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The Arabic music migrated to the West

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RESUM

Tota música té característiques segons la civilització a la qual pertany i segons l'evolució del seu llenguatge musical i l'aculturació amb la música d'altres cultures. La música àrab té les seues pròpies característiques, especialment en l'àmbit melòdic, amb dotzenes de *maqām*-s, i en l'àmbit rítmic, amb les seues cent combinacions rítmiques, que defineix la seua identitat. En obrir-se a la música occidental des del segle XIX, va prendre elements d'aquesta música, com l'harmonia, la composició orquestral i les formes musicals. Per a presentar la seua música en l'estil occidental, alguns músics àrabs sacrificaren els *maqām*-s atemperats per a adequar-los al sistema musical temperat de la música occidental. Alguns ho consideren un enriquiment per a la música àrab; altres ho consideren una pèrdua de la identitat. Podria aquesta música occidentalitzada perdre la seua identitat? Podria servir a la música àrab tant com a la música occidental?

Paraules Clau: Música; àrab; occidental; escala; mode; harmonització; temperament; polifonia; orquestració; arranjament

RESUMEN

Toda música tiene características según la civilización a la que pertenece y según la evolución de su lenguaje musical y su aculturación con la música de otras civilizaciones. La música árabe tiene sus propias características, especialmente a nivel melódico, con sus docenas de *maqām*-s, y a nivel rítmico, con sus cien combinaciones rítmicas, que definen su identidad. Al abrirse a la música occidental desde el siglo XIX, tomó prestados elementos de esta música, como la armonía, la composición orquestral y las formas musicales. Para presentar su música al estilo occidental, algunos músicos árabes sacrificaron los *maqām*-s atemperados para adecuarlos al sistema musical temperado de la música occidental. Algunos lo consideran un enriquecimiento para la música árabe; otros lo consideran una pérdida de su identidad. ¿Podría esta música occidentalizada perder su identidad? ¿Podría servir a la música árabe tanto como la música occidental?

Palabras Clave: Música; árabe; occidental; escala; modo; armonización; temperamento; polifonía; orquestación; arreglo

ABSTRACT

Every music has characteristics according to the civilization to which it belongs and according to the evolution of its musical language and to its acculturation with other civilizations music. Arab music has its own characteristics, especially at the level of the melody with its dozens of *maqām*-s and at the level of rhythm with its hundred rhythmic combinations, that define its identity. By opening to the Western music since the nineteenth century, it borrowed elements of this music such as harmony, orchestral composition and musical forms. To present their music in the Western style, some Arab musicians sacrificed the non-tempered *maqām*-s of their music to be identified with the tempered musical system of Western music. Some consider it as enrichment for Arab music; others consider it as a loss of its identity. Could this westernized music lose its identity? Could it serve Arabic music as well as Western music?

Keywords: music; Arabic; Western; *maqām*; scale; mode; harmonization; tempered; polyphony; orchestration; arrangement

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Introduction

People impregnated with modal music seemed not to feel the need to apply harmonic rules to their monophonic melodies. Their musical instinct does not admit polyphony, their music is beautiful without harmony, and their ears are not satisfied because the melodic feelings are more dominant to them. The argument of savvy and conservative musicians is that Western harmony is not compatible with oriental modes and with micro-intervals.

By opening to the Western music since the nineteenth century, Arabic musicians borrowed elements of this music such as harmony, orchestral composition, musical forms and instruments. To present their music in the Western style and forms, few of them sacrificed the non-tempered *maqām*-s/scales of their music to be identified with the tempered system of Western music.

In the process of the music migration, there are music that move from one country to another without their original musicians (composers or performers) through technology and acculturation; on the other hand, there are musicians who emigrate and forget or no longer interpret their national music.

Each music has its techniques, its characteristics, its forms, its temperament, its charm. The music acculturation was and still useful if it conserves the identity and the character of each music. Getting all music similar is an impoverishment.

