

The modal repertoire of Maqam Dasht

Analysis of vocal and instrumental compositions in Iran, Iraq and Azerbaijan

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Notes

Notes on transliteration

A simplified approach has been used for terms belonging to Arabic, Persian and Azerbaijani, prioritising readability instead of accurate pronunciation. Phonetic marks have mostly been avoided.

Music Transcriptions

All music transcriptions make use of Western music notation, with occasional visual aids to convey culture-specific concepts. In free-rhythm transcriptions, note values indicate the relative duration, in order to represent the melodic lines in the general context.

The tuning approaches used by the various music systems are not taken into account. With the assumption of an approximate correspondence with Equal Temperament, Western music accidentals are used to represent semitones. In addition, most music examples include the following micro-tonal accidentals²:

- ♭ *Kar bimol*
In the Arabic music system, lowers the pitch by a quarter of a tone (half-flat)
- ♭ *Koron*
Introduced by Vaziri in Iran³, represents a micro-tonal lowering of a quarter of a tone as well⁴.

In practical terms, for the objective of this analysis, the two accidentals above are considered equivalent. *Kar bimol* is used for the Iraqi examples, while *Koron* appears in the Persian ones, and they are both referred as half-flat in the text.

In order to facilitate reading and comparison between music examples, all transcriptions have been transposed to G as modal root note. The vast majority of music examples are originally based on G. When different, it is indicated in the foot-notes. Differences in modal rooting may be due to various reasons, such as instrumental tuning, vocal performance, or theoretical considerations. With no intention of ignoring the profound implications behind pitch rooting in Middle-Eastern musical modes, the consistency in music transcriptions has been given priority.

A key signature with two flats (on B and E, as used in the Western key of G minor) is used in all music examples. Given their importance in modal development, micro-tonal accidentals are always indicated next to the notes.

2 Other micro-tonal accidentals are available to represent additional intervals, but they are not listed here as they do not appear in the music examples.

3 It has often been debated whether the word *Iran* or *Persia* is more accurate and respectful to discuss the music of the people that live in that region. In this essay they are used interchangeably.

4 In both Persian and Arabic systems, the amplitude of the lowered quarter-tone interval depends on theoretical issues which are considered beyond the scope of this essay.

The concept of mode includes a vast spectrum of meanings, from the definition of the intervals involved in a sequence of pitches (scale) to a specific set of pre-composed pitch materials. Historically, this debate has been driven by the Western point of view of modes as abstract scales in the context of the tonal system, and only in recent decades the term mode has expanded, considering the melodic approach of fixed tunes, as in use by other cultures (Powers, 2001).

The music of Middle-East and Central Asia has a strong characterisation towards the “tune” end of this spectrum. Modes are defined not only by their intervals, but also by melodic fingerprints, modal development and even pre-composed pieces. Interpreters have to master the knowledge of this repertoire in order to add their creative input, being aware of rules and expectations present in the social context where the music is performed.

The aim of this essay is to choose one mode and follow its development in neighbouring music traditions. The term “tradition” here refers to the corpus of music repertoire that has reached an almost stable practice in a specific social and temporal context. This definition, made from the point of view of an external and contemporary observer, can lead to a number of issues. To mention a few, the fact that these traditions have never been stable, that they are still alive and developing, and that they cannot be isolated from other traditions.

Without ignoring the complexity of the debate around the meaning of the term tradition, some assumptions can be safely made regarding the music repertoire and practices which have consolidated in Iran, Iraq and Azerbaijan in the last century, thanks also to a vast literature. The journey itself of following the adoption of a specific mode across different cultures can also be helpful in understanding the different modal approaches in the Near East.

The chosen mode is known as Dastgah Dashti in Iran, Maqam Dasht in Iraq and Mugham Dasht in Azerbaijan. This choice is motivated by existing links, not necessarily proven by the common name (names of modes have a long history of interchangeability in this region) but by common references. In addition, the exiguity of the Dasht repertoire, rarely exceeding a handful of pre-composed tunes, makes it suitable for an investigation with limited scope.

A number of factors are not going to be considered in this analysis: historical developments and influences, relationship with text and poetry, metric and singing styles. Melodic motion is going to be used as instrument of musical analysis, leaving other approaches to future developments.

