut and his wife, who were both trained in singing Western tunes. Their second son developed a passion for music at an early age. He taught himself to play the piano and used to borrow Mrs. Jessup’s sheet music of Mozart, Beethoven, Handel, and Mendelssohn and play them at sight. He composed an oratorio with orchestral accompaniment,

which was performed by the Anglo-American chorus in Beirut. In his own words, Jessup described the achievement of this young man as follows:

With the aid of friends, he went to Paris, studied, supported himself by playing at evening meetings of the McCall Mission and the Y. M. C. A. entered the Conservatoire, achieved great success, and is now organist of the largest French Evangelical Church in Paris. His sister is an organist of the Syrian Evangelical Church in Beirut. He is a modest young man of exemplary character. (Jessup 1910, 252)

When the Arabic translation of the bible was published, a large group of Arab young men, who worked at the press and were members of the Protestant community, started to sing in Arabic to the tune of Hebron by Lowell Mason (1792–1872). The Arabic text of this new song, “Even Praise to Our God,” was written for the occasion by Ibrāhīm Sarkīs (1834–1885), one of the church’s Arab poets. Jessup witnessed this event and described the singing as a sweet sound arising from Syria by pious young men “ascribing glory and praise to God, that now for the first time the Word of God is given to their nation in its purity” (Jessup 1910, 76).

Christian Arabs have been involved in writing religious poetry for hundreds of years (Cheikho 2007). During the nineteenth century, which was an era of intense Christian missionary activity, many poets and scholars also got involved in writing religious poetry that rhymed with Evangelical values and teachings (Jessup and Ford 1885). These poets were also becoming increasingly mindful of the poetic meters which worked best with Western tunes. Samuel Jessup and George A. Ford mentioned that in 1883 the American missionaries in Beirut established a committee that included four prominent Arab Christian poets: Ibrāhīm Sarkīs, As‘ad al-Shudūdī, Ibrāhīm al-Ḥūrānī, As‘ad ‘Abdullah, and Salīm Kassāb (Jessup and Ford 1885). The team, including the authors, edited the poems from the previous 1878 edition of the *Mazāmīr* book and added new ones. Jessup and Ford indicated that in matching Arabic poetry to Western tunes, they continued to use standard Arabic poetic mnemonic device, *tafīla*, which lies at the heart of the

theory behind setting Arabic poetry and prosody. Also, according to Ford, it was crucial for adjusting the melodies to fit Arabic poetic meters (Ford 1913). They also noted that they transcribed some Arab tunes as an attempt to preserve them from being lost (ibid.). Although the authors labeled such transcriptions as Arab, some have Turkish, Armenian, and Greek characteristics such as numbers 403 and 419 in Jessup and Ford, which sound Greek and Armenian, respectively. This borrowing and sharing of melodies is not surprising given that it was common during this period, and well into the twentieth century, for songs to travel across linguistic barriers. Moreover, the authors did not indicate whether such tunes were secular or religious.

Based on my examination of the transcriptions, I found some secular songs such as number 395 in the 1913 edition of Ford’s book, and number 88 in the 1885 edition. The first song (Figure 1) first appeared in the 1885 edition of *Mazāmīr*, and later in Iṣṭifān’s article about Palestinian dabka in the *Muntada* magazine in 1944, as shown in Figure 3, and Dalman’s *Palästinischer Diwan* (Figure 4).

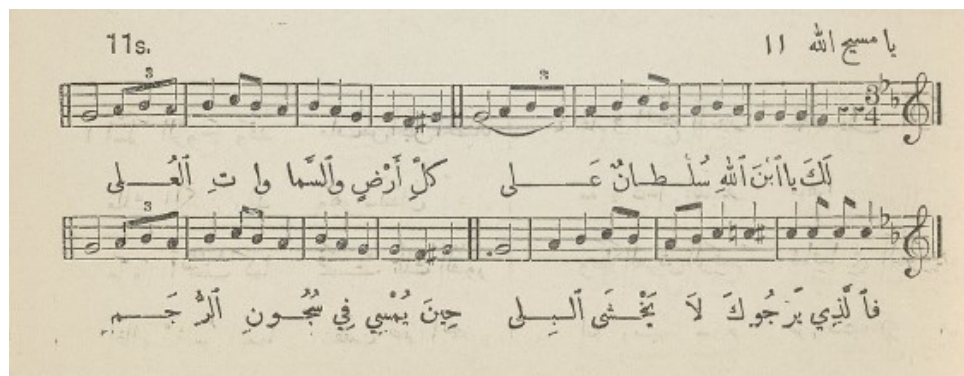


Figure 1. Secular melody adapted to a Christian religious text (Jessup and Ford 1885)