1. The principal characteristics of Arabic music

With the introduction of new styles and trends on Arab music under the pretext of "renewal", "development" or "globalization", a quick and concise presentation of the most important elements of the identity of Arabic music should be made, so that we can know the relevance of these new works. The most important characteristics of Arabic music are:¹

- The *maqām*-s: Arabic music is a modal and monophonic music; it developed melodies in dozens of music scales called *maqām*-s when the composer uses some special techniques in his composition. Traditional Arabic music did not adopt the movement of the harmony and the polyphony.
- The Singing: Arabic music is primarily lyrical. Except for the improvisation, musical instruments played an auxiliary role through the arrangements, before the adoption of Turkish musical forms (*samā'i*, *basbraf*, *longa*) and later one the occidental forms (sonata, concerto, etc).
- The improvisation: Developed in a horizontal way, Arabic music advanced its melodies, scales, stances and rhythms, and established the vocal and instrumental improvisation as one of its principal characteristics. It enabled the performer to add some ornaments thus becoming a co-composer.
- The oral tradition: The traditional Arabic music adopted the oral tradition in teaching and transferring heritage to new generations.
- The non-tempered scale: The most scales of Arabic music are non-tempered ones. They have, like the

¹ See: [Farmer, Henry George](#) (1988): *Historical facts for the Arabian Musical Influence*, Ayer Publishing; Touma, Habib Hassan (1996): *The Music of the Arabs*, trans. Laurie Schwartz, Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press; Maalouf, Shireen (2002): *History of Arabic Music Theory: Change and Continuity in the Tone Systems, Genres, and Scales*, Kaslik, Lebanon: Université Saint-Esprit; Erlanger, Baron Rodolphe (d') and Christian Poché (1930 (Reissue 2001)): *La Musique arabe / Tome cinquième, Essai de codification des règles usuelles de la musique arabe moderne, échelle générale des sons, système modal*, Published by Paris : P. Geuthner : Institut du Monde Arabe.

other oriental music, micro-intervals as the half-flat and half-sharp.

- The trance, the enchantment (*tarab*).² It describes the emotional effect of Arabic music and its artistic and aesthetic performance.

2. The Influence of Western Music on Arabic Music

The introduction of Western musical instruments to the Arabic music initiated some changes in this music:

- The small Arabic orchestra (*takbt*) was replaced by the big band up to the full orchestra.
- The fixed sound instruments used in Arabic music were pushed to modify the non-tempered Arabic musical scale and altered the capacity of the musical ear to distinguish between the original non-tempered tunes and their modified versions.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, certain eminent Arab musicians used some of the famous Western tunes, musical instruments and rhythms. They used them with great caution, art and experience, so that their music and songs preserved the Arab music identity. Mohamad Abdel Wahab³ and Rahbani Brothers⁴ are among the pioneers of this music trend. As an example, Ziad Rahbani⁵ quoted the entrance melody of the Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2⁶ of Franz Liszt⁷ and built on a new music with an oriental and modern arrangement that combines the scales of Western and Arabic music.⁸

3. Altering the Western musical scales to Eastern ones

Modifying the music scales is an old process that had multiple causes. There are composers who have written a variety of music on a known melody; there are musicians who have changed the character of a complete melody by playing or singing it on a non-tempered musical scale.

Since the sixteenth century, Western missionaries from France and Italy brought chants with them to Lebanon and the Middle East. They translated the original texts to Arabic or wrote Arabic poems while maintaining the original melodies. The Lebanese in their oriental music and temperament modified the scale in non-tempered intervals. I recall, for example, the chant *Conditor alme siderum*.

Conditor alme siderum is a Sequence hymn for the season of Advent from the 9th century; *Guillaume Dufay*⁹ rewrote

² *Tarab* is the emotional effect of music, associated with a traditional form and aesthetic of Arabic music. For more details see: Jonathan H. Shannon (2003): "Emotion, Performance, and Temporality in Arab Music: Reflections on Tarab", *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Feb. 2003), pp. 72-98.