The materials used for this research are audio recordings whose choice has taken into account various considerations. Since the sixties ethnomusicologists have established strong relationships with performers of

these traditions, contributing to identify the significant representatives and even playing an active role in capturing their performances.

Some recordings have been sourced from private sources, and they have been verified with native experts to evaluate their relevance.

Despite these efforts, the ideal condition of musical analysis - interaction with the performer - has not been possible. Therefore a cautionary approach is going to be used to mitigate the risk of drawing inaccurate conclusions.

Dastgah Dashti

In Persian music the term *Dastgah* represents two concepts: a collection of pieces (*gushe*), and the initial mode of the collection itself (Farhat 1990:19). This mode is predominant, appearing in most pieces and specifically in their cadences (*forud*). The opening *gushe* (called *Daramad*) has the fundamental role of presenting the mode and its primary melodic patterns.

Twelve *Dastgah* constitute the traditional repertoire (*Radif*). Five of them, called *Avaz*, are considered secondary, and *Dashti* is one of them, being a derivative of the primary *Dastgah Shur*.

Dashti is of relative recent formalization, as it is not present in early Persian classical sources (During 1994). Its origins can be traced to the folk repertoire of the Bushehr region in the south of Iran, on the Persian Gulf (*Dashti* is the name of a sub-province of Bushehr). A large repertoire of folk songs in *Dashti* is reported by various authors (Farhat 1990: 42, During 1994), in both South and Northern Iran.

Dastgah can be played on instruments, such as *tar*, *setar* and *ney*, or sung to classical Persian poetry. Mostly performed in free-rhythm, it can occasionally include rhythmic pieces.

Before looking at the characteristics that define *Dastgah Dashti*⁵, it is useful to introduce some additional concepts of Persian classical music.

The mode, intended as the selection of pitch intervals used in a piece, is referred with the name *maye*.

Melodic lines represent the fundamental aspect of a *Dastgah*, and are usually described by their starting point (*aqaz*), the prominent pitch (*sahed*), and the ending point (*ist*). Some notes have a dual role (*moteqayyer*), changing their pitch depending on the modal development, therefore contributing to define the identity of the *Dastgah*.

There are two fundamental characteristics of *Dashti*

Firstly, the prominent role of the 5th, mainly approached in two ways: from below, with the frequent 3-4-5 melodic movement, and from above, involving 6 and 7 in various melodic lines.

5 Some authors refer to *Dashti* as *Avaz Dashti*, some others as *Dastgah Dashti* (Farhat 1990: 21). This second approach is used in this essay.

Secondly, the 5th has a dual behaviour: it is present as a perfect 5th, but it can also be lowered by a micro-tonal alteration (half-flat).

The combination of these two factors, predominance (*sahed*) and mutation (*moteqayyer*) of the 5th, represents the main fingerprint of *Dasht*.

Other secondary characteristics of *Dasht* are inherited from *Dastgah Shur*, such as the general diatonic movements and the cadence patterns shown here on the right (Farhat 1990: 27-28).

As most activity in *Dasht* happens on the 5th, the common cadence is descending (*Forud C*).

The 2nd is lowered by half-tone and plays a marginal role, being mostly present in cadences.

The melodic range usually does not exceed an octave: 8th is used as a peak in the culminating *gushe* (called *Oj*).



The starting point of melodic lines is very often the 3rd, with the distinctive 3-4-5 opening. Alternatively, the 4th can be used as a lower *appoggiatura* to the 5th.

Gushes can have various roles and lengths. *Dashti* is a limited collection and its *gushes* do not provide new elements, a part for *Ossaq*, which is a special case (Farhat 1990: 41) not examined here. The four authors consider in this research list the following *gushes*⁶.

Farhat	Ma'aroufi	Karimi	Tala'i
Daramad	Hajiani (8 parts)	Daramad	Daramad
Bidegani	Dasti (4 parts)	Oj	Oj
Cupani	Bidegani (2 forms)	Gilaki	Bidegani
Dastestani	Caharmezrab	Bidegani	Hajiani
Gham-Angiz	Cupani	Cupani	Gham-angiz
Gilaki	Dastestani	Dastestani	Gilaki
Kucebaqi	Gham-angiz	Gham-angiz	
Ossaq	Gilaki	Deylaman	
	Kucebaqi	Masnavi	

Daramad is the defining *gushe* and it is going to be the main focus of analysis, together with *Oj* which has the role of presenting the high register.

