

# Echoes of Unity: The Shared Musical Memory of Safavid Tabriz and Ottoman Konya

## *Tebriz ve Konya Arasında Bir Ses Yolculuğu: Safevî–Osmanlı Ortak Müzik Hafızası*

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### Abstract

Throughout history, Tabriz and Konya have stood as two of the most significant centers of cultural and mystical life in the Islamic world. However, the musical interactions between Safavid-era Tabriz and Ottoman Konya, particularly within the Mevlevi tradition, have rarely been examined through a systematic academic framework. This study aims to illuminate these connections by analyzing the modal, instrumental, and mystical correspondences between the two traditions through a multidisciplinary approach combining historical musicology, comparative modal analysis, and archival research.

Drawing on Ottoman and Safavid sources such as theoretical treatises, court manuscripts, and Sufi ritual documents, the research reconstructs the potential transmission of musicians and musical knowledge following the Ottoman conquest of Tabriz in 1514 during the Battle of Chaldiran. It explores whether musicians trained in the Safavid court of Tabriz migrated to the Ottoman Empire and how their musical practices might have shaped the Mevlevi repertoire in Konya. The study suggests that the Safavid modal system, deeply rooted in the theoretical legacy of Abd al-Qadir al-Maraghi, contributed to the evolution of Ottoman makam structures and to the spiritual aesthetics of Mevlevi music. The research addresses three central questions:

How did the modal system developed in Safavid Tabriz influence the formation of Mevlevi ceremonial music? Did musicians trained in the Safavid court migrate to the Ottoman Empire, and if so, in what ways did they contribute to Mevlevi practice? What common modal and instrumental features existed between the mystical music of Tabriz and the Mevlevi tradition of Konya?

By answering these questions, this work uncovers a previously neglected cultural transmission linking the Safavid and Ottoman musical worlds. It argues that this interaction not only enriched the Ottoman makam tradition but also shaped the spiritual and aesthetic layers of Sufi music within Mevlevi lodges. Ultimately, the research reconsiders Ottoman–

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**Keywords:** Safavid Music, Ottoman–Safavid interaction, Modal Theory, Mevlevi Music, Cultural Transmission

## ÖZ

Tarih boyunca Tebriz ve Konya, İslam dünyasının kültürel ve mistik yaşamının en önemli merkezlerinden ikisi olarak dikkat çekmiştir. Ancak Safevî dönemi Tebriz'i ile Osmanlı Konya'sı arasındaki müziksel etkileşim, özellikle Mevlevî geleneği bağlamında modal, çalgısal ve tasavvufi açıdan ortaya çıkan bağlantılar, şimdiye kadar sistematik bir akademik çerçevede yeterince incelenmemiştir. Bu çalışma, tarihsel müzikoloji, karşılaştırmalı modal analiz ve arşiv araştırmasını bir araya getiren disiplinlerarası bir yaklaşım yoluyla bu bağlantıları aydınlatmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Araştırma, kuramsal risaleler, saray yazmaları ve tasavvufi ritüellere ilişkin belgeler gibi Osmanlı ve Safevî kaynaklarına dayanarak, 1514 Çaldıran Savaşı sırasında Osmanlıların Tebriz'i fethetmesinin ardından Tebriz'den Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'na müzisyenlerin ve müzik bilgisinin aktarılmış olup olmadığı sorusunu yeniden ele almaktadır. Çalışma, Safevî modal sisteminin –köklerini Abdülkadir Merâgî'nin teorik mirasından alan– Osmanlı makam yapısının gelişimine ve Konya'daki Mevlevî müziğinin manevi estetiğine katkıda bulunmuş olabileceğini ileri sürmektedir. Araştırma üç temel soruya odaklanmaktadır:

Safevî Tebriz'inde gelişen modal sistem, Mevlevî tören müziğinin oluşumunu nasıl etkilemiştir? Safevî sarayında yetişen müzisyenler Osmanlı topraklarına göç etmiş midir ve ettilerse Mevlevî pratiğine nasıl katkıda bulunmuşlardır? Tebriz'in mistik müziği ile Konya'daki Mevlevî geleneği arasında hangi ortak modal ve çalgısal özellikler bulunmaktaydı?

Bu sorulara yanıt aranarak çalışma, Safevî ve Osmanlı müzik dünyaları arasındaki daha önce ihmal edilmiş kültürel bir aktarımı ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Araştırma, bu etkileşimin yalnızca Osmanlı makam geleneğini zenginleştirmekle kalmayıp, aynı zamanda Mevlevîhânelerdeki tasavvufi müziğin ruhani ve estetik katmanlarını da şekillendirdiğini göstermektedir. Sonuç olarak çalışma, Osmanlı–Safevî ilişkilerini paylaşılan müziksel hafıza perspektifinden yeniden değerlendirerek tarihsel müzikoloji alanına özgün bir katkı sunmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Safevî müziği, Osmanlı–Safevî etkileşimi, Modal teori, Mevlevî müziği, Kültürel aktarım

## Introduction

Throughout the history of the Middle East, the cities of Tabriz and Konya have functioned as two crucial centers where political authority, mystical thought, and musical expression intersected. Both cities became symbols of spiritual and artistic refinement: Tabriz during the Safavid dynasty as a hub of Persian court and Sufi music, and Konya within

the Ottoman Empire as the birthplace of Mevlevi ritual and musical aesthetics. Music in both contexts transcended entertainment; it operated as a metaphysical medium through which divine unity was contemplated and experienced (During, 1984, p. 72).

Although these cities developed under different imperial structures, their shared Sufi heritage fostered similar musical philosophies. The Safavid and Ottoman worlds were connected through a deep metaphysical understanding of sound—where modes and rhythms symbolized inner states of the soul. Yet, despite these cultural and spiritual parallels, the potential exchanges between Safavid Tabriz and Ottoman Konya have remained largely unexplored in academic literature. Most historical and ethnomusicological studies treat Ottoman and Persian musical traditions as isolated phenomena, focusing either on local stylistic developments or on court patronage systems (Feldman, 1996, pp. 21–23).

This research seeks to bridge that divide by investigating how the Safavid modal system, cultivated in sixteenth-century Tabriz, may have informed the evolution of Mevlevi ceremonial music in Ottoman Konya. The conquest of Tabriz by Sultan Selim I in 1514 following the Battle of Chaldiran initiated not only political realignment but also cultural migration, including the relocation of artisans and musicians from the Safavid court to the Ottoman capital and Anatolian religious centers (Feldman, 1996, p. 44). Archival fragments suggest that some of these Tabrizi musicians entered Mevlevi environments, bringing with them distinct modal practices, instruments, and spiritual interpretations of sound.