³ Mohamad Abdel Wahab (1902-1991), also transliterated Mohammed Abd el-Wahab, was a prominent Egyptian singer and composer.

⁴ The Rahbani Brothers (al-Akhawān Rahbani) Assi (1923-1986) and Mansour (1925-2009) are Lebanese composers, musicians, songwriters and authors.

⁵ Ziad Rahbani (1956-) is a Lebanese composer, pianist and playwright. He is the son of Assi Rahbani and Fairouz, the Lebanese and the Arab world's most famous singer. He is one of the founders of modern Arab music.

⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdH1hSWGFGU> [viewed: July 10th, 2019].

⁷ Franz Liszt (1811-1886) is a Hungarian composer, virtuoso pianist, conductor and arranger.

⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1ANACGkERM> [viewed: July 10th, 2019].

⁹ Guillaume Du Fay (1397-1474) is a Franco-Flemish composer. He was regarded by his contemporaries as one of the leading composers in Europe in the 15th century.

it. The Maronite church in Lebanon adopted its melody in the hymn *Jalast lada l-koukb el-ḥaqir* (She stayed in the poor manger) and modified its scale from the Gregorian 4th mode to the 1st mode in the oriental music (mode of Do, or the scale of *rast* in Arabic music):

The image shows three staves of musical notation for a hymn. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a common time signature (C), and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is written in square notes with stems. Below the first staff, the lyrics 'Ondi-tor alme sí-de-rum, æ-térna lux credén-' are written. The second staff continues the melody with the lyrics 'ti-um, Christe, redémptor ómni-ùm, exáudi pre-ces'. The third staff concludes the melody with the lyrics 'súpli-cum.'.

Fig. 1. *Conditor Alma Siderum* (Creator of the stars of night)

The image shows three staves of musical notation for the hymn 'Jalast'. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a common time signature (C). The melody is written in square notes with stems. The second and third staves continue the melody with similar notation.

Fig. 2. *Jalast* (She stayed)

4. The orchestration and the harmonization of Arabic music

The Arabs, for the sake of modernity or Westernization, had made attempts to harmonize their music. The first experiments were criticized by Arab conservatives and Westerners. This harmonization varied from simple arrangements to symphonic compositions. Musicians have used counterpoint, which aligns better with modal music; others have utilized harmonic, polyphonic and orchestral compositions. Most Arab musicians have worked on tempered musical scales while sometimes they change the non-tempered modes to western modes in their compositions. Few Arab and even Western musicians have ventured into the harmonization of non-tempered music. There are works that have been more or less successful and others have not been well received.

As a successful example of the orchestration and the harmonization of Arabic music, I mention *Lamma bada yatathanna*,¹⁰ an Arabic tempered *mumashshab*¹¹ orchestrated by Thibaut Perrine and Cyrille Lehn for polyphonic

¹⁰ Attributed to the Egyptian composer Mohamad Abd el-Rahim Masloub (1793-1928).

¹¹ *Mumashshab* is a genre of Arabic poetry to be sing collectively; sometimes it uses classical language and sometimes a mixture of classical and colloquial.

choir and philharmonic orchestra¹² and performed in Paris.¹³

4.1. Modification of Arabic music scales for orchestral compositions

With “Westernization”, equal temperament not only serves to play "right" together, but to prepare the ground for polyphony. To allow Western instruments (piano, accordion, guitars, etc.) to be introduced into the Arabic orchestra, traditional instruments must be aligned with the equal tempered intervals.¹⁴

The abolition of non-tempered intervals is attested by Western-style transcriptions and compositions: the modes are transcribed with only sharps and flats. The intervals are gradually entered into the ears of musicians and have chased the old intonations with micros intervals.

The project of recycling the modal material into the great symphonic process, which produced quality works, eventually led to the development of heterophony in the instrumental accompaniment of the song, to deliberately polyphonic arrangements, in two, sometimes three voices.

