

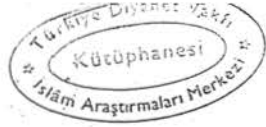
# SUFISM MUSIC AND SOCIETY

## IN TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST



Edited by Anders Hammarlund, Torbjörn Olsson, Elisabeth Özdalga  
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# SUFISM, MUSIC AND SOCIETY IN TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

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# The Technical Modernization of Turkish Sufi Music: The Case of the Durak

CEM BEHAR

The rationalization, theorization and subsequent standardization of traditional Ottoman/Turkish music was a vast enterprise, initiated towards the end of the last century by Rauf Yekta Bey (1871-1935), and brought to fruition in the 1940s and 50s by two of his colleagues and contemporary composers and musicologists: Hüseyin Sadettin Arel (1880-1955) and Dr. Subhi Zühtü Ezgi (1869-1962). Pitch, scale, intervals and makams were standardized and adapted to western staff notation. Rhythmic patterns (*'usûls*), musical genres and pieces were classified and systematized. Large portions of the orally transmitted repertoire were transcribed, new treatises and books were written for the teaching and transmission of traditional music, new teaching methods were devised etc., etc.

The timing, the unfolding and the various details of this purposeful program of "westernization" need not bother us here. The Arel-Ezgi program was, however, on the whole, much more successful than that which for instance, their contemporary Ali Naki Vaziri (1886-1981) and his students and followers tried to implement for Persian music.<sup>1</sup> Nowadays, just about all formal teaching of traditional Ottoman/Turkish music is based on what later came to be called the Arel-Ezgi system. What, in real musical life, seems not to fit these two authors' system is, in most cases, perceived by musicians of the younger generations either as an exception or as an unexplainable deviation from the norm.

There is no aspect of traditional Ottoman/Turkish music that really escaped the homogenizing thrust of the Ezgi-Arel enterprise. We shall try here to examine briefly the impact of this modernizing venture, at a strictly technical level, on the fate of one very particular genre within Turkish religious/Sufi music: the *durak*.

## The Durak: Form and Structure

The *durak*, for all we know, a specifically Ottoman/Turkish genre, is part of a family of liturgical vocal genres that are pre-composed but are non-metrical. In other words, these genres totally lack a fixed rhythmical pattern; they have no *'usûl*. They are entirely pre-composed, though, and do not allow for any kind of improvisation. Neither do they allow, in principle, for any performance-generated variants.

The other members of the same family of pre-composed ametrical genres are the *na't*, the *mevlut*, the *temcit-münacaat*, and the *miraciye*. Coincidentally, these are all religious/Sufi genres. The pre-composed *mevlut* has been lost and forgotten and

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, Hormoz Farhat, *The Dastgah Concept in Persian Music*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

today the text of the mevlut is sung in a quasi-improvised manner. The text itself, written in Turkish by Süleyman Çelebi (d.1409), celebrates the birth of the Prophet and is chanted on various occasions. As to the temcit and the na't, these two genres have become virtually extinct.

The only member of the family, indeed, which was not consigned to oblivion is the durak. Our main historical source on the texts of the duraks (Sadettin Nüzhet Ergun's fundamental and unavoidable *Anthology of Turkish Music*) was published in 1943. It lists the texts of no fewer than a hundred composed duraks. These run in a continuous line from about the middle of the seventeenth to the very end of the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

Of these hundred duraks whose texts are given by Sadettin Nüzhet Ergun, only around forty have been notated and have, therefore, survived as musical pieces, but only about half of this number are effectively sung today. A number of duraks have also been composed in the twentieth century. The official biographer of the musical reformer and composer, Hüseyin Sadettin Arel, attributes to him no less than 108 duraks, most of them composed in the late 1940s. But that is quite another matter. We shall return to it shortly.

Contrary to the na't and the münacaat, which might use texts in Arabic or in Persian, the durak always uses texts in the Turkish language. It is invariably sung *a capella*, without any instrumental accompaniment and, as far as we can surmise, by only one performer at a time. The texts of the duraks are notable for their expression of mystical fervor and enthusiasm rather than for their orthodox piety. The lyrics are mostly taken from gazels and other poems of various well-known Turkish mystical poets such as Yunus Emre, Aşık Paşa, Aziz Mahmud Hüdayi, Nasuhi, Niyazi-i Mısri, Eşrefoğlu Rumi etc.

The verses that have been selected for composing a durak are indifferently metrical (*arûz*) or syllabic. The sung texts are of varying lengths and of various poetical forms. The number of lines that are to be sung are also highly variable. Two or three lines, one or two stanzas, a quatrain or two of the same poem may have been put to music.

The number of lines put to music as a durak may therefore vary. Some of the duraks have a refrain, and some do not. Some of the duraks use some of the attributes of Allah (Hû, Hayy, Kayyûm etc.) as syllables for purposes of melodic elaboration and embellishment, but others do not. Apparently, therefore, no single type of lyric, no pre-set poetic form seems to have really prevailed and to have been taken as a standard textual form for the composition of a durak.

More or less the same thing can also be said of the internal melodic structure of the duraks in the repertoire. Some of the duraks are longish and repetitive pieces, but others are quite short. Some of them have a *meyanhane*, that is, a middle section which modulates into a different makam. But many of the duraks do not have that middle section and only have one or more very short modulating passages. A few of them, however, have a full double *meyanhane* modulating successively into two different *makams*. For some duraks, apparently the introductory section, or even a short motivic sequence, may function as a sort of ritornello. But this is not the case for some other duraks. Besides, there seems to be no standard relationship between the lengths of the introductory section (*zemin*), that of the middle section, if any, and that of the concluding melodic phrases, or of the ritornello (*nakarât*), if any.