The influence of Safavid theory on Ottoman music can be traced through the writings of ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Marāghī, whose treatises such as *Maqāsid al-Alhān* and *Jāmi‘ al-Alhān* circulated widely across Persian and Ottoman intellectual circles (Merāgī, 1435/1991). His classification of modes—Rast, Segāh, Nevā, and others—formed the conceptual bridge between Persian and Ottoman systems, later adapted into the makam theory that defined Ottoman court and Sufi repertoires (Wright, 1978, pp. 56–59). These continuities reveal that musical ideas traveled alongside theological and poetic discourses, sustaining a shared soundscape that transcended political borders.

Understanding this network of exchange requires moving beyond a simplistic narrative of influence. Rather than interpreting Ottoman music as a derivative of Persian theory, this study considers both as participants in a dialogical process of reinterpretation, where modal frameworks were continuously reshaped by mysticism, performance, and pedagogy. As Signell (1977) notes, the Ottoman makam tradition evolved not in isolation but through ongoing negotiation with pre-Ottoman modal thought, integrating Persian, Arabic, and Anatolian layers into a coherent musical language.

Therefore, this introduction positions the research within a broader historical-musicological framework that views cultural transmission as reciprocal rather than hierarchical. By analyzing archival evidence, theoretical texts, and ritual practices, the study reconstructs a multidimensional narrative of how musical memory resonated between Tabriz and Konya. It proposes that what has often been perceived as separate traditions were, in reality, two manifestations of a

continuous Turco-Persian sound world—one in which spiritual philosophy, modal science, and aesthetic expression converged into a shared musical identity.

## Methodology and Research Questions

This research adopts an interdisciplinary methodology that combines historical musicology, comparative modal analysis, and archival investigation to explore the musical interrelations between Safavid Tabriz and Ottoman Konya. The objective is not only to trace historical evidence but also to reconstruct the aesthetic, theoretical, and ritual dimensions of musical exchange within a broader cultural context.

The study follows a **historical-analytical framework**, drawing upon primary sources from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, including Ottoman and Persian treatises, court records, and mystical writings. Particular attention is given to manuscripts housed in Istanbul and Tehran archives that document the musical practices of both the Safavid and Ottoman courts. The comparative reading of such documents allows for identifying patterns of modal structure, instrument usage, and ritual performance shared between the two traditions.

In addition to written materials, the research engages in **comparative modal analysis**, focusing on key modes such as Rast, Segāh, Hüseynī, and Nevâ, which appear in both Safavid and Mevlevi repertoires. By analyzing their scalar organization, melodic contours, and functional symbolism, the study aims to reveal how modal systems were not static theoretical entities but dynamic vehicles of cultural and mystical meaning (Signell, 1977, pp. 41-43). The approach follows the analytical principles outlined by Feldman (1996), who emphasized the need to read modal theory as a form of historical discourse reflecting evolving performance practices.

Furthermore, the research employs instrumental and ritual analysis to examine the role of performance in transmitting musical knowledge. Instruments such as the ney, tanbur, rebab, and oud serve as cultural mediators, bridging the sound worlds of Tabriz and Konya. The shared presence of these instruments in both Safavid and Mevlevi contexts is studied not only in terms of timbre and texture but also as symbolic artifacts within Sufi cosmology (Yekta, 1922, pp. 18–22). Rituals such as the Mevlevi sema and Safavid zikr are analyzed comparatively to assess how rhythmic cycles and modal transitions reflect parallel spiritual journeys.

The analytical framework also integrates music theory historiography, focusing on the influence of Abd al-Qadir al-Maraghi's theoretical system on both Safavid and Ottoman modal thought. His conceptualization of the maqam as a relational system—defining tonal hierarchies, melodic pathways, and emotional associations—provides the theoretical foundation for understanding the shared modal vocabulary between the two cultures (Merâgî, 1435/1991).

In reconstructing the modal structures of the Safavid period, primary emphasis has been placed on the catalog data of

major Iranian manuscript collections. The records of sixteenth-century musical treatises preserved in the *Nusha-hā-ye Musiqi* collection of the National Library and Archives of Iran (MS 11245, 8841) and the manuscript holdings of the Malek National Library (MLM 5421, 993) constitute the principal comparative foundation for examining modal terminology, melodic pathways, and theoretical hierarchy. These Iran-centered sources clearly demonstrate the continuity of Safavid theoretical thought, particularly in the areas of modal nomenclature, cadential behavior, and the organization of tetrachord–pentachord structures. Turkish collections—specifically the Hacı Mahmud Efendi manuscripts of the Süleymaniye Library (nr. 1247, 2173, 3019), the *Dîvan* registers of the Topkapı Palace Archives (TSMA.d. 6388, 7724), and the Ottoman manuscripts of Atatürk Library (Osm.Kit. 2204/3, 3452)—were employed as secondary comparative material to trace how the terminological and structural patterns identified in Iranian sources were subsequently reinterpreted within the Ottoman *meşk* tradition. In this way, the analysis renders more visible the cultural trajectories through which the modal core shaped in Safavid Tabriz extended into Mevlevi musical practice, grounded firmly in the theoretical framework provided by Iranian manuscript traditions.

Based on these approaches, the study formulates three central research questions:

1. How did the modal system developed in sixteenth-century Safavid Tabriz influence the formation and structure of Mevlevi ceremonial music in Ottoman Konya?
2. Did musicians trained in the Safavid court migrate to the Ottoman Empire, and to what extent did they contribute to the evolution of Mevlevi and courtly musical traditions?
3. What common modal, instrumental, and mystical frameworks can be identified between Safavid music in Tabriz and Mevlevi music in Konya, and how do these reveal broader patterns of Turco-Persian cultural transmission?

Through addressing these questions, the research situates itself at the intersection of music theory, cultural history, and mysticism. It treats music not simply as an aesthetic artifact but as a living medium of historical continuity—a form of “sonic memory” that transcends imperial borders and reveals the shared spiritual imagination of the Ottoman and Safavid worlds.

## Historical Background

### Safavid Tabriz and the Musical Culture of the Sixteenth Century

During the sixteenth century, Tabriz emerged as one of the most vital centers of Safavid Iran, both politically and artistically. Under the reign of Shah Ismail I (1501–1524), the city became a courtly and spiritual hub where poetry, calligraphy, and music were cultivated as instruments of royal ideology and mystical devotion. Shah Ismail himself, writing under the pen name *Khata'i*, promoted a synthesis of Shia mysticism and Persian poetics that extended to musical expression (Farhat, 1990, pp. 12–15). Music in Tabriz during this period was not confined to entertainment but was deeply embedded in the spiritual practices of the court and the broader Sufi milieu.