The use of folk tunes in orchestral composing has emerged with the emergence of national musical schools in the 19th century aimed to express human, psychological and artistic national aspects and to show the musical identity by focusing on the popular musical heritage that was the basis of their orchestral music at that time. Some authors have diversified the scales of some melodies between the major and the minor scales.

Some of the Arab composers who studied music in Europe or who were influenced by Western music did modify the non-tempered Arabic music scales containing about the $\frac{3}{4}$ interval to western scales in the purpose to use the harmony and the orchestral style in their compositions while conserving the Arabic musical themes. For example, they replaced the scale of *al-bayāti* sometimes with the minor scale and sometimes with the modal scale (*Kurd* scale).

There are few Arab composers who have adopted the harmonic and orchestral style for the non-tempered Arabic music scales such Toufic Succar (1922-2017) and Abd el-Ghani Chaaban (1927-1977). Their works have been contrary to the harmony rules and are also contrary to the theories of Arabic music and its legacy of monophonic.

There are Arab musical composers who have used for their orchestral compositions only the tempered Arabic scales that correspond to Western musical scales, which contain only the intervals of tone (1), half tone (1/2) and tone and a half (1 and 1/2) such as Atiah Sharara (1923-2014), Abdel Halim Nouwaira (1916-1985), Hussein Jnaid (1918-1990) and Gabriel Yared (1949-).

There are Arab musicians who have changed the non-tempered music scales of their folk music that they used in their orchestral compositions to conform the tempered Western scales such as Aziz al-Chawwan (1916-1993),

¹² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajQ0mJPnPI0> [viewed: July 10th, 2019].

¹³ “Playing for Philharmonie de Paris 2016” was a unique initiative which gathered 300 musicians from *Société Générale*, fifty of them from Casablanca and Douala, and the orchestra *Les Siècles* conducted by François-Xavier Roth.

¹⁴ During, Jean « Globalisations de l'ère préindustrielle et formatage de l'oreille du monde, L'écoute de l'ethnomusicologue », [https://www.academia.edu/25737923/Globalisations_de_l_ %C3%A8re_pr%C3%A9industrielle_et_formatage_de_l_oreille_du_monde. L_ %C3%A9coute_de_l_ethnomusicologue](https://www.academia.edu/25737923/Globalisations_de_l_%C3%A8re_pr%C3%A9industrielle_et_formatage_de_l_oreille_du_monde_L_%C3%A9coute_de_l_ethnomusicologue) [viewed: July 10th 2019].

Jamal Abdel Rahim (1924-1988), Youssef Khasho (1927-1997) and Najî Hakim (1955-).

Three different and contradictory currents were created. The conservatives considered that whomever changed the *maqamât*/scales had overthrown the identity and distorted it, while the progressives considered that they gave to the Arabic music a new dimension through the orchestral and harmonic variations and compositions. The third trend, which used the harmony and the orchestral composition in the non-tempered scales, which contains intervals that do not exist in the Western scales, was not deprived of criticism. Some critics considered that that music became hybrid as it did not conform to the harmony and Western compositions, and it did not show the Arabic *maqamât*/scales neither the enchantment/the *ṭarab* nor the monophonic while using the harmony and the orchestral compositions.

4.2. The methods adopted to modify or change the scales

1. The first method is to raise or lower the non-tempered grade in order to cancel the interval of three quarters or the interval of quarter, thus either changing the *maqām-s*/scales to tempered scales used in Arabic music or similar to Western music ones, major and minor. For example, the *al-bayāṭi* scale is transformed into a minor scale or into a modal scale, while the *rast* scale is transformed into the major or the minor scale.

2. The second method is similar to the variations in music. It represents a sentence or a melodic cell on a scale or a musical tonality that has nothing to do with the basic scale of the sentence or the cell. Thus, it can be said that the change affects all the cell or melodic sentence interpreted in a new scale.