The second song (Figure 2) is known as “al-Bulbul Nāgha,” which is a popular song to this day. Iṣṭifān, a local Palestinian researcher, referenced the same lyrics in his 1928 book *The*



اللدزمه = قام ومع الصين فوق الحد - هانم طالت ال -  
 طالت الغيبه و لا البيت شوقى انا ل للزبن  
 فيه و لا ارسلي سلام - ارسلي صدا فزيد ا بو جديله شه قطر الندى  
 بنجلى الصدا من هوم الغيبه ومن ميه - عام

Figure 3. Secular song (Iṣṭifān 1944)

14<sup>b</sup> Dasselbe (Galiläa).

s. 269. Hām dam.a' il 'ēn fōḵ il - chadd hām t̄ā-lat il -  
 rē-be wa - lā-rsal-li sa - lām t̄ā-lat il - rē - be wa.lā -  
 rsal.li ḥa - da chudēd a - bu ḵdē-le schibh ḵaṭr en - ni - da.

Figure 4. Secular song (Dalman 1901)

محبة الله

Father, we thank Thee. L. M. لا حب كجيه ٨

بَشَعْرُ مَعْنَا إِن بِنَا أَلَمْ يُؤْسَ فِي الْحَيَاةِ

٢ لَاعَيْنَ مِثْلَ عَيْنٍ مِّنْ يُبْصِرُ أَسْرَارَ الْوُجُودِ  
تَحْرُسُنَا الدَّهْرَ لِكَيْ نَثْبِتَ فِي حِنْظِ الْعُهُودِ

٤ لَأَصَوْتِ مِثْلَ صَوْتِ مَنْ نَادَى الْجَمِيعَ وَدَعَا  
فَهُوَ الَّذِي نَعْمَةً لِمَنْ وَصَّابَهُ وَعَى

٥ فَلَنُضْغِ لِلصَّوْتِ الَّذِي بَحْرُسُنَا مِنَ الضَّلَالِ  
فَنَبْلُغِ الدَّارَ الْحَيِّ أَعَدَّهَا رَبُّ الْجَمَالِ

٣٩٥ الترنيمه الثلاث المئه والخامسة والتسعون

محبة الله الغائقة

١ لَأَحَبِّ مِثْلَ حُبِّ مَنْ نَجَّى الْأَنَامَ وَأَفْتَدَى  
وَهُوَ الَّذِي بَصَّيْنَا لِرَبِّنَا طَوْلَ الْمَدَى

٢ لَأَقَلِّبَ مِثْلَ قَلْبِ مَنْ أَحَبَّنَا حَتَّى الْوَفَاةِ

L. M. ٨

Figure 5. Secular song “al-Bulbul Nāgha” adapted to Christian religious text (bottom); same text assigned to a Western melody (top) (Ford 1913)



### 1.3.2 Reflections

Local and simple secular melodies had Arabic religious poetry assigned to them. The same religious poetry had also been assigned to fully harmonized Western melodies. While investigating the survival of local secular songs and their related religious texts, it appears that only Western tunes and their Arabic texts have survived. Most of the secular Arab songs did not even survive in secular contexts. Also, none of the original lyrics of the secular songs were referenced, except by Dalman and Iṣṭifān who included the text of some of the songs but not the notation, as in the case of Iṣṭifān.

Smith, Jessup, and Ford recognized that Arab music itself is difficult to understand, especially its intonations, scales, rhythms, and performance technique. They were, however, determined to make music an integral part of their work as missionaries and bring the local population to worship in the same way. However, to Jessup's ear Arab music sounded like minor scales (Jessup 1913), and the musically inclined missionaries seem to have given up on the idea of learning the Arab music idiom.