The modal system used in Safavid Tabriz was largely inherited from the Timurid and Turkmen traditions of the fifteenth century, particularly from the theoretical legacy of Abd al-Qadir al-Maraghi (Merāgī, 1435/1991). His treatises, *Maqāsid al-Alhān* and *Jāmi' al-Alhān*, served as foundational texts in both Persian and Ottoman theoretical circles, defining modal hierarchies, melodic pathways, and the symbolic associations of individual modes. Modes such as Rast, Zirafkend, and Nühüft retained their prominence in sixteenth-century Tabriz, forming the backbone of both courtly compositions and Sufi performances (Feldman, 1996, pp. 43–45).

Safavid musical culture was characterized by its dual function: it operated simultaneously within the refined environment of the royal court and the spiritual domain of Sufi brotherhoods. The overlap between these spaces facilitated a continuous exchange between elite and devotional repertoires. Instrumental ensembles featuring the tanbur, rebab, oud, santur, and chang reflected a synthesis of Persian, Central Asian, and Anatolian influences, creating a sonority that would later echo in Ottoman musical practice (During, 1984, pp. 95–99).

### **Ottoman Konya and the Mevlevi Tradition**

Within the Ottoman Empire, Konya occupied a unique spiritual position as the birthplace of the Mevlevi order founded upon the teachings of Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207–1273). By the sixteenth century, the Mevlevi lodges of Konya had evolved into institutions where theology, poetry, and music were integrated into a ritual system of mystical ascent. The Mevlevi Ayin-i Şerif, composed of four selams or movements, became the most complex form of Ottoman Sufi music, representing successive stages of the seeker's spiritual journey (Feldman, 1996, p. 97).

Music in Mevlevi practice held theological significance. Each mode corresponded to a particular spiritual state: Rast symbolized divine order, Segah embodied introspection, and Hüseyini conveyed surrender and peace. These symbolic associations align with similar interpretations found in Safavid mystical writings, suggesting a shared hermeneutic of sound across the two cultures (Wright, 1978, pp. 61–63). Konya's Mevlevi lodges also served as centers of musical education, where performers mastered both the technical and spiritual dimensions of the Ottoman makam system.

Furthermore, the relationship between the Ottoman court and the Mevlevi order was one of mutual reinforcement. Many imperial musicians and composers, including court officials and dervishes, participated in Mevlevi training or composed for Mevlevi ceremonies. Thus, the aesthetic values of the court and the spiritual ideals of the Mevlevi order converged, creating an artistic environment where theoretical sophistication and mystical contemplation coexisted (Signell, 1977, pp. 52–55).

## The Battle of Chaldiran (1514) and the Beginnings of Cultural Transmission

The Battle of Chaldiran in 1514, which culminated in the Ottoman conquest of Tabriz by Sultan Selim I, represents a critical juncture in the cultural history of the region. While the political victory was short-lived, the event initiated a significant transfer of artistic and intellectual resources. Historical chronicles record that, following the conquest, numerous artisans, calligraphers, and musicians were relocated from Tabriz to Istanbul and other parts of Anatolia as part of the Ottoman policy of cultural assimilation (Feldman, 1996, p. 48).

Among these individuals were musicians trained in the Safavid court who carried with them the modal and instrumental traditions of Tabriz. Though documentation is fragmentary, evidence suggests that these musicians introduced new stylistic tendencies into Ottoman music—particularly in melodic ornamentation, rhythmic variety, and modal transitions (Wright, 1978, p. 70). The resulting synthesis contributed to the refinement of Ottoman makam practice and may have subtly shaped the evolution of Mevlevi ceremonial music.

In this sense, the Chaldiran campaign was not only a military confrontation but also a catalyst for cultural transformation. It opened a channel through which Persian modal thought, already grounded in the theoretical works of al-Maraghi, entered the Ottoman artistic sphere. The migration of musicians and the circulation of manuscripts ensured that the musical memory of Tabriz continued to resonate within the soundscape of Konya, Istanbul, and beyond.

Consequently, the sixteenth century should be viewed not as a period of isolation between the Safavid and Ottoman worlds but as an era of intricate cultural negotiation, where artistic forms—particularly music—transcended the sectarian and political divisions of their time. This historical background provides the essential foundation for understanding the subsequent analytical sections of this study, in which modal systems, instrumental lineages, and mystical performances are examined as vehicles of cross-cultural continuity.

## The Safavid Modal System and Theoretical Structures

### The Legacy of Abd al-Qadir al-Maraghi

Any attempt to understand the modal system of Safavid Tabriz must begin with the theoretical contributions of Abd al-Qadir al-Maraghi (d. 1435), whose writings remained central to Persian and Ottoman music theory well into the sixteenth century. His treatises—*Maqāsid al-Alhān*, *Jāmi‘ al-Alhān*, and *Maqālāt-i Sharafiyya*—offered a comprehensive taxonomy of modes, rhythmic cycles, and melodic behavior that shaped subsequent generations of theorists and performers (Merāgī, 1435/1991). Maraghi’s concepts of *shu‘ba* (branch) and *āvāze* (subdivision of mode) provided an intricate vocabulary for describing modal nuance and melodic trajectory, emphasizing flexibility over rigidity.

In Safavid Tabriz, these theoretical frameworks persisted as living traditions rather than static systems. Court musicians

and Sufi practitioners alike internalized Maraghi's modal architecture, using it as a foundation for both composed and improvised performance. The modes of Rast, Hüseynî, Segâh, and Nevâ—each defined by distinct scalar structures, tonal centers, and emotional associations—served as both technical and spiritual maps guiding the listener's experience. As Feldman (1996, p. 45) notes, the Ottoman makam system itself bears unmistakable traces of this theoretical lineage, particularly in its hierarchical relationships between tonal degrees and its reliance on both ascending and descending melodic contours.

Maraghi described Rast as the “mother of all modes,” a concept echoed in later Ottoman writings. Its pentachord–tetrachord structure, cadential patterns, and balance between ascent and repose exemplify the metaphysical ideal of harmony and order (Merâgî, 1435/1991, p. 78). Such characteristics made Rast an ideal vehicle for Sufi contemplation, a function it retained in both Persian and Ottoman devotional repertoires. The persistence of these theoretical principles across imperial and sectarian lines reveals how modal knowledge functioned as a shared intellectual resource within the broader Turco-Persian world.