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<sup>2</sup> Sadettin Nüzhet Ergun, *Türk Musikisi Antolojisi-Dini Eserler*, 2 vols., (Istanbul: 1942-1943). For the list of Duraks, see pp. 719-723.

All these elements are highly variable. Pending more detailed historical, textual and musical analyses, of course, this great variability induces me to think that it is difficult to speak either of a uniform textual or of a more or less stable musical structure for the durak. Had the durak had an *'usûl*, a fixed rhythmical pattern, this rhythmical entity, this fixed and stable configuration of strong and weak beats might well have served as a unit of compositional measurement and a means of comparing the respective lengths of each of its parts, as it does in many of the religious or secular pieces of the *répertoire* of Ottoman/Turkish music.

This is, indeed, a function that the *'usûls* perform in many other genres of Turkish music, whether secular or religious. Partitioning pieces into sections, relating these sections to each other and thus giving these compositions a further element of structuring is, in Ottoman/Turkish music, an important function of the rhythmic cycles, especially of the longer ones. We have here, therefore, an *a contrario* argument pointing to the non-metrical structure of the durak. The few duraks that we know for sure were composed in the late nineteenth century, though, and notwithstanding the fact that they, too, are non-metrical, seem to have a more balanced internal structure. Apparently they have an introduction, a middle and a final section of comparable, though not necessarily equal lengths.

The absence of any discernibly uniform textual or musical structural characteristics in the duraks must, therefore, be considered as an important piece of circumstantial evidence speaking in favor of the fact that this absence of a fixed rhythmical pattern was really an original attribute of the genre. This fundamental structural "anarchy" plaguing such a highly prestigious musical genre did, as we shall see, certainly deeply disturb the self-appointed modernizers and rationalizers of Ottoman/Turkish music, Arel and Ezgi.

Of the origin of the durak, nothing is really known. Neither do we have any precise information on its liturgical place and function in the earlier periods. Ali Ufkî's collection of notations, dating from about the middle of the seventeenth century, contains a number of religious and Sufi hymns (*İlahi*, *Tesbih* etc.), but none that is entitled 'durak'. The earliest known duraks are the ones composed by Sepetçizade Mehmet Ağa (d.1694), Hafız Post (d.1693), and Ali Şirüvani Efendi (d.1714). These composers are contemporaries of Itrî (d.1712) and of Yusuf Çelebi (d.1728?), the composers of the oldest known two *na'ts* (another non-metrical genre of Ottoman/Turkish music).

Walter Feldman has suggested that the duraks "seem to display a deep and old relation to certain chants of the Greek Orthodox Church".<sup>3</sup> That statement, however, is just a very interesting hypothesis which, of course, needs to be substantiated. If it were so substantiated, however, this idea would probably change our understanding of the formation of the specific Ottoman/Turkish Sufi musical tradition. Besides, the relationship of the durak and *na't* performance style to the vocal improvisations (*taksim*, *gazel*) of Ottoman/Turkish music has not yet been made the object of any serious study.

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3 See Walter Feldman "Musical Genres and Zikir of the Sunni Tarikats of Istanbul", in Raymond Lifchez (ed.) *The Dervish Lodge-Architecture, Art and Sufism in Ottoman Turkey*, (Berkeley: California University Press, 1992), pp. 187-202. As stated by Walter Feldman, the structural principles of the Durak were also used, at least once, to create a religious work of larger dimensions. This is the *Miraciye* of Osman Dede (1652-1730). The *Miraciye* was considered as an inimitable composition and remained as the only example of this genre.

## The Durak: Liturgy, Style and Transmission

The liturgical place and function of the durak is also significant. What we know of it, however, mostly relates to the nineteenth century practices.

The singing of duraks at particular points within the *zikr* ceremony of the Halveti and Cerrahi tarikats seem to have marked a period of particular solemnity, concentration and deep meditation. The duraks were chanted, according to Ekrem Karadeniz, in a period of total silence just after the *kelime-i tevhid zikri* and before the beginning of the circular standing *zikr*.

The duraks were, in fact, sung during the *zikr* of most of Sunni tarikats in Istanbul, except the Mevlevi. In the course of the eighteenth century, the duraks were also accepted in mosques outside of the dervish *tekkes*. Ekrem Karadeniz tells us that in the nineteenth century they were especially chanted just before Friday prayers in mosques that had a *vakıf*.<sup>4</sup> Nowadays, the duraks are also sung to mark particular resting points, stopping points during the recitation of the Mevlut.

The word *durak* itself means “a stopping point, a rest or a pause”. What we know of nineteenth and twentieth century practices seems to suggest that the genre itself was, perhaps from the very beginning, conceived as an insert of particular significance set to mark points of special concentration within a wide and diversified Sufi liturgical framework. But there is also an alternative, and quite pedestrian, explanation. The durak, sung by a single person, might simply have been used to provide a period of well-deserved physical and mental rest for the numerous dervishes participating in a long and sometimes exhausting *zikr* exercise. If that were true, the liturgical function of the durak would, then, be not that of a climax but quite the opposite.

Duraks were composed not only by the *zakirs* of Sufi orders of whose liturgy the durak was a part, but also by other Sufi musicians and even by totally secular composers. A court musician and singer of the last century, Hacı Arif Bey (1831-1885), a composer of hundreds of light songs (*şarkı*) for instance, is also the author of a well known durak in the makam Hicaz.