4.3. Examples of Arabic musical works in which the modes or scales were changed

a. The Folk Suite for Orchestra N° 24 in Do minor of Abu Bakr Khairat (1910-1963). It is one of six movements based on popular Egyptian and Syrian melodies and other melodies by Egyptian composers. The author used the following song °*Atchan ya sabāya* (Thirsty O girls): Mode of *bayāṭi*.



The scale was modified by raising the second degree (mi) to become a minor scale, and with the raising of the sixth grade of the minor scale, the melody becomes on the dorian scale.



b. The Symphonic Variations *baladi* (my country) of Kamel Al-Ramali (1922-2011). The author used the folkloric melody *Ah ya asmar el-lawn* (Ah! O brown color) of the *bayāṭi* scale:



The scale has been changed to Ré minor:



c- Salvador Arnita (1914-1985), in the second dance of his second suite, the Oriental 2 (Suite n° 2 l'Orientale), based on the folkloric melody *al-lawṣ al akhdar ya eini* (The green almonds) from the *bayāti* scale to the minor scale to be subjected to the harmonic and orchestra arrangement.¹⁵

d- The scale of the song *sa'alouni el-nās* (People asked me) in *bayāti* scale, composed by Ziad Rahbani, Lyrics by Mansour Rahbani and sung by Fairouz, has been modified to be performed by occidental singers and musical instruments who cannot perform non-tempered scales (for example, Dalit Friedman, the singer of Turquoise, sings it in hebrew but on the scale of do phrygien / kurd scale).¹⁶ It is played also on Western music instruments; for example, Claude Ciari plays it guitar with his band on the Do minor scale.¹⁷

e- The Jordanian music experience Yusuf Khasho, who chose not to get involved in using the interval of three quarter of tone, turned it into a half tone, regardless of the fact of its position in the original scale and its functional impact. Khashu has used some of the popular Jordanian-Palestinian songs originally in *bayāti*, *sikah* and *rust* modes in tempered scales. In this way he got them out of their original value and turned them into distorted music that was not appreciated by the people or the Arabic music.

f- Naji Hakim is a Lebanese French organist and composer. In his *Ouverture Libanaise* for organ, he changes the mode *bayāti* of a very known folk song *°ala dal'ouna* in minor mode.

- The folk song:



- The organ version:

¹⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZtVHFCl-Hs> [viewed: July 10th, 2019].

¹⁶ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9F2yGico_k [viewed: July 10th, 2019].

¹⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TmbKitiEKsQ> [viewed: July 10th, 2019].

4.4. Harmony and orchestral arrangement in non-tempered scales

a. Toufic Succar¹⁸ was among the pioneers who applied the harmonic rules of Western music to the non-tempered scales of Arabic music. In parallel with his musical studies in Paris he was interested in oriental music, more particularly in Lebanese folk music like “Lebanese Popular Suite in D rast for String Quartet op. 17”¹⁹, and harmonized songs from his country as well as Maronite chants conceived in oriental modes. Indeed, he is the first musician to push polyphonic research in these modes at intervals of about one-quarter of a ton and to systematize this polyphony even before the 1950s; which has earned him violent criticism, especially from Oriental musicians who refused that polyphony. The Czech composer and pedagogue Alois Haba (1893-1973) noticed the works of Succar as early as 1956. The "Novak Quartet" commissioned him a work, a Quartet in mode *bayāti* mi, containing intervals of about $\frac{1}{4}$ of a tone. This work was played by this Czech band during their tours across Europe. The Oriental Lebanese Fantasy in mode *saba* ré, written at the request of the French cellist Eliane Magnan, was a great success at the 1970 Festival de Menton.

b. Abd el-Ghani Chaaban wrote a book on the art of voices harmony and its compatibility in oriental music.²⁰ He composed oriental music harmonized according the counterpoint, and one of them on the *maqām*/scale of *rast* (non-tempered scale) in the form of fugue, based on the song *Min °az̤zibak* (Who tortured you?) composed by Mohamed Abdel Wahab.²¹ He presented it in the UNESCO World Music Forum in Paris in 1972.