The transcriptions of Arab tunes were also selective. They restricted themselves to modes which the missionaries were able to understand. Those include melodies in major, Phrygian, Aeolian, and scales that have the descending augmented second as a featured component, such as the harmonic minor scale and the *maqām* scale *ḥijāz*. Their understanding of the rhythmic cycles tied to each of the melodies was also lacking, despite the access they had to people like Mishāqa. After all, learning the Arabic language is much easier than learning the *maqām* system. Therefore, Christian missionaries gradually pursued the matter from a different angle, the native language. By then, the concept of using Arabic as a tool of proselytizing native Arabs was also used to shape music-making in the direction of Western music. The publications that they put out

in the following years continued to include sheet music of mostly Western tunes, but the lyrics were all set in standard Arabic. The Beirut Press published several books after the 1862 children's hymnbook. Those include several editions of the hymns and psalms as well as many new ones. In the 1913 edition of the *Mazāmīr* book, it is noticeable that many of the poems, although religious, were set to embrace the homeland and assigned to march-like Western melodies.

Missionaries by this time were determined to bring their musical practice to local populations through the Arabic language, and not through Arab music. They supported this endeavor by publications, training, and formal instruction. As Jessup put it: "The introduction of melodeons, pianos, harmoniums, and organs by Americans and Europeans in the last fifty years and the regular instruction in harmony in the schools have developed in the second generation of educated Syrians several very remarkable cases of the musical genius of the European style" (1910, 566). Jessup took pride that the total number of pupils in 1891 was 7,117. He noted that by adding the numbers at other Protestant missions in Syria and Palestine, it went up to 15,000 children, all under Evangelical instruction (1910, vol. II, 593).

During the nineteenth century, industrialization, urban development, and mass migrations to urban centers affected rural and urban musical traditions in Palestine (Davis 2010). Contact with other cultures had transformed music-making in the region, and more dramatically in urban settings (Lachman [1936-1937] 2013). Nevertheless, musical connections occurred not only at the *maqām* level but also across the poetic landscape of the Arabic language. Melodic contours and poetic meters of vocal music in Syria show significant structural connections that probably go back hundreds of years (see Dalman 1901; Jessup 1885; Ford 1913; and Sbaïṭ 1986). Such links can still be seen despite the limited documentation of the Palestinian musical landscape. At

the same time, the transformations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have been particularly striking, especially with the pressures of modernity, as well as the phenomenon of change (Shiloah 1981, 19). The resulting musical blend reveals that the history of the region has always intertwined with many influences. The history and evolution of musical traditions are related to such trajectories, but also to the rapid changes that influenced Palestine's cultural, political, and demographic environment during the nineteenth century. Christian Arabs were not immune from change and their interactions with missionaries gradually transformed their musical outlook and expression.

#### **1.4 Poetry**

The poetry in Palestinian songs is usually in a colloquial Arabic, which is specific to the region. This type of poetry does not follow the grammatical rules of standard Arabic used by authors of literary poetry. However, it incorporates many of the devices found in literary poetry. It also loosely uses *buhūr*, the meters used in Arabic poetic schemes (Sbait 1986, 1993). Beats or pulses, as well as silence, are measured and counted according to *buhūr* and conferring to the basic rules of the local vernacular Arabic diction, articulation, and pronunciation.

Ḍurghām Sbait highlights the connections between colloquial and literary poetry. He demonstrates how certain literary devices are used in colloquial poetry, such as paronomasia, antithesis, metaphor, and meronymy. He also illustrates how poetic rhyme schemes distinguish song types from each other and influence melodies (Sbait 1986). He shows how music and poetry in the Near East are tightly interconnected. David Samuel Margoliouth articulates this notion perfectly and argues that “[s]ome of the Arab poetic meters seem to suggest either the dance or music or both” (Margoliouth 1925, 447), and often forcefully determine musical discourses.

