

## MODAL SYSTEMS ON THE UD ACCORDING TO ŞERİF MUHİDDİN'S TUNING

**CHABRIER, Jean-Claude C.**  
FRANSA/FRANCE/ФРАНЦИЯ

### I. Short Biography of Muhiddin

Şerif Muhiddin (bin Haydar Hâşimî) Targan was born January 21<sup>st</sup> 1892 in the *family konak* at Çamlıca. His father was Şerif Ali Haydar and his mother Sabîha Sultan. Both parents were belonging to the Ottoman Aristocracy and for that reason would listen to and play music with pleasure, but would never think of making a career based on music. Famous musicians like Hacı Arif, Alî Rıfat and Rauf Yekta would come to the *family konak* and organize concerts. Muhiddin was delighted at listening to these concerts. But, when he decided to train himself to *ûd* playing. He had to secretly borrow advices from servants and to play at night "*hatta sabah*". He even composed a *Hüzzam saz semaisi* when he was only thirteen years of age in 1905 AD.

One day, his secret night training was discovered. His uncle Alî Cafer Paşa decided that Muhiddin would adopt, not an "*allaturka*", but an "*edebiyatı*" (learned) instrument: The cello. He was then given Music lesson by Riki, Eringer Traianon and Iskori. World War I interrupted this training and, at the same time, the social power of the family since Şerif Alî Haydar had to go to Medina and Damascus and remained faithful to the disappearing Ottoman Empire.

Although Muhiddin had made a short stay in Türkiye after war, he was a refugee in Egypt and decided to emigrate to the United States of America in 1924. In New York, he could meet famous european musicians: namely Godovsky, Kreisler, Heifetz, Auer, Elman, Váška... and he gave two recitals. Back to East, he gave one recital at the *Théâtre Français de Beyoğlu* in 1934. Then, his cousing King Faysal of Iraq called him in Bagdad where he became head of the *Ma'had al-musîqî*.

Then started a fantastic period for Music in Iraq. Muhiddin was helped by talented teachers like Haqqî al-Shablî, Hanna Petros, Sando Albo, Julian Hertz, Alî Darwish, Qânûnî Nubar, Saïd-Enyss-Omer-Djemil-Francis-Paul-Demillac, and scholars: Allahwardî, Bulbul, Brâhîm, Babukian, Haïm, Sheikh Qâsim, Fahmî, Tajirian, Kuyumjian, Madeleine Eskel, Lyra Pidenko, Sylva Boghossian, Thalia and Maria Helkias, Beatrice Hohanessian... Frequently, teachers would come from Türkiye in order to stimulate the teaching team and the level of studies.

As far as the *ûd* is concerned, Muhiddin had excellent pupils. The best was Jamîl Bashîr, a syriac-orthodox originated from Habâbê (a village of Turabdîn,

south-east of Midyat). Jamîl Bashîr became soon the best virtuoso and received, as a gift, the *ûd* of his master, when Mühiddin left Iraq in 1948. Jamîl was also learning violin with Demillac. Others famous lutenists trained in Bağdad were Salmân Shukur, Ghânim Haddad, Munîr Bashîr, Jamîl Ghânim, Alî Imâm, Nâsir Shamma...

Muhiddin came back to Türkiye in 1948 and became president of *İstanbul Belediye Konservatuvarı*. He soon resigned, married Safiye Ayla, and spent his last years in his *konak* of Beşiktaş. He had composed only twenty five pieces when he died in 1967. Then Safiye Ayla offered his manuscripts and one *Manol ûd* at the *Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi* and one *Nahhat ûd* at the *Tekke* of Konya.

**Note:** This short biography has been started after I had met both Muhiddin and Safiye in İstanbul. I went to Iraq from 1960 to 2007. I discovered the manuscripts of Muhiddin in *Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi* (1977). One of my doctorate theses is “*L’Ecole de Bagdad de Cherif Muhieddin à Munir Bachir*” (Paris-Sorbonne (1976). I have been “*auditeur libre*” at *İstanbul Belediye Konservatuvarı* and *Ma’had al Musiqî fî Bağdad*. Complementary information about 1940-1949 period in Iraq were given to me by Francis-Paul-Demillac. I could discover the three *ûd*-s: the *°Alî* in Bağdad, the *Manol* in İstanbul and the *Nahhat* in *Konya*. I already made several papers and articles about Mühiddin in French.