¹⁸ His varied music includes symphonic works such as the Cedar Symphony, chamber music, choral pages, film music, piano pieces and educational works.

¹⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FSnB-x4BRkU> [viewed: July 10th, 2019].

²⁰ *Fan ta'āhuf al-aswat wa tamāfīnuquba fi l-musiqa al-charqiyah*. It is still manuscript and has not yet been printed.

²¹ https://www.onefineart.com/uploads/quatuor_rast.mp3 [viewed: July 10th, 2019].

5. Orientalization of Musical instruments

Many Western music instruments had been altered to play the quartertone or the $\frac{3}{4}$ tone. I cite: piano, trumpet, guitar, flute, saxophone, etc. The use of some Orientalized instruments was developed such as the keyboard, while the use of others such as the piano was limited.

5.1. The piano of Abdallah Chahine (1894-1975)

Although the piano was included in Arabic music since the early 20th century, it was used as a Western instrument to add a classical color to Arabic compositions. The earliest Arabic piano pioneer was the Lebanese Wadih Sabra who played a piano endowed with additional notes (quartertones) during the Cairo Arabic Music Congress of 1932. Later, Lebanese Abdallah Chahine also altered a piano to play quartertones.

Chahine's piano is an authentic oriental-occidental straight piano. Since 1954, it has been made in Vienna by Hoffman's factories with the help of Renner's factories, in Stuttgart. This new piano was first shown in an exhibition in 1954 at the Austrian Pavilion in Damascus, then, two years later, its numerous possibilities had been shown to the members of the UNESCO Congress of quartertone in Beirut. In 1962, thanks to a prototype, which he had in his flat in Beirut, he recorded a vinyl record called "al-Nagham al-Khaled" with *taqāsim* (improvisation) and Arabic music in the most common *maqām-s*.²²

5.2. The trumpet of Nassim Maalouf (1941-)

Nassim Maalouf is a classical trumpet soloist particularly known for his adaptation of the trumpet to Arabic non-tempered music with the introduction of the quarter tones on the trumpet. He said: when I was young, I was told in my village in Lebanon that I was playing incorrectly when I performed the traditional Arabic melodies on my trumpet". For that he added in 1976 a 4th valve to his trumpet, an enormous invention that allows him to play quartertones, essential in Arabic music. Maalouf worked for two years with the craftsman Michel Wikrikaz of the Henri Selmer company in Paris to produce his design of a "quarter-tone" trumpet, suitable for performing Arabic *maqām-s* throughout the full chromatic range of the instrument.²³

5.3. The oriental keyboard

The Oriental Keyboard is a Synthesizer/Sampler with full quartertone capability. It had been commercialized toward the end of the 20th century. Its strength was that it could imitate sounds from various traditional Arabic instruments by sampling them. The oriental keyboard is able to play a quartertone on any of the 12 notes of the keyboard simply by pressing a switch.²⁴

²² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2MXGYmOs2M> [viewed: July 10th, 2019].

²³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jCIH5PHiwZA> [viewed: July 10th 2019].

²⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ulWxfjOPjcc> [viewed: July 10th 2019].

6. Advantages and disadvantages

In 1932, the first Arab Music Conference was held in Egypt. In the presence of many international music experts and some of the musicians involved in music composition and orchestral arrangement, one of the most important points of the conference was the study of the Arab music scales and its relationship with the Western scales. Some researchers asked to introduce to the Arabic music polyphony and musical orchestration and to include some Western musical instruments to the Oriental bands. These requests have generated widespread debate among supporters and opponents. Supporters looking for innovation and development realized that the introduction of "polyphonic" would add a great deal to the music work. On the other hand, the opponents were adhering to the Oriental vision of the monophonic melody which is the origin of Arabic music; and all the musical components must follow the basic melody sung by the singer; and the Western musical instruments are odd to Arabic music, and their use will make Arab music lose its spirit and character. The conference concluded, among other things, the recommendations of the European delegations that found the need to preserve the heritage of oriental music and the interest in popular music and singing, unlike some Egyptians who wanted to follow the same European music by introducing polyphonic into oriental music.