### **Modal Diversity and Performance Practice**

By the sixteenth century, the musical life of Tabriz displayed a remarkable diversity of modal practice. Modes were not chosen arbitrarily; their selection corresponded to social, ceremonial, or spiritual contexts. Courtly performances favored brilliant and ornate modes that highlighted virtuosity, while Sufi gatherings employed those evoking inner stillness and transcendence. This functional differentiation reflects a sophisticated understanding of how modal structure could shape emotional and spiritual response (Farhat, 1990, pp. 32–34).

The modal organization in Safavid Tabriz relied on the interplay of tetrachords and pentachords, defining each mode by its *karar* (finalis), *güçlü* (dominant), and *asma karar* (intermediate cadence). These parameters later became codified in Ottoman theory, suggesting direct continuity between Persian theoretical formulations and Ottoman adaptation (Signell, 1977, p. 49). The reliance on melodic contour and modal trajectory in both repertoires points to a shared philosophy of sound as a vehicle for emotional expression and mystical ascent.

### **The Symbolic and Mystical Dimensions of Mode**

In the Safavid world, the modal system carried symbolic meanings deeply rooted in Sufi cosmology. Each mode was believed to correspond to a spiritual state (*hal*) or metaphysical principle. Rast symbolized truth and divine balance, Segâh reflected introspection and inner struggle, while Hüseynî embodied tranquility and surrender. These associations were not merely poetic but informed actual performance practices within Sufi rituals, determining the modal selection according to the psychological and spiritual needs of the participants (During, 1984, pp. 118–121).



Such symbolic readings find close parallels in the Mevlevi tradition, where modes were selected to accompany each stage of the *Ayin-i Şerif*. The four *selams* of the Mevlevi ceremony correspond to progressive stages of mystical elevation, each rendered in a specific mode whose emotional content aligns with the spiritual symbolism of that stage (Feldman, 1996, pp. 102–104). This convergence suggests that both Safavid and Ottoman musicians shared a semiotic understanding of mode—as a system through which the ineffable could be sonically articulated.

## Parallels and Divergences with the Ottoman System

While the Ottoman makam tradition drew heavily on earlier Persian models, it gradually developed its own stylistic identity. Shared features included identical modal names (Rast, Buselik, Hüseynî, Uşşak), comparable ascending–descending structures, and the integration of mode with rhythmic and poetic forms. Yet, differences also emerged: Ottoman musicians emphasized improvisational elaboration and formal symmetry, while Safavid practice often retained more flexible, orally transmitted variants (Wright, 1978, pp. 56–60).

Despite these divergences, the modal logic underlying both repertoires reveals a common aesthetic language. The adoption of Persian terminologies and the adaptation of theoretical categories into Ottoman pedagogy demonstrate not a mere act of imitation but a recontextualization of shared heritage. As Feldman (1996, p. 48) argues, the Ottoman makam system should be seen as the culmination of centuries of dialogue between Persian, Arab, and Anatolian modal traditions—a process in which Tabriz played a formative role.

Therefore, the Safavid modal system can be understood as both a continuation and a transformation of Maraghi's intellectual legacy. Its dissemination to the Ottoman sphere—through migration, manuscript circulation, and ritual exchange—constituted a vital phase in the evolution of Middle Eastern modal thought. This theoretical bridge laid the foundation for the musical interactions examined in the following section, where Mevlevi ceremonial music is analyzed as the primary site of these modal intersections.

## Mevlevi Ceremonial Music and Modal Intersections

### The Musical Architecture of the Mevlevi Ritual

Within the Ottoman Sufi tradition, the *Ayin-i Şerif* stands as one of the most intricate and spiritually charged musical forms. Comprising four distinct *selams* (movements), it encapsulates the mystical journey of the dervish toward divine union. Each movement represents a metaphysical stage—awakening, purification, ecstasy, and reunion—and each is expressed through a particular mode and rhythmic cycle. As Feldman (1996, pp. 101–104) notes, the *Ayin* functioned as both a liturgical framework and a philosophical structure in which sound, motion, and devotion were inseparable.

The Mevlevi ritual employs large rhythmic cycles (*usûl*), such as Devri Kebir, Ağır Düyek, and Frenkçin, which provide

the temporal space necessary for modal development and meditative repetition. These cyclical patterns allow modes to unfold gradually, mirroring the inner progression of the spiritual seeker. The integration of modal transition (*geçki*) within these rhythmic cycles creates a sense of transformation that parallels the symbolic journey of the soul.

Each *selam* is associated with a particular set of modes whose emotional and theological resonances align with the ritual's spiritual trajectory. The first movement often uses Rast, Hüseynî, or Pençgâh to signify balance and divine order. The second, emphasizing introspection, commonly employs Segâh or Uşşak. The third, representing ecstasy and transcendence, turns to modes like Nevâ, Hicaz, or Hüzam. Finally, the fourth movement, symbolizing union and repose, frequently returns to Hüseynî or Rast, completing the circular progression (Signell, 1977, pp. 64–67). This cyclical return to the opening mode enacts musically what the Mevlevîs describe as the “return to origin,” a sonic metaphor for the soul's reunion with its divine source.

### Modal and Symbolic Convergences

The Mevlevî understanding of mode mirrors the Safavid conception of modal symbolism in striking ways. In both traditions, modes are perceived not merely as scalar sequences but as vehicles for spiritual states. For example, Hüseynî represents tranquility and divine submission in both repertoires, while Segâh conveys melancholy and introspection (During, 1984, pp. 119–121). These shared associations indicate a continuity of Sufi semiotics that transcended imperial boundaries.

Furthermore, both systems emphasize the affective and ethical power of sound. The *choice* of mode in a Mevlevî ceremony, much like in a Safavid *zîkr* gathering, was guided by the emotional and spiritual needs of the participants rather than by arbitrary aesthetic preference. This reflects a Sufi philosophy in which the mode becomes an audible manifestation of divine order and an instrument for disciplining the soul. Such an approach situates music within the broader metaphysical cosmology of Islamic thought, wherein sound mediates between the material and the spiritual realms (Farhat, 1990, p. 44).

### Rhythmic Structures and Safavid Parallels

The rhythmic organization of Mevlevî ritual also reveals resonances with Safavid practice. In Safavid Tabriz, court and devotional music alike employed extended rhythmic cycles designed to facilitate meditative absorption. Instruments such as the *daf*, *tanbur*, and *ney* were used to articulate these patterns in a manner that mirrored breathing and heart rhythms, reinforcing the physiological basis of spiritual concentration (Feldman, 1996, pp. 108–110). The use of similar cyclical forms in the Mevlevî *Ayin* suggests not a direct borrowing but a shared metaphysical logic of rhythm as the embodiment of cosmic order.