Arab literary poets practiced the melodic-poetic recitation from ancient times. This style of reading can easily give the impression that melodies in rhythmic cycles and bars are organized in equal units as Virginia Danielson describes:

Traditionally, recitations of poetry form part of ceremonies, celebrations, and other performances. Sophisticated poetry and colloquial verse are frequently sung, with the expectation that the singer's rendition will enhance the mood and meaning of the poetry but not obscure its puns or other wordplays. The singing of a *qaṣīda*, a long narrative poem describing nature, political events, or religious devotion, exemplifies pre-Islamic classical tradition. In this tradition, singers select a dozen or more poignant lines from much longer poems and create melodies for them. Their performances featured lengthy variations or improvisations on lines at the behest of listeners who felt themselves drawn into the mood of the poetry and music. This tradition continues in a multitude of genres of song, including highly colloquial folksongs performed in small villages, that operate similarly—that is, they combine clever ideas and wordplay with creative musical rendition. (Danielson 2004, para. 4)

It seems logical, therefore, to assume that there is a link between poetry and the musical traditions related to them, on the one hand, and with those of the Arab musical and literary past on the other. The survival of song types in the Ottoman period is likely due to the structure and multiethnic nature of the Empire in addition to the centralized governance which positioned progress around major urban centers, and neglected development in rural and Bedouin communities. It is safe to assume that urban musical practices were subjected to outside influences more so than rural and Bedouin trajectories.

Despite the pivotal link between music and poetry, poetry consistently plays a more dominant role in Palestinian songs, not music. Music occupies a subordinate status to poetry, especially in rural and Bedouin contexts where it conveys and presents text and serves as its carrier or transporter. Therefore, I examine lyrics and poems in terms of their poetic meters and literary connections. This procedure becomes necessary to demonstrate how syllabic orientation levies itself over the type of rhythmic cycles or duration of measured metrical units, as well as identifying shared historical traits.

## 1.5 Song

I divide Palestinian songs into three major categories which nonetheless often overlap: 1) a short song with a pulse (beat); 2) a strophic, binary, or ternary song with a pulse, and 3) a longer song with a pulse, rhythmic cycle, or free. I describe such categories in detail below, but must highlight that musical practices among Palestinians are primarily vocal, monophonic, and transmitted orally, as described below:

1. *Vocal*: Despite the variety, context, and function, Palestinian musical traditions are primarily vocal. An exception to this occurred in some urban pockets where instrumental music, mostly Ottoman, was present (Thompson 1860; Lachman [1936–1937] 2013).
2. *Monophonic*: A typical song would consist of a single melody, usually sung by one singer with occasional group participation. One or more musical instruments may join the singer(s) and play the same tune, in unison, or an octave apart. When performed by a group, the song texture can be regarded as a kind of complex monophony. Multiple voices may also present the same basic melody differently by applying various rhythmic or melodic embellishments. In this case, the texture becomes heterophonic.
3. *Oral and Observatory Transmission*: Palestinian musical traditions are transmitted orally or by observation. Informal master/apprentice scenarios occur, and even those rely heavily on memorizing the text first, and then the melody. The masters in this context are poet-singers.

An important aspect of Palestinian music-making in these contexts is that it also allows a degree of improvisatory elements which appear to various degrees in both music and poetry. Since most performers have little awareness or theoretical knowledge of *maqām*, any regularity

or irregularity occurring in melodies and the rules and principles structuring the melodic contours tend to be spontaneous, intuitive, and subconscious. Even within the same song type, poet-singers may, for example, change to a different *maqām* scheme during a giving performance. This flexibility allows them to have extra liberty, which reflects on *maqām*, rhythm, melodic contour, lyrics, and poetry (Cohen and Katz 2006), but seldom at the expense of text. An example of this is shown below by comparing the various versions of one single traditional song, “‘al-Rūzānā,” Figures 6, 7, 8, and 9. The transcriptions illustrate how the syllabic orientation remained the same across all four versions of the song despite the change in *maqām* and rhythm. The text of the refrain verse also remained mostly the same, but dozens of verses occur in each region where any of these versions appear. In all the transcriptions, I added slurs on certain notes to indicate how the diction rules of Arabic persist despite the change in *maqām* and rhythm. Essentially, melisma or any extension of a syllable must always occur while attached to the sound of one of the vowels *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u*.

