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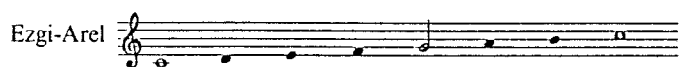
BSOAS, 53/2, 1990 London - Çargâh

ÇARGÂH IN TURKISH CLASSICAL MUSIC:  
HISTORY VERSUS THEORY

By O. WRIGHT

If there has been one dominant, quasi-official theory for Turkish classical music in the second half of the twentieth century, it is that particularly associated with Ezgi and Arel.<sup>1</sup> Their notational conventions have become standard, supplanting earlier norms, and the framework they developed is the one still employed in recent general accounts of the modal system, whether the simplified introductory survey of Yılmaz (1983), for example, or the more detailed and comprehensive coverage of Özkan (1984).<sup>2</sup> Both of these follow the analytical models provided by their predecessors, and begin with an exposition of intervals and the various species of tetrachord and pentachord formed from them before moving on to describe the structure of the *makams* themselves. The sequence interval, scale, mode, nevertheless forms a conceptual continuum: the intervals defined are restricted to those deemed to occur in Turkish classical music, and the nomenclature of the various species, for all that they appear as abstract assemblages of intervals, identifies them with characteristic segments of well-known and important *makams*.

But there is one immediate and striking exception. Pride of place in the exposition of tetrachord species is given to the (Pythagorean) diatonic tetrachord *C D E F/c d e f*, called *çargâh*.<sup>3</sup> The same name is then applied by extension first to the pentachord *C D E F G/c d e f g*, and then to the *C-c* octave, analysed as consisting of the *çargâh* pentachord (*C-G*) below the *çargâh* tetrachord (*G-c*). Finally, this octave is accorded the status of a *makam*. Reference to the repertoire, however, shows that neither the initial tetrachord nor the derived pentachord or octave is to be identified with any part of *çargâh* as exhibited in practice, the scale structure of which is quite different. Further, far from being one of the core *makams* in contemporary practice, *çargâh* is now so rare that it could reasonably be considered, if not wholly obsolete, then at least obsolescent. This curious state of affairs has not passed unnoticed, but no satisfactory explanation for it has been provided. Signell, for example, merely remarks (1977: 43) that 'there exist no compositions in such a makam described as ÇARGÂH by Ezgi and Arel', and notes the very different structure of the mode to which the small *çargâh* repertoire does relate, presenting the two as in exs. 1 and 2:



Example 1

<sup>1</sup> As presented in Ezgi (1933) and Arel (1968). The latter is a posthumous work collecting together material most of which had been serialized in *Musiki mecmuası* around 1950 (Öztuna, 1969: 50). Their theory is in certain important respects indebted to Rauf Yekta Bey (see *infra*). A further writer sometimes associated with the Ezgi-Arel theory is Uzdilek (1977), who deals however only with intervallic relationships.

<sup>2</sup> A teacher at the Istanbul Belediye Konservatuarı. The work comes with a prefatory note by Nevzat Atlığ mentioning Rauf Yekta Bey, Ezgi, Arel and Öztuna, a disciple of Arel, as (effectively a chain of) authorities. Özkan himself speaks of the Arel-Ezgi-Uzdilek system.

<sup>3</sup> The lowest pitch of the standard gamut, traditionally called *yegâh*, is represented by *d* above middle *c*. The gamut is, however, normally extended down a tone to include middle *c* (*kaba çargâh*). Here the octave beginning on middle *c* will be represented as *C...Bc*, and the next as *c...bc'*. The *çargâh* tetrachord is accordingly represented as *C-F* by Arel (1968: 11) and as *c-f* by both Ezgi (1933: 32) and Arel (1968: 11, 13).