The hegemony of the equal tempered range and scales, propagated by the vast majority of variety music, is materialized by classical or electronic instruments calibrated on the Western scale. Their use (especially if they are electronic) forbids the slight difference in tuning. Formatting the ear at this level certainly corresponds to a refinement of perception, but it is detrimental to many musical expressions where correctness is not an essential factor. We are witnessing a reformation of the ear of the world which affects at the same time the forms, the nature of the performance, the listening, and which, like any system of mass production, conditions the taste, the discernment and the habits of the public.

The process of changing the scales of non-tempered music to facilitate harmony and orchestral arrangement or composition is an alienation of this music, its ethos and its significations. The fact of applying this process to all non-tempered music will abolish the existence of ethnic music and make all music similar; consequently, the civilization will lose a part of its richness. Some Arabic musicians work to develop Arabic music through its characteristics, regardless of imitate the Western music. Bertrand Robillard (1905-1964), a French organist, composer and music teacher, taught the Lebanese composers, as Rahbani Brothers, to utilize counterpoint, instead of harmony, in their compositions because it aligns better with modal.

In fact, the globalization in music may make all music similar and abolishes all the ethnic music and its different characteristics. It imposes the standardization of ranges, the exclusive use of equal tempered scales, the recourse to arrangement, harmonization and polyphony process.

Some researchers consider that too much harmony destroys the melody and the modal music has its beauty and charm in melodies, scales and performance. The harmony and orchestral arrangement do not make it necessarily more beautiful; however, they may show it in a different style. The most important is to preserve its identity and its temperament. The non-tempered music when altered in equal tempered scales loses many of its symbols and ethnic components. When a composer wants to use such music in his orchestral compositions or arrangements, the authenticity requires him to present the theme as is before or after making variations on it. In that occasion, the exchange between Western and Oriental music can create new style or hybrid one retaining the characteristics of both. It means: do not go too far from European music, without ever losing sight of the original culture.

Conclusion

The monophony continues to have beautiful days in the Arab musical culture, even if the singers of the second half of the twentieth century like to be accompanied by chords synthesizer keyboards or guitars drawing only in the rhythmic harmonic. The melody is almost sacrificed to the detriment of harmonic ornament. Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), spoke on a similar debate between the French and Italian music, by considering that the real music must be purely melodic²⁵. In the process of westernizing the non-tempered modes, we risk losing the multiplicity of these scales that are so inspiring and so attractive. On the other hand, can the western harmony be applied to the non-tempered music? Or do we have the challenge to find a special harmony for that music, or to be satisfied by the counterpoint?

Mr. Louis-Albert Bourgeault-Ducoudray (1840-1910), a French composer, pianist, and professor of music, said that admitting that Westerners whose music has been immobilized so far in a long stagnation, is already tired by an excessive development of his "major" and "minor", draws new elements of combinations and expressive means still unexploited in the adaptation of harmony to the ancient modes. He also stated that the day the nations of the East can apply harmony to their modes, oriental music will finally come out of its long immobility²⁶. From this movement will spring an original and progressive art, whose advent will open new horizons to Western music.

In brief, the musical acculturation can be useful and fruitful for both music Western and Arabic, while preserving the identity of each one. The Western music borrows melodies, scales, rhythms and charm from Arabic and Oriental music, while Arabic and Oriental music borrows in turn techniques, forms, harmony and polyphony from Western music. The encounter between the two musical systems, in the musical syncretism process, may create a new or hybrid style.

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²⁵ <https://www.rousseauonline.ch/pdf/rousseauonline-0061.pdf>

²⁶ Bourgeault-Ducoudray, Louis-Albert (1878): *Souvenirs d'une mission musicale en Grèce et en Orient*, Librairie Hachette et Cie, Paris, p. 17.

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Cita recomanada

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