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'Ūd Taqsīm as a Model of Pre-Composition

Rohana, N.

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***‘Ud Taqsīm* as a Model of Pre-Composition**

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Nizar Rohana
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Promotores

Prof.dr. Joep Bor

Prof. Frans de Ruiter

Copromotor

Dr. Anne van Oostrum (Universiteit van Amsterdam)

Promotiecommissie

Prof.dr. Rachel Beckles Willson (SOAS University of London)

Prof.dr. Rokus de Groot (Universiteit van Amsterdam)

Dr. Wim van der Meer

Prof.dr. Sjaak Neefjes

Dr. Liselotte Sels (AP Hogeschool Antwerpen)

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Initial Glossary

Taqsīm (plural *taqāsīm*): instrumental improvisation in Arabic music.

Maqām (plural *maqāmāt*): the system of melodic modes used in the Arabic music tradition.

Improvisation, extemporization: one of the standard definitions of improvisation is: ‘The creation of music in the course of performance.’¹ Another definition of improvisation provided by Jan Laurens Hartong is: ‘Spontaneously creating or extemporizing music while performing it. [...] There are many different ways to improvise in the music of the world.’² In Arab music melodic improvisation occurs within the boundaries of the *maqām*.

Composition: ‘the activity of creating a musical work; the work thus created.’³ Or, a piece of music in which the composer has determined the content to be performed (as opposed to orally transmitted traditions like Indian music where pieces are mostly not written down).

Pre-composed *Taqsīm* or pre-composed improvisation: a pre-composed *taqsīm*-like piece of music; or, a predetermined piece of music, composed in the style of *taqsīm*.

Phonograph era: ‘a period when the business of sound recording gained strongholds in Cairo [...] This period [...] began around 1904, when record sales were initiated on a large scale in Cairo, and ended around 1932, when the popularity of the phonograph receded in favor of other mass media.’⁴

Introductory *taqsīm* (in Arabic *taqsīm istihlālī*): a *taqsīm* that is performed as a prelude (or as an interlude) to a song or a pre-composed instrumental piece. In this type of a *taqsīm*, the *maqām* is partially explored.

Exploratory *taqsīm* (in Arabic *taqsīm mursāl*): a *taqsīm* that is performed as an independent piece. It explores wide tonal areas within a *maqām*.

For the romanization of Arabic I follow *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, an encyclopedia of the academic discipline of Islamic studies published by E. J. Brill, Leiden.

¹ *The Harvard Dictionary of Music*. Edited by Don Michael Randel, 4th ed., The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2003, p. 406.

² Hartong, Jan Laurens. *Musical Terms Worldwide: A Companion for the Musical Explorer*. Edited by Simon Mills, Peter van Amstel and Aleksandra Marković, Semar and Codarts, 2006, p. 138.

³ *The Harvard Dictionary of Music*, Randel, ed., p. 194.

⁴ Racy, Jihad Ali. *Musical Change and Commercial Recordings in Egypt, 1904-1932*. PhD dissertation, University of Illinois, 1977, p. 1.