Although the genre never was part of the Mevlevi ritual, such eminent Mevlevi musicians as the great İsmail Dede Efendi (1777-1846) and his pupil Zekâi Dede, a Mevlevi musician, too, also composed a few duraks and were also probably familiar with the repertoire of duraks. A well known durak performer of the late nineteenth century, Behlül Efendi (c.1830-1895), for instance, was a pupil of İsmail Dede Efendi and had received his musical education in the Mevlevi tekkes of Istanbul. But he was also one of the most famous durak performers of his time. He used to chant the durak during the *zikr* in two different Halvetî *tekkes* in Üsküdar as well as attending to the singing of *ayins* in the Mevlevi lodge of Yenikapı. Many Mevlevi musicians were, therefore, themselves part of the chain of transmission of the repertoire of duraks, although these were basically performed in other Sufi orders.

Apparently, the durak and the *na't* were always considered as highly sophisticated and very prestigious forms of Sufi music. Writing in the 1950s and 1960s, for instance, Ekrem Karadeniz describes them as “the highest works of art in Turkish music”. He also complains about the fact that there are very few good performers of the durak left. A beautiful voice and a good musical education, we are told by Karadeniz, are not sufficient conditions for performing the duraks correctly. The vocalist should also have learned well the special “Durak style”<sup>5</sup> (*durak tavrı*).

<sup>4</sup> Ekrem Karadeniz, *Türk Musikisinin Nazariye ve Esasları*, (Istanbul: İş Bankası Yayınları, 1983), p. 166.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 166.

The na'ts and duraks were indeed perceived as having to be performed in a special style and manner, different from that which would apply to any other type of religious, Sufi or secular music. This style, as far as we can judge from existing sources and recordings, involved freely-flowing but nevertheless carefully balanced, slow and solemn singing. This singing could be so ponderous and heavy that it would, at times, be awkward to the point of being disregarding of some of the basic prosodic rules of the Turkish language.

This style of chanting is, in many sources, named *durak tavrı*. This particular Durak style was most probably transmitted, together with the repertoire of duraks itself, from one zakir or müezzın to another. The singing of the na'ts, it seems, required more or less the same style. There is, today, in Turkish musical circles, a general consensus as to the fact that Hâfız Kâni Karaca (born 1930) is the best performer of the various ametrical genres of Turkish Sufi music.

There certainly is some historical documentation showing that there was, in the second half of the nineteenth century a particular line (we wouldn't go so far as to say a school) of performers who were specialized in and famous for their rendering of the na'ts and of the duraks. Kâzım Uz (1872-1938) writes:

*1308'de suzidil makamında bestelemeye çalıştığımız na't-ı Mevlanayı Zekâi Dede'ye arzettiğimde beni... Behlül Efendi'nin yanına götürüp na't ve durağın tavrını bu zattan öğren diyerek elini öptürdü.*<sup>6</sup>

When, in 1308 (1893), I was trying to compose, in the makam Suzidil, a na't in honour of Mevlânâ and I presented it to Zekâi Dede...he took me to Behlül Efendi, made me kiss his hand and told me to learn the style of the na't and of the durak from him.

Behlül Efendi (c.1830 - 1895) was indeed one of the most famous performers of the durak of his time. Even a very important composer of liturgical and Sufi music such as Zekâi Dede (1824-1897), author of a large output of religious music and composer of a number of duraks himself, clearly recognizes the particularity of performing - and hence of composing - na'ts and duraks.

Another well-known zakir and singer of Sufi music of the second half of the nineteenth century was Hacı Nafiz Bey (1849-1898), who officiated as *zakirbaşı* in many Halvetî dervish lodges of Istanbul. He was so appreciated for his singing of the durak that he was nicknamed "Durakçı (singer of duraks) Nafiz bey". Nafiz bey had a number of pupils to whom he transmitted the whole of his repertoire of na'ts and duraks as well, presumably, as the particular style necessary for their rendering.

One of the better known of Nafiz Bey's pupils was Hoca Fehmi Efendi (d. 1938), the zakirbaşı of both a Halvetî-Şabanî and of a Sünbülî tekke in Istanbul. He, in turn, taught all or most of the duraks he knew to Dr. Subhi Ezgi and to Abdülkadir Töre (1873-1946). Both of these musicologists did transcriptions of these duraks. Abdülkadir Töre's notations, though only very few were ever effectively published, are reputed to have been more accurate.

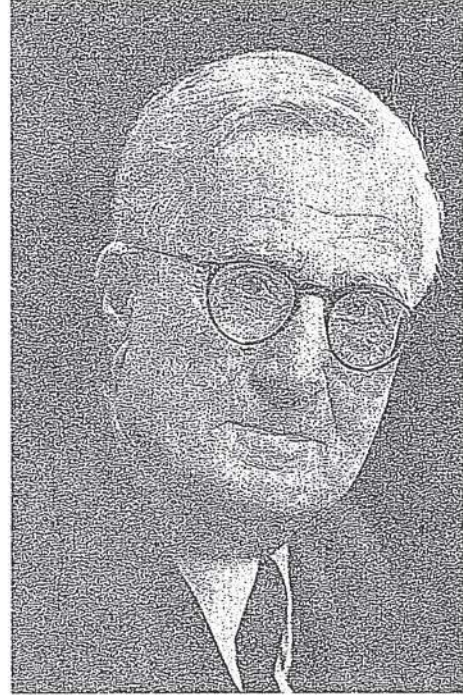
As for Dr. Subhi Ezgi, he first published, in 1933 and 1935, a few of the duraks and na'ts in his five-volume work as examples of notation, to illustrate makams and 'usûls. Then, in 1946, he collected them in a small volume containing notations of thirty-nine duraks and of a small number of na'ts.<sup>7</sup> We shall return to it shortly.

<sup>6</sup> İbnülemin Mahmud Kemal İnal, *Hoş Sada*, (Istanbul: Maarif Basımevi, 1958), p. 105. For Behlül Efendi, see also Sadettin Nüzhet Ergun, *op. cit.*, pp. 443-444.