ع الروزانا  
'al-Rūzana

Maqām: Jihārkah Traditional

$\text{♩} = 72$

ها فينا هل - ال كل نا زا رو ع/ال نا زا رو ع/ال  
'ar rū - zā - nā 'ar rū - zā - nā kul li - l - ha na fi - hā

D.C. al fine  
Fine

ها زي جاي - - - ال نا زا رو مت/ال ل عم و يش  
waish 'im - li ti rū zā - nā al - la yī - jā - zī - hā

Figure 6. “‘Al-Rūzānā,” *maqām jihārkah*, 6/8 rhythm

عَ الروزانا  
'al-Rūzana

Maqām: Huzām

Traditional

$\text{♩} = 72$

ها فينا هل - ال - كل نا زا مرو ع/ال نا زا مرو ع/ال  
'ar rū - zā - nā 'ar - rū - zā - nā kul - li - l - hā - nā fi - hā

ها زي جا ي - - - له ال نا زا مرو رت/ال عم ويش  
waish 'im - li - ti - r - rū - zā - nā al - lah yī - jā - zī - hā

D.C. al fine  
Fine

Figure 7. “Al-Rūzānā,” *maqām huzām*, 6/8 rhythm

عَ الروزانا  
'al-Rūzana

Maqām: Kurdī

Traditional

$\text{♩} = 72$

ها فينا هل - ال - كل نا زا مرو ع/ال نا زا مرو ع/ال  
'ar rū - zā - nā 'ar rū - zā - nā kul li - l - ha nā fi - hā D.C. al fine

ها زي جا ي - - - له ال نا زا مرو رت/ال عم ويش  
waish 'im - li ti r rū zā nā al - la yī - jā - zī - hā

Fine

Figure 8. “Al-Rūzānā,” *maqām kurdī*, 4/8 rhythm

ع الروزانا  
'al-Rūzana

Maqām: Kurdī

Traditional

♩ = 72

ها فينا هل - ال - كل نا زا رو ع/ال نا زا رو ع/ال

'ar rū - zā - nā 'ar rū zā nā kul li l ha nā fi hā

ها زي جا يد - - - له ال نا زا رو ر ت/ال لك عم ويش

waish 'im li ti r rū zā nā al la yī - jā - zī - hā

D.C. al fine  
Fine

Figure 9. “Al-Rūzānā,” *maqām kurdī*, 6/8 rhythm

There is a large body of empirical evidence indicating that musical practices existed in Palestine in different regional settings, including coastal, mountain, inland, and desert. However, the same practices can also be classified according to other criteria such as urban, rural, Bedouin, secular, seasonal, celebratory, or religious. Cohen and Katz (2006) review and describe seven of the most important song types, including *shurūqī*, *‘atābā*, *mījānā*, and *mu‘uanna*. They discuss each type separately and describe the context, poetic and musical aspects, and other distinguishing characteristics. While their work is impressive and useful, their notion of *genre* implies certain barriers or conventions concerning musical form, performance, and style. The constant adjustment of all related dynamics in each performance, which they observed, hinders any attempt to create a theoretical model that explains a specific *genre* or compares it to another. Therefore, I classify traditional musical practices into three categories and treat all types, regardless of category, as musico-poetic frames, not genres. I do it intentionally as I am not concerned with how song types are labeled, theorized, or named in each region. Consequently,



and to define the basic ingredients of the Palestinian musical landscape during the period in question, below are more detailed explanations of the three categories. Since traditional musical practices are essentially not so distant from each other in the first place, any song types mentioned below within the framework of each category can easily cross over to another. Most of the songs follow specific poetic meters, and verses set to a precise number of poetic lines, where each line consists of two hemistiches. Also, lyrics can be different from one region or occasion to another.