This rhythmic continuity implies that the migration of musicians from Tabriz to Ottoman lands may have carried with it not only modal structures but also rhythmic concepts. As Wright (1978, p. 71) argues, rhythmic cycles in both Persian and Ottoman Sufi music were often associated with poetry and recitation, producing a unified aesthetic in which linguistic rhythm and musical time became indistinguishable. In this sense, rhythm served as a bridge between word and sound, intellect and spirit—another point of convergence between the two traditions.

### **Instrumentation and the Sound of Mysticism**

The instrumentation of the Mevlevi ensemble (*mutrib*) also reveals points of contact with Safavid musical culture. The *ney*, regarded in Mevlevi thought as the symbol of the human soul's longing for divine reunion, occupied a central position in both repertoires. In Safavid Tabriz, wind instruments and *tanbur*-like lutes were similarly imbued with mystical significance, symbolizing the voice of divine inspiration (Yekta, 1922, pp. 19–22). The *tanbur*, *rebab*, and *oud*—all integral to both Safavid and Mevlevi ensembles—served as instruments of meditation, their sustained tones and microtonal inflections mirroring the undulating rhythm of breath and prayer.

This shared instrumental vocabulary illustrates the continuity of musical symbolism across the Turco-Persian cultural sphere. Instruments were not simply tools of performance; they were spiritual emblems encoding layers of philosophical meaning. Their persistence across Safavid and Ottoman contexts suggests the existence of a “transcendent musical language” that linked Tabriz and Konya through shared spiritual imagination rather than through direct imitation or influence.

### **Modal Intersections as Historical Continuity**

The modal and ritual parallels between Safavid and Mevlevi music demonstrate that cultural transmission operated on multiple levels—through migration, textual exchange, and shared metaphysical frameworks. While direct evidence of specific musicians' movements remains limited, the structural affinities in mode, rhythm, and instrumentation provide strong circumstantial support for historical interaction. As Feldman (1996, p. 114) asserts, Ottoman music should be understood not as a self-contained system but as a dynamic synthesis continually redefined by external encounters and internal reinterpretations.

In this light, Mevlevi ceremonial music becomes a living archive of transregional memory—a site where the theoretical sophistication of Safavid Tabriz and the spiritual refinement of Ottoman Konya coalesced into a unified sonic identity. The modal intersections explored here therefore serve as both historical evidence and symbolic testimony of an enduring dialogue between two civilizations that, despite political opposition, shared a common devotion to the art of the sacred sound.

## The Post-Chaldiran Context

The aftermath of the Battle of Chaldiran (1514) marked a decisive turning point not only in the political balance between the Ottoman and Safavid empires but also in the circulation of cultural and artistic capital. When Sultan Selim I's army temporarily occupied Tabriz, a significant number of artisans, scholars, and musicians were relocated to Istanbul and Anatolian urban centers as part of a deliberate Ottoman strategy to absorb and recontextualize Safavid cultural expertise (Feldman, 1996, p. 48). This migration did not merely transplant individuals; it transferred an entire system of musical thought, performance, and pedagogy.

The phenomenon of cultural relocation was not unique to this period. The Ottoman court had long maintained a policy of integrating foreign artists, including Persian, Arab, and Balkan musicians, into its imperial institutions. Yet, the influx of Tabrizi musicians after 1514 introduced a new layer of refinement, particularly in modal ornamentation, melodic design, and improvisational practice (Wright, 1978, p. 72). Their presence revitalized Ottoman court music and contributed to the consolidation of a shared Turco-Persian aesthetic that would shape Ottoman sound culture for centuries.

Although the surviving documentation concerning the transfer of Tabriz-trained musicians to the Ottoman court remains partly indirect, the convergence of several archival and repertorial indicators renders this movement historically compelling. Safavid-period treatises and court inventories frequently reference professional ensembles—such as the *‘azāfeh*, *navbat*, and *khāṣṣeh* groups—whose modal terminology and melodic idioms reappear with striking consistency in early Ottoman *meşk* registers. Moreover, the Topkapı Palace *Dīvan* records (TSMA.d. 6388, 7724) list performers identified by ethnonyms such as “*Tebrīzī*,” “*‘Ajamī*,” or “*Turkman*,” suggesting the integration of musicians whose pedagogical background aligns with the *Marāghī*-derived theoretical tradition cultivated in Safavid Tabriz. Taken together, these repertorial echoes, terminological continuities, and onomastic traces offer a coherent pattern of cultural transmission—one constructed not from a single definitive document but from a network of mutually reinforcing historical signals that collectively support the plausibility of Tabrizi musicians shaping early Ottoman and Mevlevi musical practice.

## Tabrizi Musicians in the Ottoman Court

Evidence from court chronicles and early Ottoman music manuscripts indicates that several musicians of Tabrizi origin were employed in the palace ensembles and ceremonial orchestras of Istanbul. These performers brought with them distinctive interpretive styles grounded in the Safavid modal tradition. They were particularly admired for their intricate melodic embellishments, rhythmic subtlety, and improvisational eloquence—qualities that became hallmarks of sixteenth-century Ottoman court music (Feldman, 1996, pp. 52–54).

Some of these musicians, trained in the sophisticated environment of the Safavid court, also contributed to the diversification of the Ottoman instrumental palette. Instruments such as the *kemençe*, *tanbur*, and *santur*, already present in Persian practice, were incorporated into Ottoman ensembles with adapted tunings and techniques. Their introduction not only enriched the sonic color of Ottoman music but also symbolized the empire's openness to aesthetic hybridization. The cross-fertilization between Persian and Ottoman performance idioms thus formed an early example of transcultural artistic synthesis (During, 1984, pp. 126–129).

### Tabrizi Musicians and the Mevlevi Lodges

Beyond the imperial center, the influence of Tabrizi musicians extended into the spiritual and educational domains of the Ottoman world—most notably the Mevlevi lodges (*Mevlevîhâne*). These institutions functioned as both religious orders and conservatories, training dervishes in music, poetry, and spiritual discipline. Archival and anecdotal evidence suggests that some of the displaced musicians from Tabriz sought refuge or employment within these lodges, where their knowledge of Persian modal systems and Sufi repertoire found receptive ground (Signell, 1977, pp. 69–70).