<sup>7</sup> Suphi Ezgi, *Türk Musikisi Klâsiklerinden Temcit-Na't-Salât-Durak*, (Istanbul: İstanbul Konservatuarı Neşriyatı, 1946).



Suphi Ezgi



Saadettin Arel

## “The Taming of the Shrew”

As early as 1700 Demetrius Cantemir wrote in his treatise on music:

*İlm-i musıkide cümlesinden lâzım olan ilm-i ‘usûldür... usulsüz nağme mücerred musiki nağmesi değildir...‘usûl musikinın terazisi ve endazesidir.<sup>8</sup>*

In the science of music, the science of rhythmic patterns is most indispensable...a melody without a rhythmic pattern is not music...the usuls are the scales and the proportions of music.

Ironically enough, Kantemiroğlu was a contemporary of the period which witnessed the birth of the non-metrical genres such as the na’t and the durak. Besides, he had great respect for and spoke very highly of the *taksim* (improvisation) and clearly acknowledged its non-metrical structure. It may also well be that Cantemir was, perhaps, mostly thinking in terms of instrumental and secular music. However that may be, there is no doubt that his theoretical work would have difficulty in admitting this type of an anomaly: music which was ametrical, had no usul, but was nevertheless entirely pre-composed and not at all improvised. This type of music would not fit anywhere in his system.

Kantemir, too, in his time, was a “systematist” and also a modernizer of sorts. In large portions of his treatise on Turkish music he stresses firmly the opposition between “les anciens” (*kavl-i kadîm*) and “les modernes” (*kavl-i cedid*), thereby giving himself the role of a musical reformer. On the question of the durak, however, Cantemir had a great advantage over Ezgi and Arel. Cantemir could easily afford, in the late seventeenth century, simply to ignore such newly emerging vocal genres as the na’t and the durak.

<sup>8</sup> Demetrius Cantemir (Kantemiroğlu), *Kitab-ı ‘ilm-ül musiki ‘alâ Vech-i Hurufat*, İstanbul Üniversitesi Türkiyat Enstitüsü Kütüphanesi, Manuscript [Y.2748], p. 78.

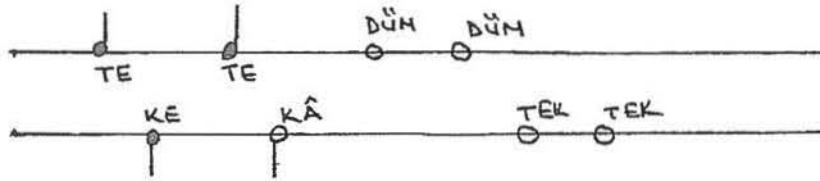
From the seventeenth to the twentieth century, however, the problem has basically remained the same: how can Turkish musical theory account for the non-metrical structure of some important religious/Sufi compositions? In other words, how can it accept the existence and the persistence of several religious/Sufi vocal genres whose rhythm does not conform to any of the established rhythmical cycles? Ezgi and Arel seem to have found a way out of the dilemma.

What they did, in reality, was simply to invent a tradition, or rather a small technical segment of a tradition, in order to fit their needs. Arel and Ezgi's enterprise in the rationalization and uniformization of traditional Turkish music was to suffer no exceptions and could, therefore, not tolerate such an important lacuna as the anomalous *na'ts* and *duraks*.

Therefore, the supposedly "inherent" but unfortunately "forgotten" rhythmic cycle of the *durak* had necessarily to be "rediscovered" by Dr. Ezgi - hence a new 'usûl called "Durak Evferi". If the new Arel-Ezgi system did not fit the music, then the music had to fit the new modern system. We shall now try to trace the path followed by this "technical modernization" process. In a sense, the whole attempt can be called a "taming of the shrew".

### The invention of a "technical tradition" by Ezgi and Arel

The 'usûl *Durak Evferi*, first put forward by Ezgi in 1935, as having the following form, with eight basic weak and strong beats, and a total of twenty one time units:<sup>9</sup>



As defined by Ezgi, this *Durak Evferi* has a rather unusual structure. First of all, this new rhythmic pattern starts with a weak beat, a "tek". This is highly unusual because the beginning of a rhythmical cycle is normally marked with a strong beat, a "düm". Indeed, from among nearly a hundred 'usûls known and used in Ottoman/Turkish music, barely a couple start with a weak beat.

Secondly, Ezgi defines this 'usûl as a "compound [*mürekkep*] 'usûl", that is, as a longer rhythmical cycle made up of a succession of shorter and simpler usûls. This constitutes a parallel to Arel and Ezgi's new taxonomy of Turkish makams. Indeed, Arel and Ezgi classified all the modal entities of Ottoman/Turkish music as either "simple", "compound", or "transposed" *makams*.

According to Ezgi, the composition of the 21 time-unit *Durak Evferi* is 5 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 4, that is, a succession of five short 'usûls. The first 'usûl is a *Türk Aksağı* and has five time-units, and then we have four *sofyans*, with four time-units each. The definition of a long and complex rhythmical pattern not as a particular, *sui generis*, arrangement of strong and weak beats of variable durations, but necessarily, as a succession, a chain, a fixed sequence of a number of shorter and simpler 'usûls is, again,

<sup>9</sup> Dr. Suphi [Ezgi], *Nazarî ve Amelî Türk Musikisi*, (Istanbul: Istanbul Konservatuvarı Neşriyatı, vol. II, 1935), p. 56 (where the 'usûl is first exposed).

a novelty introduced by Arel and Ezgi. Arel and Ezgi systematically tried to decompose longer *'usûls* into smaller constituent parts. Each of the longer *'usûls* is then defined by them as a particular arrangement of the two- and three-time unit basic building blocks.