### 1.5.1 Short Songs with a Pulse

Such songs consist of short melodies that tend to be repetitive and do not go beyond the range of four to six notes. They adhere to a pulse or meter, but not strictly, and typically occur in rural settings and are mostly not inclusive of strict form. They can be fast, such as the *murabba* ‘, *ḥidā*’, and *far* ‘*āwī*’, or slow such as the *tarwīda* example shown below in Figure 10:

سبب عيونيه  
Sabbal 'Uyūnuh

Maqām: Bayātī Traditional  
tr. Issa Boulos

tarwīda

♩ = 90

(له) sab bal 'u 'yū nu wi mad ī du yi ḥan nū

(lu)

نه خصه ره ر قيد و كيه ف/أه له سه م حو  
nu khaṣ ru ri gay yig u kai f/ah lu sa ma ḥū

Figure 10. “Sabbal ‘Uyūnu,” (*tarāwīd* tune)

In this example, the lyrics are in Near Eastern colloquial Arabic, set according to a poetic meter called *baḥr al-basīṭ*:

mustaf'ilun fā'ilun mustaf'ilun fa'ilun      mustaf'ilun fā'ilun mustaf'ilun fa'ilun  
 - - u - - u - - - u - u u -      - - u - - u - - - u - u u -  
 فَعْلُنْ      فاعِلُنْ      فاعِلُنْ      مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ      فَعْلُنْ      مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ      فاعِلُنْ      مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ  
 ٥ ٥ -      - - ٥ -      - ٥ -      - - ٥ -      ٥ ٥ -      - - ٥ -      - ٥ -      - - ٥ -

The following is one line or verse of colloquial poetry from the song, which consists of two equal hemistiches which match the exact configuration of baḥr al-basīṭ:

sabbal 'uyūnu wi mad dīdū yīḥannūnuḥ khaṣru riḡayyig u kaif\_ahlu samaḥūlu

سَبَّلْ عُيُونُهُ وَمَدَّ إِيْدَهُ بِحَنُونُهُ      حَصْرُهُ رَقِيقٌ وَكَيْفَ أَهْلُهُ سَمَحُونُهُ

Other variations of this *tarwīda* exist, such as Ḥenna l-il-'Arīs (track 21 in Cohen and Katz 2006, 395). When appearing in urban contexts, such short melodies may be subjected to further additions and expansions and become more suited to urban consumption.

### 1.5.2 Strophic, Binary, or Ternary Song with a Pulse

These songs consist of slightly longer melodies with a somewhat broader melodic range. Phrases tend to be more consistent every time they are sung and may follow a stricter beat or rhythmic cycle. The melodies in this category tend to be receptive to being developed into strophic, binary, or ternary song forms, especially in urban settings. An example of this is the melody shown below in Figure 11 and Figure 12, where I transposed the melody to D and added the proper key signature along with the quartertones:

10. Marschlied (Merg̃ 'Ajūn). 11. Zum Präsentier

*Lebhaft.*

s. 193. 'A - rīs - na ḍau il - ḳa - mar s. 254. Tchaṭ - ṭa - ri  
 wischsams ḥad - du wā - ḳi - fi. kibsch il - ḳu -

**tanz der Braut (Nazaret).**

smal\_la jā zē - na jā war - di ḡuw - wa - ḡḡi - nē - na  
 run\_ful jā 'a - rū - si wil - fill je - chai - jem 'a - lē - na.

Figure 11. “Itshaṭṭarī” (“Tchaṭṭari”) (Dalman 1901)

تَشَطَّرِي  
**Itshaṭṭarī**

Maqām: Bayātī Traditional

it shaṭ ṭa ris mal la yā zai na yā  
 war di juw wa ji nai na

Figure 12. “Itshaṭṭarī,” transposition and quartertone markings by the author

The text is in Near Eastern colloquial Arabic but is set according to a different poetic meter called *al-mutadārak*. Like *baḥr al-basīṭ* from the previous example, each verse consists of two poetic lines, with two equal hemistiches:

fa'ilun fa'ilun fa'ilun fa'ilun fa'ilun fa'ilun fa'ilun fa'ilun  
 u u - u u - u u - u u - u u - u u - u u - u u -

فَعْلُنْ      فَعْلُنْ      فَعْلُنْ      فَعْلُنْ              فَعْلُنْ      فَعْلُنْ      فَعْلُنْ      فَعْلُنْ  
 ٠٠-      ٠٠-      ٠٠-      ٠٠-              ٠٠-      ٠٠-      ٠٠-      ٠٠-