Farhat (1990: 39) gives two "skeleton" examples for *Daramad*⁷.

⁶ Transliterations of *gushes* names have been normalised in order to provide a comparable lists



Both themes display the opening movement (3-4-5), the prevalence of 5, its melodic contour and the cadence. Occasionally the 5th is lowered; 2 and 1 appear only in the cadence.

In the full examples provided (Farhat 1990: 130-131), the duality of the 5th (natural or half-flat) is present in more detail, with alternating phrases involving either one form or the other.

Oj is not considered by Farhat as part of *Dashti*.

A significant attempt to notate the full *Radif* was promoted and published by the Persian government in 1963. This transcription, supervised by Moussa Ma'aroufi, represents a useful reference, even if questions have been raised (Zonis 1964: 308) on how it has been assembled, given the lack of consensus among the experts initially involved in the work.

Ma'aroufi's transcription includes several *Hajianis* before the presentation of *Dashti*, made of four *gushes*. The beginnings of two of these are reported below. They are quite similar to the two themes by Farhat, a part for the missing 3-4-5 opening (present in the preceding *Hajianis* instead), and the micro-tonal alteration of the 5th which is introduced much later in the melodic development.



Ma'aroufi does not include an explicit *gushe Oj*, but the 4th *Dashti* introduction (#12 in his sequence) starts in the high register.

7 Original in D, here transposed up a 4th to G

In order to analyse Dashti in more detail, we have to look at performances of the Radif by prominent musicians. The singer Mahmoud Karimi has recorded the full Radif in the seventies and his performance has been transcribed and analysed by Mohammad T. Massoudieh in 1978. Unfortunately it has not been possible to source this transcription, therefore a manual transcription⁸ of the beginning of Karimi's performance of *Daramad* (CD#1) is reported here. Vocal ornamentations have not been captured.



Section B is sung to poetry, while the others are melismatic.

The vocal performance has some remarkable characteristics, partially due to the fact that ornamentation techniques shape the melodic lines differently. For example the typical 3-4-5 opening has a much longer and rich exposure. Some specific vocal techniques seems to recur, like *staccatos* on a diatonic step (one tone below or above) at the end of long phrases.

The melodic contour is strongly centred on the 5th and does not descend to the 1st. Furthermore, there is no sign of the lowered 5th.

⁸ Karimi sings in D. The transcription has been transposed up a 4th to G.

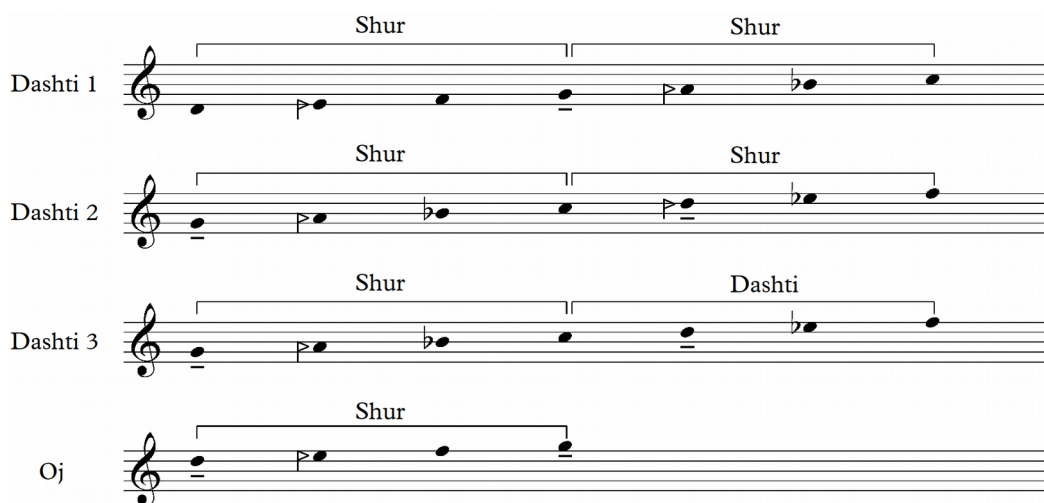
The beginning of *Oj* (CD#2) shows some similar characteristics, in the high register.