Thirdly, this 21 time-unit Durak Evferi has a beat-density which is unusually low. It has only a total of eight strong and weak beats, covering a duration of 21 time-units. The average duration of each of the beats is therefore quite long. By opposition, Fahte, another *'usûl* of comparable length (twenty time-units) has no less than fourteen beats. Çenber, a slightly longer, 24 time-unit *'usûl*, has a total of seventeen strong and weak beats. This low beat-density makes the Durak Evferi a very compliant and flexible *'usûl*, if we may say so. This is so because fewer beats for a given tempo means greater adaptability of the rhythmic cycle to melodic structures of quite variable notational densities. This structural flexibility of the Durak Evferi greatly facilitates its adaptation to the repertoire of duraks.

Finally, Ezgi does not even try to explain why the durak notations of his have so many rests and "pointsd'orgue", which are sprinkled all over the pieces, thereby often interrupting the regular flow of the rhythmical pattern. Nor does the *'usûl* durak Evferi account for the unmeasured syllable, "Ah" or "Dost", of variable duration, with which all the duraks invariably start.

The fitting of the duraks to a fixed rhythmical cycle took the form, for Arel and Ezgi, of a search for authenticity. Arel and Ezgi were looking for an *'usûl* which really existed but which was, somehow, "lost and found". Their idea was that all of the duraks must necessarily have been composed with an *'usûl*, but that this particular *'usûl* had somehow been forgotten. The duraks were therefore to be subject to an operation of "restoration". No reason is given as to why it is that the *'usûl* durak Evferi is, from among almost a hundred different rhythmic cycles, the only one which has, disappeared after the seventeenth century without leaving any trace.

The first question which must be answered is, therefore, whether Ezgi's search for the authentic and genuine rhythmical structure of the durak rested on sound historical and musical evidence.

About ten years before Suphi Ezgi started publishing his five-volume work on Turkish Music,<sup>10</sup> in 1922 Rauf Yekta's well known book-size article, "La Musique Turque", appeared in Lavignac's *Encyclopédie de la Musique*. In this first systematic study of the theory and practice of Ottoman/Turkish music,<sup>11</sup> by one of its foremost authorities, are carefully described no less than forty-five different rhythmic cycles, and all of them are illustrated with musical examples. Ezgi's Durak Evferi, however, is not to be found among them.

Neither is this *'usûl* Durak Evferi (or anything approaching or having a resemblance to it, for that matter) to be found in any of the known seventeenth, eighteenth or nineteenth century Turkish manuscript or published sources.

Ali Ufkî (that is, Wojciech Bobowski), in one of his as yet unpublished manuscripts, probably dating from the 1640s, gives the strong and weak beat patterns of about thirty different *usûls*.<sup>12</sup> Writing about half a century later, Demetrius Kantemir, in his treatise on Turkish music, describes, with the help of the traditional circles used

10 Dr. Suphi [Ezgi], *Nazarî ve Amelî Türk Musikisi*, (Istanbul: Istanbul Konservatuarı Neşriyatı, 5 vols., (I/1933, II/1935, III/n.d., IV/1940, V/1953).

11 Rauf Yekta Bey "La Musique Turque", in A. Lavignac (ed.), *Encyclopédie de la Musique et Dictionnaire du Conservatoire*, vol. 5, (Paris: Delagrave, 1922), pp. 2945-3064.

12 Âli Ufkî *Mecmua*, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Manuscrits Orientaux [Turc 292], folios 51b, 103a, 121a, 131a, 136a, 136b, 149a, 149b and passim. Most of the Ottoman/Turkish authors, up to the early twentieth century, described the various *usûls* either by placing the succession

for explaining makams and their transpositions as well as the usuls, about twenty different rhythmic cycles.<sup>13</sup> Ezgi's Durak Evferi is not among them.

There are a number of eighteenth-century manuscript sources containing 'usûl descriptions. Hızır Ağa's manuscript, *Tefhim ül makamat fi' ttevlid ün nagamât* probably dating from the 1740s, gives a list of twenty five 'usûls.<sup>14</sup> A contemporary of Hızır Ağa, the Armenian tanbur-player Arutin, gives, in a treatise on music written in Armenian characters, a list of twenty eight different beat patterns.<sup>15</sup> Charles Fonton, a dragoman of the French Embassy, in his *Essai sur la Musique Orientale*, written in Istanbul and dated 1751, lists the beat patterns of no less than thirty different 'usûls.<sup>16</sup> Towards the end of the eighteenth century, Abdülbaki Nasır Dede, a Mevlevi sheikh and a protégé of Sultan Selim III, in his *Tedkik ve Tahkik* dating from 1794, describes twenty-one different 'usûls.<sup>17</sup>

None of these seventeenth and eighteenth-century basic manuscript sources mention any 'usûl named Evfer other than the well known 'usûl in 9/4 or 9/8 often used in Mevlevi music. Not only is no trace to be found of Ezgi's Durak Evferi, but none of these sources even mention any other usul having twenty-one time-units.

A perusal of the nineteenth century's important printed sources is not more productive of any Durak Evferi. The first printed song - text collection of Turkish music - in Arabic characters, for "Karamanlı" publications using Greek characters predate these by about a quarter of a century - is Haşim Bey's *Mecmua*, published twice, in 1855 and 1864. It contains descriptive figures of thirty-five 'usûls. Durak Evferi is not among them. Bolahenk Nuri Bey (1834-1910), one of the famous music teachers of his time, published in 1873 a song-text collection. This "Mecmua" lists, in its introductory section, thirty-two 'usûls, among which Durak Evferi is not to be seen. Another well-known Mecmua, Şeyh Edhem Efendi's collection of lyrics, is named "Bergüzar-ı Edhem" and was published in 1890. It lists only fifteen 'usûls but, again, there is in it no sign of Durak Evferi.