## II. Mode Ferahfeza in *Yegâh-La* and *Acem-Aşiran-Do*

### Notes

1. The analysis will be made in Latin-european notes and 440 pitch correspondences, *Neva-La* being on 440 pitch, *Yegâh-La* being in 220 pitch, and *Râst* being a *Ré*.

2. The analysed piece is not the one which is currently found in the Turkish music books. The analysed piece was given to me as a magnetic ribbon, by Safiye Ayla in 1977.

3. *ûd* tuning: (six courses, bass to treble): *kaba-dügâh-mi//yegâh-la//aşiran-si//dügâh-mi//neva-la//gerdaniye-ré*

4. After the Icanas Congress, the piece was presented to Ms. Şevhar Beşiroğlu’s seminar and we could remark that the style of Muhiddin was rather cold and repetitive in comparison with the styles of Aleko Bacanos or Jamîl Bashîr.

### II. 1. Modal Structures and Insertions

The modal complex *Ferahfeza* is based upon the modal relativity between a major mode *Acem-Aşiran* inserted on a *acem-aşiran-do* degree and a descending melodic minor mode *Nihavend* inserted on a *yegâh-la* degree (empty first course of strings). One may observe a modulation of the descending melodic minor mode *Nihavend* into a harmonic minor mode *Sultanî-Yegâh* (then the *çargâh-sol* degree is replaced by a *hicaz-sharp-sol* degree). One might

also identify a *Kürdi* or *Acem-Kürdi* mode inserted on a *dügâh-mi* degree, which is the equivalent of a European *Mode de Mi*.

## II. 2. Style and Comments

The play will be limited to *Ferahfeza* modal complex without extra-modal modulation, except three alterations pointed in black notes. One may remark the progressions by consecutive doubled or tripled degrees, dramatizing descending lines in order to emphasize the last note of every phrase; with an exception for the finalis *yegâh-la* of the minor mode which is emphasized by its leading note, a *kaba-hicaz-sharp-sol*. The eclecticism and refinement of the playing gentleman (*Osmanli Efendisi*) take shape into a beautiful performance. It could seduce anybody who would be allergic to the musics of the Arab-Iranian-Turkish Orient, to vulgarity and to non-equalized intervals.

## II.3. Chronological Analysis of the Played Piece

0'00". Minor Anacrouse *la-si-do* leading to the major mode in *do*. Descending motion through *Kürdi* mode in *mi*, major mode in *do*, then minor mode in *la*, emphasized by its leading note *sharp-sol*.

Descending motti *do-mi, la-do, mi-la*, put the modal exposition into a concrete form.

0'55". Same motti at the bass octave, then at the treble one.

1'20". *Sharp-sol* identifies the harmonic modulation (*Nikriz beşli:ré -mi-fa-sharp-sol-la*).

Once again, descending motti *do-mi, la-do, mi-la* on both octaves.

3'21". Two ascending motti in harmonic minor mode lead to the descending motti and to the final *kaba-hicaz-sharp-sol-yegâh-la*.

**III. Bibliography** (Only in France and in French, not including the many Turkish publications) Jean-Claude C. CHABRIER

1976: *L'Encole de Bagdad de Cherif Muhieddin à Munir Bachir*; Thèse doctorat musicology Paris-Sorbonne.

1978: "Un réformateur du 'ûd. Şerif Muhiddin" *Quand le crible était dans la paille*, Paris, Maisonneuve et Larose.

1995: *Arabesques, analyses de musiques traditionnelles*. Thèse doctorat musicologic Paris-Sorbonne.

1996: "Şerif Muhiddin Haydar hâşimî Targan, luthiste et compositeur. Une confluence culturelle Ottomane et un rayonnement artistique mondial" in D. Panzac éd. *Histoire économique et sociale de l'Empire ottoman et de la Turquie (1326-1960), actes 6<sup>ème</sup> congrès international, Aix en Provence, 1992*; Paris-Leuven, Peeters, pp. 767-774.

## IV. Illustrations

See the staves, diagrams and the 'ûd board with fingering-degrees of the played *Ferahfeza* mode.