The 6th half-flat is part of the higher tetrachord, and its use is quite common in certain renditions of *Dashti*. Again, the lowered 5th is absent in *Oj* and in all other *Dashti gushes* performed by Karimi.

An important version of the Radif has been developed at the end of the 19th century by Mirza Abdollah (Nettl 1987: 6), a prominent teacher and performer who has been extremely influential in Persian traditional music. The instrumental performance of the Radif of Mirza Abdollah by Dariush Tala'i on the *setar* is accompanied by a theoretical introduction and a full transcription (Tala'i 2000).

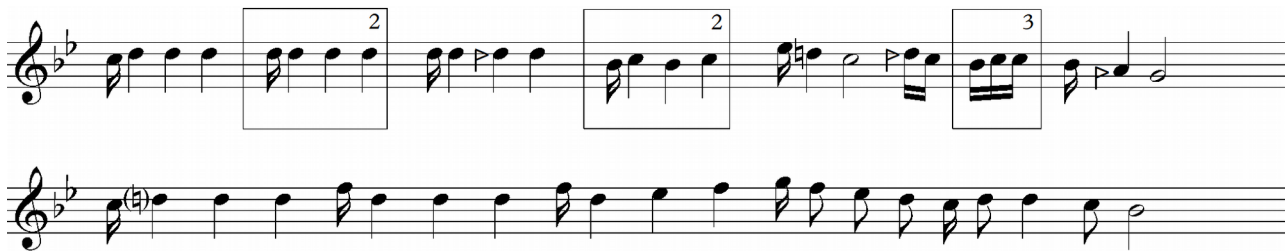
Tala'i proposes his own visual representation of the tetrachords involved in the various *Dastgahs*. Without entering the details of his approach, his description of *Dashti* (Tala'i 2000:18) can be reproduced in terms of Western music notation.



Dashti is shown as 4 recurring shapes, made of various combinations of 2 tetrachords (called *Shur* and *Dashti*). The prominent pitches are underlined (G and D).

Leaving aside the low and the high registers, this scheme highlights the two "souls" of *Dashti* (#2 and #3), with the characteristic dual 5th. In the high register, the 6th is half-flat, as noticed in Karimi's performance.

The performance by Dariush Tala'i of *Dashti Daramad* (CD#3) is fully notated in his book (2000: 157) and partially reproduced here, showing its beginning. Ornamentations signs, such as *mezrab* techniques, have not been reported. Square boxes indicate repetitions.

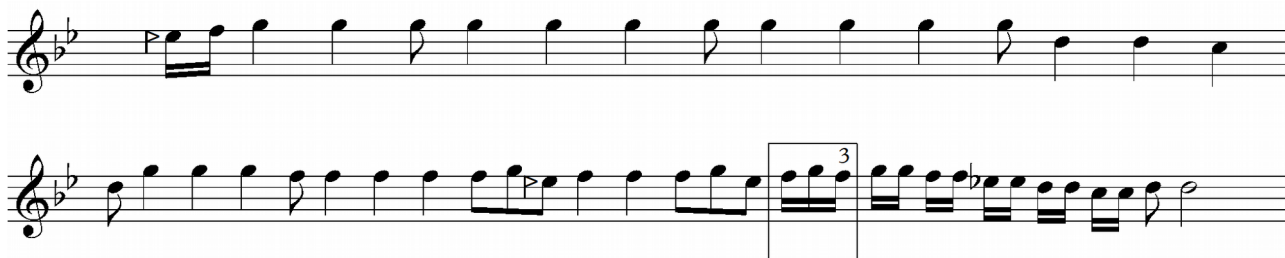


The instrumental performance has quite a different melodic contour from the vocal one, insisting on fast passages and making large use of *tremolo* to sustain its sound.

The lowered 5th is presented at the very beginning, with an unusual direct passage from the natural 5th. Other performers on the *setar*, such as Borumand (CD#5), follow a more traditional configuration, alternating phrases with the natural 5th and others with the lowered one, always avoiding a direct passage.

For the rest, the typical diatonic progressions of Dasthi and the prevalence of the 5th fulfil the expectations of its modal presentation.