Ahmet Avni bey (1871-1938), scholar, musician and composer, published in 1899 a song-text collection named *Hanende*. This is, perhaps, the most famous printed song-text collection of the whole nineteenth century. This thick 600-page volume is still much appreciated for its supposed exhaustivity and for its very systematic listing of the various types of lyrics. It is often considered as a sort of catalogue of the late nineteenth century repertoire. Besides, Ahmet Avni bey was Dr. Ezgi's close friend, his colleague, and life-long music companion. *Hanende* contains, in its introductory sec-

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of beats within circles (hence the name Edvar given to their works) or by just giving a flat listing of strong and weak beats (*Düms* and *Teks*) for each *usûl*. Ali Ufki is indeed a very notable exception in this matter. For him, rhythmical beats are represented by notes of various durations. Ali Ufki represents each *usûl* by placing notes of various durations on a horizontal line. The duration of the notes correspond to the duration of the beats. The tails of the notes are turned up or down according to whether they represent a strong or a weak beat. The names of each of the beats appear below the line and the total number of time units of the *usûl* is put to the left of the same line.

13 Demetrius Cantemir (Kantemiroğlu), *op.cit.*, pp. 80-86.

14 Hızır Ağa, *Tefhim ül makamat fi' ttevlid ün nagamât*, Paris, B.N.F., Manuscrits Orientaux [Supplément Turc 1495], folios 25b-27a.

15 Tanburist Arutin, *Rukovodstvo po Vostochnoi Muzika*, N. Tahmizian (ed.), (Yerevan: 1968).

16 Charles Fonton, *Essay sur la Musique Orientale comparée à la Musique Européenne* (1751), Paris, B.N.F., Manuscrits Français, [Nouvelles Acquisitions 4023]. For a modern edition of this important manuscript see Eckhard Neubauer "Der Essai sur la Musique Orientale von Charles Fonton mit Zeichnungen von Adanson", *Zeitschrift für Geschichte des Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften*, vol. 2 (1985), pp. 277-324 and vol. 3 (1986), pp. 335-376. For an introduction to and Turkish translation of Charles Fonton's manuscript see, Cem Behar, *Onsekizinci Yüzyılda Türk Müziği*, (Istanbul: Pan Yayıncılık, 1987).

17 Abdülbaki Nasır Dede, *Tedkik ve Tahkik*, Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Nafiz Paşa Manuscripts [1242/1].

tion, the description of no less than thirty-seven different 'usûls. But nowhere is Dr. Ezgi's Durak Evferi to be seen. Neither is it to be found in any other late nineteenth and early twentieth century published source on Ottoman/Turkish music.

A contemporary of Suphi Ezgi, the composer and music teacher Kâzım Uz (1872-1938), published in 1893 a small Dictionary of Turkish Musical Terms (*Musiki İstilahatı*), the first of its kind. Among a total of five hundred and thirty entries of this Dictionary are thirty-nine different 'usûls. Durak Evferi is not one of them.

We are left with no possible alternative but to conclude that Dr. Ezgi has, when writing the first volume of his book in the early 1930s, simply created, made up, invented a new 'usûl to suit his needs.<sup>18</sup> Besides, Doctor Ezgi's Durak Evferi apparently bears no resemblance to any of the usuls listed in any of the basic eighteenth and nineteenth sources we have covered. There is no way we can say, therefore, that this 'usûl might have been born as a derivative of or have evolved as a variant of a pre-existing beat pattern.

Ezgi simply created an *ad hoc* 'usûl, to account for the unexplainably irregular rhythmical structure of the durak. This new 'usûl he conveniently named durak Evferi. The name creates a parallelism to the 'usûl Evfer, sometimes also called Mevlevî Evferi, of canonical use in some crucial parts of the Mevlevi musical ritual.<sup>19</sup> This new rhythmic cycle was to fit the repertoire of existing pieces, and Dr. Ezgi started to publish the notations in 1933. The few duraks published by Abdülkadir Töre, who learned them from the same teacher as Dr. Ezgi (Fehmi Efendi), were, however, notated as having no 'usûl.

Suphi Ezgi then published in 1946 a small volume containing notations of thirty-nine duraks, plus six na'ts, a *temcit* and a few other liturgical pieces.<sup>20</sup> This is the first and, to the present day, the only publication devoted to the duraks. There has been,

18 We can not totally exclude the possibility that some of the duraks composed in the seventeenth or eighteenth century might initially have had an usûl. What is to us absolutely certain, however, is that there is no way that this old usûl could have been the Durak Evferi, as it is defined by Ezgi. Dr. Ezgi himself tells us that one of the Duraks that were orally transmitted to him by Hüseyin Fahreddin Dede had an usûl ("Dilkeşhâveran makamında yegâne usullü Durak"). He does not, however, tell us what that original usûl was, and goes on by transcribing that Durak as if it had originally been composed with his newly invented Durak Evferi (Ezgi, *op. cit.*, vol.I, p. 163).