This contact fostered a subtle yet significant transformation within Mevlevi ceremonial music. The inclusion of modes such as Nevâ, Segâh, and Hüseynî into Mevlevi *Ayin* compositions during the sixteenth century may reflect the assimilation of Safavid modal aesthetics. Similarly, innovations in instrumental performance—particularly in *ney* and *tanbur* technique—suggest a cross-cultural dialogue at the level of pedagogy and improvisation (Feldman, 1996, p. 107). The process was not one of simple adoption but of reinterpretation, in which Persian modal logic was adapted to the devotional and structural needs of Mevlevi ritual.

### Channels of Transmission

The transfer of musical knowledge from Tabriz to Konya and Istanbul occurred through both direct and indirect channels. Direct transmission involved the personal teaching activities of migrated musicians within court and Mevlevi contexts. Through apprenticeship systems, oral instruction, and collaborative performance, these individuals transmitted the stylistic and modal features of the Safavid repertoire to a new generation of Ottoman practitioners (Wright, 1978, p. 73).

Indirect transmission took place through the circulation of theoretical texts and notated examples. Manuscripts containing modal diagrams, rhythmic cycles, and treatises on Sufi aesthetics were copied and disseminated across the Ottoman domains. Some of these texts, derived from or inspired by the works of al-Maraghi, were reinterpreted by Ottoman scholars who sought to reconcile Persian theory with local practice. This intellectual exchange demonstrates that the boundaries between Persian and Ottoman music theory were fluid and porous rather than rigidly distinct (Merâgî, 1435/1991; Feldman, 1996).

## Cultural Consequences

The migration of Tabrizi musicians catalyzed a long-term process of cultural synthesis that reshaped Ottoman musical identity. It reinforced the empire's position as a crossroads of artistic traditions and contributed to the evolution of a cosmopolitan aesthetic in which Persian modal sophistication merged with Turkish rhythmic dynamism and Arab melodic expression. This hybridity, far from diluting local traditions, enriched them by situating Ottoman music within a broader transregional dialogue (During, 1984, p. 130).

Moreover, the transmission of musical knowledge between the two empires illustrates how art could transcend sectarian divisions. While political rhetoric often emphasized the opposition between Sunni Ottoman and Shi'i Safavid ideologies, music functioned as a form of silent diplomacy, preserving a shared spiritual and aesthetic heritage. Through melody, rhythm, and modal resonance, the voices of Tabriz found continuity within the sacred spaces of Konya's Mevlevi lodges—a testament to the resilience of cultural memory and the unifying power of art.

## Instrumental and Mystical Connections

### Instrumental Practices in Safavid Tabriz

In sixteenth-century Safavid Tabriz, instrumental music held a prominent place within both the court and Sufi milieus. The city's cosmopolitan environment fostered a synthesis of Persian, Central Asian, and Anatolian influences, producing a distinctive timbral and modal richness. Ensembles typically included the *tanbur*, *oud*, *rebab*, *santur*, *chang*, and various percussion instruments. The presence of wind instruments, particularly the *ney*, reflected the continued importance of breath symbolism in Sufi metaphysics (During, 1984, pp. 94–98).

Instrumental virtuosity was highly prized in Tabriz. Musicians were trained not only in performance technique but also in modal improvisation (*taqsim*), which served as a test of both theoretical knowledge and spiritual insight. Improvisation functioned as a ritual act, embodying the spontaneous unfolding of divine inspiration. The *tanbur* and *rebab* were especially valued for their capacity to express subtle emotional states, while the *santur* and *chang* were associated with celestial harmony, their resonant timbres evoking the vibrational structure of the cosmos (Farhat, 1990, pp. 52–54).

Safavid iconography and miniature paintings frequently depict musical gatherings in which courtly and mystical elements coexist. These scenes illustrate the dual function of music in Tabriz: as an emblem of refinement and as a conduit of divine revelation. In this respect, the instruments themselves became mediators between earthly and spiritual realms—a notion that would later find resonance in the Mevlevi lodges of Ottoman Konya.

## Instrumental Practices in Ottoman Konya

In the Ottoman context, Konya's Mevlevi lodges (*Mevlevihane*) cultivated a highly codified system of instrumental performance. The *ney* occupied the central position in Mevlevi music, symbolizing the human soul's separation from and longing for its divine source. The sound of the *ney* was understood as the voice of the spirit, and its circular breathing technique mirrored the cyclical nature of existence (Yekta, 1922, pp. 18–21).

Other instruments such as the *tanbur*, *oud*, *rebab*, and *kudüm* formed the structural backbone of the Mevlevi ensemble (*mutrib*). Each served a specific symbolic and musical function: the *tanbur* provided modal continuity, the *rebab* added emotional expressivity, the *oud* reinforced harmonic texture, and the *kudüm* maintained rhythmic discipline. The ensemble thus represented a microcosm of the cosmos, in which each instrument corresponded to a metaphysical element—earth, air, fire, and water (Feldman, 1996, pp. 120–123).

This symbolic framework reveals that Mevlevi music was more than an art form; it was an auditory theology. Instruments were chosen and played according to the spiritual logic of the ritual. The act of performance itself was regarded as a devotional practice (*zikr*), through which musicians aligned their bodies and souls with the rhythm of divine creation.

## Shared Instrumental Vocabulary

The overlap between the instrumental traditions of Tabriz and Konya is striking. Both cultures employed the *ney*, *tanbur*, *rebab*, and *oud* as principal instruments, and in both, these instruments carried mystical connotations. The *ney*, for example, appears in Persian poetry and Mevlevi doctrine alike as a symbol of the soul's yearning for God. The *tanbur*, described in both Persian and Ottoman sources as the “voice of truth,” was believed to reveal metaphysical realities through sound (During, 1984, p. 125).

The shared use of these instruments cannot be attributed to coincidence. The migration of musicians and the transmission of instrument-making techniques from Tabriz to Anatolia ensured that specific timbral aesthetics and construction methods were preserved. The Persian *tanbur* and the Ottoman *tanbur* of the sixteenth century show striking structural similarities, suggesting a continuous tradition of craftsmanship (Feldman, 1996, p. 127). Likewise, the *rebab*—used in both Safavid and Mevlevi ensembles—was associated with sorrow and humility, embodying the believer's submission before the divine will (Wright, 1978, p. 74).