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repertoire<sup>4</sup>



Example 2

Although gestures of accommodation are not unknown, it is hardly surprising to find that orthodox adherents of the Ezgi-Arel school sometimes pass over the repertoire form in genteel silence. (The difficulties attendant upon attempts at reconciling the two are most succinctly illustrated by Belviranlı (1975: 28-9), who blithely ignores them, defining *çargâh* according to the Ezgi-Arel model but illustrating it with a piece containing almost invariably *d<sup>b</sup>*.) Others take the opposite view, citing only the repertoire form: thus Karadeniz, in a large-scale theoretical work proposing an alternative analysis of the scale system, describes and illustrates the *çargâh* of ex. 2 (n.d.: 114, 402),<sup>5</sup> but wholly disregards the diatonic model proposed by Ezgi and Arel. A more robustly aggressive line has been taken recently by Tura (1988: 58, 119-57), for whom the whole Ezgi-Arel system is faulty: the diatonic *çargâh* is brusquely dismissed as non-existent.<sup>6</sup>

A cursory glance at the earliest notations of pieces in *çargâh*, representing the Istanbul repertoire of the second half of the seventeenth century, might suggest that the form proposed in the Ezgi-Arel theory harks back to an earlier stage of development, at least as far as the contrast in the *C-F* vs. *c-f* tetrachords exhibited by exs. 1 and 2 is concerned. By a fortunate coincidence, one of the few seventeenth-century instrumental pieces known to have survived into the modern repertoire happens to be in *çargâh*. Recorded around 1700 by Demetrius Cantemir,<sup>7</sup> it contains throughout *c d e f*, whereas the much expanded modern version,<sup>8</sup> which appears as the *neyrev* (instrumental prelude) to the *ayin* (the set of pieces performed during a Mevlevi ceremony) in *çargâh*, for much of its length substitutes a *hicaz*-type tetrachord with *d<sup>b</sup>*, as may be seen from the extract in ex. 3:



Example 3

<sup>4</sup> Similar conventions will be adopted below, *o* indicating the most prominent note (often also the final), *Δ* the next most prominent. Prominence is to be defined both statistically (duration, number of attacks) and structurally (position, especially phrase final). The accidentals <sup>4</sup> and <sup>5</sup> indicate lowerings of one and four commas respectively.

<sup>5</sup> He gives a *c-c'* octave scale with effectively the same intervallic relationships (although slightly differently defined) as the *c*-(*implied*) *c'* segment of Signell's definition in ascent, while in descent *a* replaces *a<sup>b</sup>*. However, the range of the example provided is *G-a<sup>b</sup>*. Other repertoire examples also normally have this range, unless repeating at the octave, where we encounter *a<sup>b</sup> c' d<sup>b</sup>*. The status of *b<sup>4</sup>* in Signell's account is therefore dubious, as is the absence of *G*.

<sup>6</sup> 1988: 132: *Bütün çabalarına rağmen, Arel ve Ezgi, bu söz-de makama ait bir tek doğru dürüst örnek verememişlerdir.* (Try as they might, Arel and Ezgi have been unable to come up with a single authentic example belonging to this pseudo-makam.)

<sup>7</sup> *edvar* notations p. 102 (transcription in Cantemir (forthcoming: no. 190)).  
<sup>8</sup> On the relationship between the two see Wright (1988: 48-55). The modern version may be consulted in full in Heper (1974: 83) or *Mevlevî âynleri*, (ed.) Rifat *et al.* (no. 234, p. 400).

*Messianism. The Idea of the Mahdi in Twelver Shi'ism*, Albany, N.Y., 1981. Š. Širāzī, *Ahl al-Bayt fi'l-Qor'ān*, Beirut, 1400/1979.

(HAMID ALGAR)

**ČAHĀRGĀH**, the name of one of the twelve *dasgāhs* (modes) of traditional Persian music in the 14th/20th century, evidently derived from its position among musical scales or the fret locating its fundamental tone or tonic (Mallāh, p. 200). The term was already known in the 9th/15th century, when it evidently referred to a *maqām* (Ar. "key") of Persian music (e.g., Marāgī, p. 70). The *maqām* Čahārgāh in 20th-century Arabic music ordinarily has a scale close to that of a Western major scale; the Turkish *makam* Čargah is similarly constructed. In Persian music, however, a similar unit became the basis for a larger grouping that at some point began to be performed in consistent succession and combination. Čahārgāh thus became one of the *dasgāhs*; although it is mentioned in sources of the early 14th/20th century (Khatschi, pp. 7, 79), it probably did not achieve its position as one of the principal *dasgāhs* in Persia until after 1320 Š./1940. Examination of recordings suggests that it continued to increase in importance until about 1975. Many composed pieces in the Persian classical tradition—*pīš-darāmad*s, *tasnīf*s, *čahār-mežrāb*s (q.v.)—are cast in Čahārgāh, as are songs in the popular repertory.