19 Kantemiroğlu tells us that the relative durations of the beats of some of the usûls were not, in his time, as strictly defined and inflexible as they are nowadays usually considered to be. Some of the usûls were, it seems, rather flexible. The three more malleable usûl were, according to him, Türkî Zarb, Evfer and Devr-i Revan. Here is what Kantemir writes: "Agâh ol ki Türkî Zarb usulün ikinci dümü... hanendelerin şartında vezne bend olmaz, öyle ki murad eylediği kadar uzatmağa ruhsatı vardır. Buna göre Evfer usulün ikinci dümü ve sonrası tek hanendelerde nâmevzun olabilir, öyle ki istendiği kadar uzun ider. Buna göre Devr-i Revan usulün dümleri hanendelerde câ-be-câ nâmevzun olabilir, lâkin sazendeye böyle olmaz zira Pişrevin şartı oldur ki name hatırı için vezni usûlü bozmaya." (Kantemir, *Edvâr*, pp. 85-86). These three usuls (Türkî Zarb, Evfer and Devr-i Revan) were used, according to Kantemir again, only for vocal pieces, and seem to have been, at that time, pretty changeable and open to interpretative variations. But this, of course, is rather inconclusive evidence as to the later evolution of these rhythmical patterns or as to their eventual relationship to Ezgi's Durak Evferi. What is noteworthy is that Kâzım Uz, two centuries after Kantemir, in the entry "Durak" of his *Dictionary of Musical Terms*, defines the genre as: "A hymn (ilâhî) sung by one person and composed with the usûls Evfer or Türkî Zarb". See, A. Kâzım [Uz], *Musiki İstilahatı*, (Istanbul: Matbaa-yı Ebüzziya, 1310[1893]), p. 25. (New and enlarged edition by Gültekin Oransay, Ankara, 1964, p. 20).

20 *Türk Musikisi Klâsiklerinden Temcit-Na't-Salât-Durak*, (Istanbul: İstanbul Konservatuarı Neşriyatı, 1946). In this volume, Ezgi put five of the six Na'ts he notated to the usûl Durak Evferi, while the sixth, İtrî's Na't-ı Mevlânâ, is written in the usûl Türkî Zarb. Ezgi also adapted a few other well known liturgical pieces (salât, tekbir, mersiye) to the same usûl. Ezgi's Türkî Zarb has little connection with its eighteenth century namesake. Besides, using Ezgi's notations in order to scrutinize more closely the structure of the Durak would, for obvious reasons, be tautological. Transcriptions and notations by other musicians or scholars have to be used in a comparative perspective. Especially the Abdülkadir Töre collection of notations, now in the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul, should be carefully scrutinized.

unfortunately, no other publication of any significance, whether analytical or simply of notations, on the topic of the durak since then.

Ezgi's 1946 volume of duraks seems to have had an electrifying effect on Hüseyin Sadettin Arel, the other "modernizer" of traditional Ottoman/Turkish music. Indeed, after the "real" 'usûl of the durak was "rediscovered" by Ezgi and the durak and na't notations published in 1946, Arel, who had not composed a single durak until then, put himself to work and, within two years, from 1947 to 1949, produced no less than eighty duraks.<sup>21</sup> Needless to say, all of them had Ezgi's Durak Evferi as their rhythmic pattern.

The invention of this 'usûl met with no real resistance or opposition. With the generalization of the Arel-Ezgi pitch system and notational conventions of Turkish music, the 'usûl Durak Evferi became part of the accepted stock of rhythmical cycles. Its existence and "authenticity" were never seriously challenged, except by one musicologist, Ekrem Karadeniz.<sup>22</sup> Karadeniz' book, however, although written much earlier, was published only in 1983 and has not yet been successful in providing an overall and systematic alternative to the Arel-Ezgi system.

The general Arel-Ezgi setup was, from the 1970s on, adopted as the main pedagogical instrument in the Conservatories of traditional Turkish music. These Conservatories were founded thanks to the political initiatives of some of Arel's followers and students, who were also appointed as directors or members of the teaching staff of these institutions. This seems to have sealed the fate of the objections to the acceptance of Durak Evferi as the standard 'usûl for the duraks. All subsequent Turkish publications list it as one of the well known and "age-old" 'usûls.<sup>23</sup>

## The "Restoration" Project

How does Ezgi explain his enterprise of the "restoration" of the duraks? What justification does he have for it? What are the arguments?

As a matter of fact, nowhere do either Arel or Ezgi provide any significant historical or musicological argument, or even any sort of supporting evidence, in favor of the treatment they chose to inflict on the durak.

As for the rediscovery of the 'usûl Durak Evferi, Ezgi and Arel obviously never had a good historical case for it. What Ezgi writes about the "restoration" of the durak is rather thin and clearly imbued with a good amount of self-righteousness. Here is what Ezgi wrote in 1935:

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21 See Yılmaz Öztuna, *Hüseyin Sadettin Arel*, (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1986), pp. 107-114.

22 See, Ekrem Karadeniz, *Türk Musikisinin Nazariye ve Esasları*, (Istanbul: İş Bankası Yayınları, 1983), particularly pp. 44, 166, 222-223 and 710. Karadeniz adopts a middle of the road position in the matter of the rhythmic cycle of the Durak. He does not challenge the existence of Ezgi's Durak Evferi and says that new Duraks might eventually be composed using this usûl. But he strongly opposes the idea that the existing stock of Duraks were composed with the help of this usûl and heavily insists on their having no regular rhythmic pattern at all. His argumentation is, however, not well documented, as well as rather inconsistent and in general pretty unconvincing.

23 See, for instance, M. Hurşit Ungay, *Türk Musikisinde Usuller ve Kudüm*, (Istanbul: 1981); İsmail Hakkı Özkan, *Türk Musikisi Nazariyatı ve Usulleri*, (Istanbul: Ötüken Neşriyat, 1984); Vural Sözer, *Müzik ve Müzisyenler Ansiklopedisi*, (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 1986); Zekâî Kaplan, *Dinî Musiki*, (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1991); M. Nazmi Özalp, *Türk Musikisi Beste Formları*, (Ankara: TRT Basım ve Yayın Müdürlüğü Yayınları, 1992); Şeref Çakar, *Türk Musikisinde Usul*, (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1996). Some composers have continued, nevertheless, to compose Duraks which have no usûl. Çinuçen Tanrkorur (1938- ), for instance, composed in 1984 a Durak "in the old style" in the makam Bestenigâr.