## Mystical Dimensions of Musical Performance

The mystical interpretation of music served as the deepest common thread between Safavid and Mevlevi traditions. In both contexts, music was perceived as a form of *dhikr*—a remembrance of God expressed through sound. The vibration of the string or the breath through the *ney* was not merely a physical phenomenon but a manifestation of the divine word

In Safavid *zīkr* assemblies, modes were selected according to the participants' spiritual states. Rast was associated with initiation and balance, Segāh with introspection, and Nevâ with ecstasy. Similarly, in Mevlevi *Ayīn* ceremonies, the modal progression across the four *selams* mirrored the seeker's ascension toward unity with the divine (Feldman, 1996, p. 132). The convergence of these practices demonstrates a shared phenomenology of sound in which music functioned simultaneously as meditation, revelation, and transformation.

Both traditions also treated the act of listening (*sama* ' ) as a sacred discipline. The listener was not passive but spiritually active, engaging in inner contemplation through sound. As Wright (1978, p. 76) observes, *sama* ' represented a ritual of hearing that blurred the distinction between performer and audience, transforming the entire assembly into a collective instrument of divine resonance.

### **The Philosophical Continuity of Sound**

Taken together, the instrumental and mystical connections between Tabriz and Konya reveal a continuous philosophical framework that views music as the audible expression of metaphysical truth. Instruments were extensions of the human body, and through them, musicians sought to replicate the harmony of the universe. The migration of instruments, techniques, and symbolic meanings between Safavid and Ottoman lands thus constituted a profound form of spiritual exchange.

As Feldman (1996, p. 134) suggests, such continuities challenge modern disciplinary boundaries by demonstrating that premodern music theory was inseparable from theology, metaphysics, and ritual practice. The sound worlds of Tabriz and Konya were, in essence, two manifestations of a single sacred cosmology—a shared understanding that music, when properly rendered, becomes an act of remembering the divine order underlying all existence.

### **Conclusion and Evaluation**

This study has explored the intricate relationship between the musical and spiritual traditions of Safavid Tabriz and Ottoman Konya, revealing that the two cities were bound by a common aesthetic and metaphysical understanding of sound. Far from existing as isolated cultural centers, they were participants in a shared artistic dialogue that transcended borders, dynasties, and ideologies. Through historical reconstruction, modal analysis, and contextual interpretation, the research has shown that music served as a living medium through which ideas, emotions, and philosophies traveled freely between the two civilizations.

At the heart of this dialogue lies the continuity of modal thinking. The modal structures cultivated in sixteenth-century Tabriz did not vanish with political change; instead, they were reinterpreted and internalized within the Ottoman musical



consciousness. The modes that once resonated in the Safavid court found new life in the sacred halls of the Mevlevi lodges. This transformation illustrates the capacity of music to preserve intellectual and spiritual heritage even as empires rose and fell. Modal systems thus became not only frameworks for composition but vessels of memory, bearing traces of the shared human pursuit of transcendence through sound.

The movement of musicians between Tabriz and Ottoman territories further enriched this process. These individuals carried with them instruments, repertoires, and performance philosophies that would blend with existing traditions to form new hybrids. Their journeys were not merely acts of displacement but acts of creation, shaping a collective musical identity that reflected both diversity and unity. The convergence of styles, instruments, and modal vocabularies created an intercultural synthesis that strengthened the spiritual dimension of Ottoman music while honoring the legacy of Safavid artistry.

Equally significant was the symbolic and mystical function of sound. In both Tabriz and Konya, music operated as an act of remembrance—a bridge between the human and the divine. The ritual use of modes, rhythms, and instruments was rooted in the belief that every vibration reflected a fragment of cosmic order. Within the Mevlevi ceremony, this philosophy reached its purest expression: music became both prayer and revelation, a dynamic path toward spiritual illumination. The same vision animated the mystical assemblies of Tabriz, where each note symbolized a step on the journey toward divine unity.

Taken together, these findings illuminate a larger truth: that music, when understood as a form of metaphysical inquiry, transcends its immediate cultural setting. The connection between Tabriz and Konya demonstrates how artistic expression can endure beyond conflict, carrying within it the resonance of shared humanity. The melodies once heard in Safavid gardens and Ottoman lodges were not mere compositions but articulations of a timeless dialogue between the earthly and the eternal.

In essence, this study redefines the relationship between Safavid and Ottoman musical traditions as one of coexistence rather than opposition. It reveals that beneath the surface of political rivalry lay a deep current of artistic exchange sustained by devotion, imagination, and a common vision of beauty. The lost musical memory of Tabriz continues to echo through the spiritual music of Konya, reminding us that cultural memory is not confined to history—it lives in the sound that endures, in the silence that listens, and in the human desire to turn music into meaning.

**Bir Nəfəs, Bir Söz**

*Tabrizdən qalxar bir səs,  
Konyada könül cavab verər.  
Arada dəniz yox,  
Yalnız yel, yalnız nəfəs.  
İki diyar — bir yol,  
İki ürək — bir döyüntü.  
Göy birdir, ay birdir,  
Ruh birdir, nəfəs birdir.  
Saz ağlar, torpaq dinləyər,  
Hər sükut bir nəğmə doğurar.  
Türkün sözü torpaq kimi qədim,  
Türkün səsi külək kimi əbədidir.  
Hər şəhərdə eyni avaz,  
Hər könlüdə eyni ahəng.  
Biz o səsik ---  
zamanı aşan,  
torpağı birləşdirən,  
eyni nəfəsdən yaranan.*

**Bir Nefes, Bir Söz**

*Tabriz'den yüksəlir bir ses,  
Konya'da bir yürek cevap verir.  
Arada deniz yok,  
Yalnız rüzgâr, yalnız nefes.  
İki diyar — bir yol,  
İki yürek — bir atış.  
Gökyüzü bir, ay bir,  
Ruh bir, nefes bir.  
Saz ağlar, toprak dinler,  
Her sessizlik bir ezgi doğurur.  
Türk'ün sözü toprak kadar kadimdir,  
Türk'ün sesi rüzgâr kadar ebedî.  
Her şehirde aynı tını,  
Her gönülde aynı ahenk.  
Biz o sesiz —  
zamanı aşan,  
toprağı birleştiren,  
aynı nefesten doğan.*

**Whisper of Breath**

*From Tabriz rises a voice,  
A heart in Konya answers.  
No sea lies between them —  
Only wind, only breath.  
Two lands — one path,  
Two hearts — one beat.  
One sky, one moon,  
One spirit, one breath.  
The lute weeps, the earth listens;  
Every silence gives birth to a melody.  
The Turk's word is as ancient as the soil,  
The Turk's voice as eternal as the wind.  
In every city, the same resonance,  
In every heart, the same harmony.  
We are that voice —  
crossing time,  
uniting the earth,  
born of the same breath.*

— *Tara Saiyah · Eskişehir – Tabriz · 2025*

**Ethical approval**

Ethical committee approval is not required for this research as it does not involve the use of human or animal subjects or sensitive data.