Baḥr al-mutadārak as beat phrases:

fa 'i lun    fa 'i lun    fa 'i lun    fa 'i lun    fa 'i lun    fa 'i lun    fa 'i lun    fa 'i lun  
 لُنْ جَدْ    لُنْ جَدْ    لُنْ جَدْ    لُنْ جَدْ    لُنْ جَدْ    لُنْ جَدْ    لُنْ جَدْ    لُنْ جَدْ

“Itshṭṭarī” lyrics, and transliteration:

إِشْطَرِّي إِسْمَ اللَّهِ يَا زَيْنَةَ      يَا وَرْدَةَ جُورًا الْجَيْنِيَّةَ  
 كَبِشِ الْفُرْتُلُ يَا عَرُوسِيَّةَ      وَالْفُلَّ بِيَّيْنِ عَلَيْنَا  
 itshṭṭarī\_ism al-Lah yā zaina    yā wardi juwwa\_l-jinaina  
 Kabsh\_il-urunful yā ‘arūsi    w\_il-ful yibayyin ‘alainā

Dalman transcribed two versions of this song, one in Ṣafad through a woman from Nazareth by the name of Elisabet Bender (Elišabāt Bandar), Figures 13 and 14, and another in southern Lebanon, as shown below in Figure 13:

12. Dasselbe (südl. Libanon).  
 Mī'tchatṭa-ri ē jā zē-na jā warde minḡuw.wa ḡe-nē - na.

Figure 13. “A Song from Southern Lebanon,” (Dalman 1901)

Dalman describes this encounter and points to some practices associated with it:

Dance and dance songs are performed here because dancing is a must at weddings. It also appears on festive events such as in circumcision, baptism, and evening gatherings. My Bedouin friends in Aleppo have winter dances every night in their cave, to ward off the cold. [...]. The bride puts on her wedding robes in her parents' house. When she arrives at the groom's house, she carries out a kind of dance with candles in both hands. Her dance moves are slow, and in all directions, she resembled the stars. The bride is described as *tijalla*, or parading. The women meanwhile sing *jalwaih* songs accompanied by the pot drum [probably darbukka]. Then a cantor sings, and the choir repeats after [him]. Incidentally, the whole thing is more of an urban custom that has only occasionally found its way into the villages. (Dalman 1901, 254)

This tune is a wedding song used when the crowd parades the bride into the groom's house in a ritual called *tijlayai*. It is a well-known song/ritual and performed to this day, not only in Palestine but also in the broader Arabic-speaking region. The song often appears with the same lyrics, but subtle differences in dialect occur from one area to another. The variations are apparent in Dalman's transcriptions, as well as the transcription, which I provide in Figure 14 below. Take, for example, the words *wardi* and *'arūsi* in Dalman's transcription. People in Nazareth and northern Palestine pronounce these two words as written above. However, they are pronounced *wardai* and *'arūsai* in Ramallah, a town approximately 140 kilometers south, and *warda* and *'arūsa* further south in Gaza. Fundamentally, each community alters the lyrics and pronunciation of certain words as they see fit. Currently, the most common adaptation in Arab mainstream wedding ceremonies is the Egyptian version, Figure 14.<sup>10</sup> While the lyrics remained almost the same, the first word of the song changed from *itshaṭṭarī* to *itmakhtarī*. Also, the pronunciation of the “ja” in *jinaina* changed to “ga” and into *ginaina*.

<sup>10</sup> For further exploration, see “Itmakhtarī” by Munīra al-Mahdiyya in 1923 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZyd6z3rK6U>. Note that instead of the first word being *itshaṭṭarī* it was changed to *itmakhtarī*.

تشطري  
Itshaṭṭarī

(Itmakhtarī)

Maqām: Bayāfī

Traditional

it makh ṭa rī yā ḥil wa yā zai nah

5  
yā war da mi n gu wag gi nai na

Figure 14. “Itshaṭṭarī” (here “Itmakhtarī”) (1923)

Several known songs fit this category, including *al-muthamman*, and *a-l-yādī*. See Dalman’s no. 23 (Figure 15), and “Yā Bashrab” (“Hayhāt Yā Ibn il-‘Am”) track 28, see Cohen and Katz (2006, 408).