*Durak Evferi usulü tahminen yüz seneden beri unutulmuş... Durak ve na'tler tenbel ve cahil müezzin ve zakirler tarafından usulün zamanları birçok parçalara ayrılmak suretiyle adeta musiki hokkabazlığı yapılarak taksim gibi okunmuş idi... işte bunları usule sokmaya ve asıllarına ircââ H. Sadettin Beyle çalıştık ve muvaffak olduk... yuřdumuz evlatlarına bu güzel ölçüyü kazandırdığımızdan dolayı bahtiyarız.<sup>24</sup>*

The usul Durak Evferi had been forgotten for about a century...the ignorant and lazy zakirs and müezzins had split the beats of the usul into many parts and, with a sort of musical sleight of hand, had performed them as if they were improvisations... H.Sadettin Bey and I tried to to put them back into an usul and to restore them to their original condition and we succeeded...we are happy to make a present of this beautiful measure to our country's children

Elsewhere, Ezgi uses almost the same expressions to justify his enterprise of restoration.

*...bu eserlerin usulü unutulmuş ve cahil zakir ve müezzinler tarafından motifleri bozulmuş ve başka kötü motifler katılarak taksim gibi okunagelmişti."<sup>25</sup>*

..the 'usûls of these works had been forgotten and the ignorant zakirs and müezzins had spoiled their melodies and added unbecoming motifs and had performed them as if they were improvisations.

Why was the "authentic" 'usûl of the durak forgotten? Why were their melodies now 'unbecoming'? Because, we are told by Ezgi, the old, primitive, pitifully traditional, backward, ignorant and, worst of all, Ottoman zakirs were unfortunately strictly instinctive and irrational transmitters of a repertoire of duraks. The rationality and the logic of this repertoire, they did not master. For Ezgi, these zakirs and müezzins were just unconscious carriers of a musical tradition with which they had no cognitive relationship of any sort. They were also faithless, because they "spoiled" the melodies during performance and transmission. These traditional musicians just memorized vast quantities of musical pieces, without ever being able to reach a solid comprehension of their significance and structure.

Ezgi stops short, but barely, of openly accusing the zakirs and müezzins of being totally unaware of the new science of Turkish music, which, in reality, he himself set out to construct. The ignorant zakirs did not know the principles of the new science of music, its taxonomy, its logic or its modes of reckoning and classifying various musical artifacts. All too clearly, an operation of "restoration" was then needed to free the durak from the grip of centuries of "ignorant and lazy" performers.

How was the durak to be restored to its original condition? What method was to be followed? What justification is given by Ezgi for the kind of restoration he precisely chose to implement?

None at all, in reality. "Restoration to its original condition" (*asıllarına ircâ*) is a key idea for Ezgi and Arel. Almost all the notations published by Suphi Ezgi in his five-volume work are in fact "restorations" of his own making. Rediscovering the age-old but hidden internal logic, rationality and consistency of Turkish music became sometimes an obsession for him. It is clear, however, that both Arel and Ezgi lacked historical evidence as well as analytical tools and methods. Here is how Ezgi explains and justifies the method he has followed in his enterprise of "restoration" of the duraks:

24 Dr. Suphi [Ezgi], *Nazarî, Amelî Türk Musıkisi*, Istanbul, Istanbul Konservatuarı Neşriyatı, vol. II, 1935), p. 63.

25 Suphi Ezgi, *Türk Musıkisi Klâsiklerinden Temcit-Na't-Salât-Durak*, (Istanbul: Istanbul Konservatuarı Neşriyatı, 1946, p. 3.

*Usulleri unutulmuş veya lahinlerinin motifleri pek bozulmuş eserlerin asıllarını bulmak merakı onyediyedi yaşından beri bana hakim olduğundan o bozuk eserleri asıllarına irca etmek hususunda elli seneyi müteceviz çalışmalarım bende o eserleri asıllarına irca edilmiş bir halde tamire ilmî ve san'atî bir kudret ve meleke hasıl etti.<sup>26</sup>*

Ever since I was seventeen years old I have been curious about the originals of works whose usuls were forgotten and whose melodies had been spoiled. I have been working on this for more than fifty years and have developed an ability, an artistic and scientific expertise in repairing these works and restoring them to their original condition.

or,

*Bu mesai sayesinde bozuk olan eserleri tanımakta benim için bir ilim ve sîhulet hasıl oldu.<sup>27</sup>*

Thanks to my hard work, I acquired the science and the ease for recognizing these spoiled works.

No other explanation or justification is ever given either by Ezgi or by Arel. Ezgi's personal musical experience, his common sense and intuition is simply raised to the status of a universal, modern, Kantian *Vernunft*. Arel and Ezgi, these two self-appointed technical modernizers of Ottoman/Turkish music, set out, first and foremost, to put order into the house, i.e. to write down, preserve and transmit traditional Ottoman/Turkish music by reformulating it as a self-contained system. This system was to be natural, logical, exhaustive and totalizing. The type of musical positivism which their views imply and the details of its implementation are, however, beyond the scope of this paper.

At all events, the canon according to which every single composition of Turkish music must have a makam and an *'usûl* could suffer no exception. Formal laxity and anarchy as well as rhythmical looseness - relics and symbols of a past age - had to be eliminated at all costs.

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<sup>26-27</sup> *Ibid*, p. 3. For a more analytical and solid attempt at reaching the "originals" of some seventeenth century instrumental compositions, see Owen Wright "Aspects of Historical Change in the Turkish Classical Repertoire", in Richard Widdess(ed.) *Musica Asiatica-5*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 1-108.