The scale of Čahārgāh is consistently described as being like a Western major scale, except that the second and sixth degrees are lowered a quarter-tone: the tone-interval sequence of the scale, beginning with the tonic, is thus 3/4, 5/4, 1/2, whole, 3/4, 5/4, 1/2. In actual practice, however, there is considerable variation in the intonation of the intervals, especially in the second and sixth degrees, which are sometimes rendered as much as a quarter-tone lower or higher than in the defined sequence, thus occasionally corresponding to a Western major scale. Čahārgāh also has in common with the Western major mode that the third and fifth degrees of the scale are emphasized.

The *dasgāh* of Čahārgāh has other important distinctive features, including a characteristic musical motif (6-5-6-5-6-5-6-1-6-1), which always appears in its initial section (*darāmad*) and sometimes elsewhere as well: a tendency to emphasize the tonic more than is common in some other *dasgāhs*; and a distinct musical character or mood. This mood is usually described as epic (*hamāsī*) and heroic (*pahlavānī*), but Čahārgāh is also considered one of the two more joyous *dasgāhs* (the other being Māhūr). The very popular wedding song "Mobārak bādā" is sung in Čahārgāh. Most important, this mode has a group of subdivisions, *gūšas*, which appear in the various sequences of the *radīf*s (canons of instrumental melodies) of Persian music. Chief among them (after the characterizing *darāmad*) are Zābol, Moḳāleḫ, Hešār, Maḡlūb, Mūya, Manšūrī, Ḥodī, Pahlavī, and Rajaz. Frequently the *darāmad* itself includes a rhythmically distinct section in the *keresma* meter and a metric tune called Zangūla (also called Pīš-zangūla),

which is reminiscent of the American song "Yankee Doodle Dandy." Hešār and Mūya are modulatory *gūšas*, departing from the basic scalar pattern of Čahārgāh. Virtually all these *gūšas*, with the same names and general melodic outlines, also appear in the closely related *dasgāh* of Segāh. Several other *gūšas* of Čahārgāh also appear in other *dasgāhs* of the Persian *radīf*. The various published *radīf*s, like those of Mūsā Ma'rūfī, Abu'l-Ḥasan Šabā, and Maḡmūd Karīmī, as well as the available recordings of Nūr-'Alī Borūmand's *radīf*s, generally agree on the context and on the order, though the position of Mūya varies somewhat.

Structured series of recordings made in the 1960s and 1970s (see Nettl and Foltin; Nettl, 1987, pp. 43-64) make it possible to give an account of the characteristics of *āvāz* (q.v.; nonmetric) performances of Čahārgāh. Various sequences are possible. For example, although the *darāmad* is virtually always first and Zābol second, there is less consistency among the succeeding sections, except that Manšūrī, if it appears, is usually last. Hešār and Moḳāleḫ are partly complementary, one of them being always present; when both appear they are played successively. Ḥodī, Pahlavī, and Rajaz, which, in contrast to the other *gūšas*, are semimetric, are almost always grouped together. The most popular *gūšas* in order of frequency are *darāmad*, Zābol, Moḳāleḫ, Hešār, Manšūrī, Maḡlūb, and Mūya.

Performances of Čahārgāh differ from those of some other *dasgāhs* in that the *āvāz* is usually divided into several sections, each clearly based on one *gūša*. In some performances the section based on the *darāmad* is by far the longest and ensuing sections are presented in order of decreasing length; in others an approximately equal amount of time can be devoted to each of the *gūšas*. In a quite different type of structure there are two major sections, each beginning with a long *gūša* (usually Moḳāleḫ after the *darāmad*), followed by a short rendition of one or two other *gūšas*. Although the *āvāz* is improvised, individual musicians do develop characteristic patterns and apparently plan their performances: there are certainly characteristic structures.

The tendency to devote a section in the *āvāz* clearly to material from one *gūša* is typical of Čahārgāh, Segāh, and Māhūr, in contrast, for example, to the *dasgāh* of Šūr, in which materials from various *gūšas* may be started in quick succession and mixed order.

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**ÇÂRGÂH**

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