23. Bardu (Aleppo). × Erhöhung um  $\frac{1}{4}$  Ton.  
*Munter.*

s. 237. Jā bar-du bar-du bar-du as-mar sa-bā-ni ḳad-du

ma-ta jū-fī-ni wa ‘du wa-ḳab-bil schā-met chad-du.

Figure 15. “Bardu” from Aleppo (Dalman 1901)

### 1.5.3 Long Songs with Pulse, Rhythmic Cycle, or Free

This category includes various song types such as *mījānā*, *qarrādī*, *shurūqī*, *‘atābā*, *mawwāl*, and *mu‘anna*. These songs consist of extended flexible melodic contours that have

general melodic guidelines but are either rhythmically free or alternate between open and metered sections. They also incorporate more melisma in contrast to the syllabic orientation of the shorter songs. “Mījānā” is a popular tune that embodies this category, illustrated below in Figure 17. It uses *baḥr al-rajaz*.

*Baḥr al-rajaz*, and *baḥr al-rajaz* as beat phrases:

mustaf`ilun	mustaf`ilun	mustaf`ilun	mustaf`ilun	mustaf`ilun	mustaf`ilun
- -u-	- -u-	- -u-	- -u-	- -u-	- -u-
مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ	مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ	مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ	مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ	مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ	مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ
- ٠ --	- ٠ --	- ٠ --	- ٠ --	- ٠ --	- ٠ --

“Mījānā,” lyrics, and transliteration:

*Opening*

يا ميجانا ويا ميجانا ويا ميجانا	أهلا وسهلاً شرفونا حبابنا
ahlan was sahlan sharraffūnā_hbābinā	yā mījāna w yā mījānā w yā mījānā

*Verse*

بأنْ حُزني اللي انكتمْ والدمع بأنْ	من يومٍ عن عيني حبيب القلب بأنْ
بُذكر حبيبي اللي انتنى عني بُننا	وكلما بنتني مع التسميه عُصن بأنْ
min yūm ‘an ‘ainī ḥab_b il-qalib bān	bān ḥuznil_l-inkatam widdami‘ bān
w kul mā yinthona ma‘innismaih ghusun bān	bazkur ḥabibillinthana ‘annī bthanā

*Return* (note that in this example the singer used a different second hemistich as return)

يا ميحنا ويا ميحنا ويا ميحنا زهر البنفسج يا ربيع بلادنا  
yā mījanā w yā mījanā w yā mījanā zahr il-banafsaj yā rabī‘i \_blādinā

Describing songs in this fashion puts to rest certain ambiguities that surround many of the early descriptions and transcriptions by researchers, especially concerning intonation, musical form, mode, form, context, occasion, regional variations, and *maqām* practices. Also, such categorizations distinguish between musical practices in rural and Bedouin areas versus urban ones. An example of this is Dalman’s Aleppo transcriptions, which seem more elaborate, cosmopolitan (some were Turkish), and which incorporate several musical devices that are available and practiced only in an urban setting.



# Mijānā

Maqām: Bayātī

Traditional

♩ = 120  
ad libitum 1st hemistich (solo singer)

يا مي جا نا/و يا مي جا نا/و يا مي جا نا  
yā mī ja na/w yā mī ja nā/w yā mī ja nā

♩ = 130  
2nd hemistich

نا د لا ع/ب يا ر بي راف/ب زه  
zah r/il ba naf saj yā ra bī 'i/b lā di nā

♩ = 104 - 120  
2nd hemistich (group)

زه راف/ب با نا ف سا ج يار ر  
zah r/il ba na f sa j yā ra

1. 2.  
بي ع ب لا د نا  
bī 'i b lā di nā

ad libitum

با ع/ب ها وا/ع يو نك با ع/ب ني  
ba 'id nī/b ha wa/'u yū nik ba 'id nī

و ما/د ها ر د عن حب بك با ع/ب ني  
u mah ma/d da hir 'an ḥub bik ba 'ad nī

ني ع/ب ملك برا غد في في كان ذا ا  
i dhā kān fī fī gha rā mik ba 'id nī

يا ل ه/ن نيف ريح بال حب با/ق لو بي نا  
yal la nif riḥ bil ma ḥab ba/q lū bi nā

Figure 16. “Mijānā”