**Author contribution**

Study conception and design TS; data collection: TS; analysis and interpretation of results: TS; draft manuscript preparation: TS. All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the article.

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The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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## Appendix

### Safavid Manuscript Excerpts from ‘Abd al-Qādir Marāghī’s Works

#### 1. Excerpt from Jāmi‘ al-Alḥān

##### Original Text (Persian)

هر آوازی را شد و جذبتی باشد، و هر مقامی را نهایتی و غایتی

بعضی مقامات طرب‌انگیز باشند و بعضی محزون

و مقام راست، اصل مقامات است و میزان اعتدال

آغاز آن بر دوگاه، قوت آن بر نوا، و قرار آن بر دوگاه بود

Har āvāzī-rā shadd va jadhbatī bāshad, va har maqāmī-rā nihāyatī va ghāyatī.

Ba‘zī maqāmāt ṭarab-angiz bāshand va ba‘zī maḥzūn.

Va maqām-e Rāst asl-e maqāmāt ast va mīzān-e e‘tedāl.

Āghāz-e ān bar Dugāh, quwwat-e ān bar Navā, va qarār-e ān bar Dugāh bovad.

##### English Translation

Every āvāz possesses both tension and attraction, and every maqām has its own finality and purpose.

The mode of Rast is the origin of all modes and the measure of equilibrium.

Its beginning lies on Dugāh, its strength on Navā, and its finalis returns to Dugāh.

## 2. Excerpt from Maqāṣid al-Alhān

و هر مقامی را درجانیست، و هر درجانی را خاصیتی  
 سبب اختلاف درجات آن است که بعضی طبیعت گرم دارند و بعضی سرد  
 ، چون در مقام حسینی، نغمه را رقتی و سکونی باشد  
 و در نغمه نوا، حرکتی و بسطی

**Va har maqāmī-rā darajatī-st, va har darajah-rā khāṣṣiyatī.**

**Sabab-e ekhtelāf-e darajāt ān ast keh ba ‘zī ṭabī‘at-e garm dārand va ba ‘zī sard.**

**Chon dar maqām-e Ḥosaynī, naghmeḥ-rā raqqatī va sokūnī bāshad,**

**va dar naghmeḥ-ye Navā, harekatī va basṭī.**

### English Translation

Every maqām has its own degree, and each degree possesses a distinct quality.

The reason for the differences between these degrees is that some carry a warm nature, while others bear a cold one.

Thus, in the mode of Hüseyinî, the tone embodies softness and stillness,

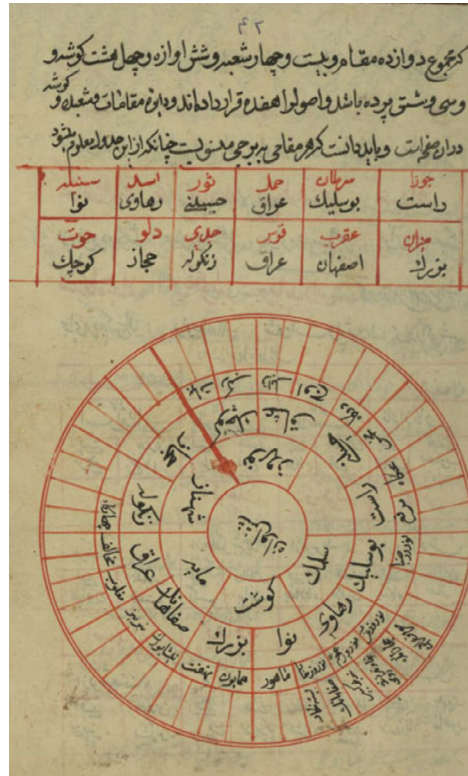
whereas in Navā, it expresses movement and expansion.

## Visual Material from Safavid-Era Persian Music Manuscripts

The following figures present selected folios from Safavid and post-Timurid Persian music manuscripts that visually illustrate the theoretical principles discussed in this study. These diagrams and tables reveal key aspects of modal classification, pitch hierarchy, interval calculation, and cosmological ordering in the Safavid tradition. As shown in Figure 1, the twelve-maqām circular diagram clearly illustrates the cosmological ordering that underlies the Safavid modal system. Together, they provide primary-source evidence that supports the structural and conceptual continuities traced between Safavid Tabriz and early Ottoman musical practice.

### Figure 1

Twelve-Maqām Table and Large Modal Circle (Nusha-hā-ye Musiqi Collection, National Library of Iran).



This folio combines a twelve-maḳām grid with an extended circular modal diagram (dâyira). Red ink demarcates modal sectors and scalar boundaries, while the black inscriptions identify principal modes such as Râst, Navâ, Hoseynî, 'Erâq, Busalik, and others. The geometric layout exemplifies the Safavid conception of modality as a cosmologically ordered system grounded in proportional relationships and symbolic correspondences.

**Figure 2**

Concentric Modal Rings Depicting Hierarchical Pitch Functions.



This schematic representation uses concentric rings to organize the maḳām into functional layers: finalis, strong degree, mediant, auxiliary tones, and modulating pitches. Such diagrams illuminate how Safavid theorists conceptualized melodic motion, cadential gravity, and differentiated pitch roles (darajât). The visual model closely parallels the theoretical

descriptions preserved in Marāghī's Jāmi' al-Al ḥān and Maqāṣid al-Al ḥān. As presented in Figure 2, the concentric-ring model demonstrates the hierarchical organization of pitch functions within the modal structure.

**Figure 3**

Numeric Interval Tables for Modal and Scalar Calculation.

This folio contains a series of numeric grids used to measure intervallic distances and calculate modal correspondences. These tables demonstrate the computational rigor of Safavid modal science and offer insight into how theorists calibrated tetrachord–pentachord structures, scalar proportions, and symbolic mathematical relationships embedded in the maqām system. As illustrated in Figure 3, the numeric interval tables reflect the analytical methods used in Safavid modal calculation

**Figure 4**

Annotated Folio with Extensive Marginalia Clarifying Modal Processes.



This page presents dense marginal annotations by later performers and scribes. Red ink highlights structural markers such as cadential cues, modal transitions, or symbolic associations, while the black marginalia elaborate performance practices and interpretive notes. Such annotated folios offer rare insight into the pedagogical and practical reception of

Safavid theoretical texts. As shown in Figure 4, the dense marginal annotations and highlighted markers provide clear evidence of performers' interpretive approaches to cadences and modal transitions.

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