The high register is presented in *Oj* (CD#4), whose first phrase is reproduced here (Tala'i 2000:158). The lowered 6th is present in the opening statement 6-7-8 and throughout the melodic lines, a part for returning to a standard 6th flat in the cadence.



From these examples, it seems that instrumental performances pay more attention to the micro-tonal alteration which constitutes one of the defining characteristics of *Dastgah Dashti*.

Iraqi Maqam Dasht

Not to be confused with the term that identifies modes across the Arab world, *Maqam* in Iraq represents a repertoire of 50-60 modal compositions (Kojaman 2001: 139), performed by a singer (*qari*) accompanied by a small ensemble made of the zither *santur*, the spike fiddle *joza* and various percussionists (Hassan 2001).

Lyrics can be based on classical Arabic poetry (*qasida*) or a form of local colloquial poetry (*zhairi*).

The structure of an Iraqi *Maqam* is made of the following elements (Kojaman 2001: 186-188):

- instrumental introduction in the main mode (*moqadamme*)
- vocal introduction (*tahir*)
- text sung to poetry
- preparatory cadence (*jalsa*)
- climax (*mayana*)
- modulating pieces (*qit'a*)
- closure – return to initial mode (*teslim*)
- light song (*peste*)

The instrumental introduction is functionally equivalent to the Persian *Daramad*, setting the modal scene with an instrumental piece from the Iraqi repertoire. The optional song at the end is usually sung by the ensemble, together with the audience, allowing the singer to rest.

The overall performance generally lasts 10 to 15 minutes. Iraqi *Maqam* can be rhythmic, when a rhythmic accompaniment is present throughout the whole performance, otherwise they are in free rhythm, a part for the introduction and the *peste*.

Iraqi *Maqam* emerged around the second half of 19th century and further developed in the 20th century. They used to be grouped in five sets (*fasl*) of approximately six *Maqam* each, performed one after the other. One of these sets is called *Husseini*, taking the name from the *Husseini* mode of the first *Maqam* in the group.

The *Husseini* scale in D is shown below in one of its many possible tetrachord layout (Simms 2004:14).



Others prefer to see *Husseini* as *Beyati* plus *Rast* from 4th. *Husseini* could also be traced back to *Husayni*, one of Safi Al-Din's pentachords. Tetrachords naming and organisation are beyond the scope of this research; in general terms, *Husseini* is based on the tetrachord that Arabs nowadays call *Beyati*.

The Iraqi *Maqam Dasht* belongs to the *Husseini* family, together with other *Maqams* with a *Beyati* flavour, such as *Arwah*, *Orfa* and *Husseini* itself. In terms of modal scale, Iraqi consider *Dasht* as *Husseini* from G.

It is not known when *Dasht* has been imported into Iraq. Some authors (Simms 2004: 99) credit Ahmad Zaydan (1832-1912), one of the most prominent figures of the early development of the Iraqi *Maqam* repertoire. Various *Maqams* are attributed to Zaydan (Kojaman 2001: 136) but *Dasht* remains dubious.

Its first manifestation, called *Dasht Arab*, can be heard in a very old recording of Ahmad Zaydan himself (CD#6). This low quality recording features a rhythmic accompaniment with a 4/4 rhythm called *Wahda* (Kojaman 2001: 153). Zaydan sings in a very high register (a fourth higher, in C). A short melodic phrase, a common feature of rhythmic *Maqams*, is presented at the beginning and repeated with variations in the pauses between the *qasida* poetry lines.



The vocal performance of Zaydan is quite short. The persistence of the 5th and the diatonic movements seem to be the main characteristic of his rendition. There is no sign of a lowered 5th, while something peculiar happens around 2:00: Zaydan settles on the 3rd and modulates to the *Ajam* tetrachord (the Arab equivalent of the Western major scale), staying in *Ajam* until the end with no return to the initial mode.

Another recording of this early Iraqi *Maqam Dasht* has been made by Rashid Al Qundarchi (1885-1945), a remarkable performer and respected teacher of Iraqi *Maqam* (CD#7). Qundarchi sings in *false* *setto* a 5th higher than Zaydan, hence one octave above.

Maqam Dasht Arab has a 4/4 rhythmic accompaniment throughout, with a short instrumental repetition which recalls the recording by Zaydan. Al Qundarchi follows a similar development, modulating (2:05) and finishing in *Ajam* on the 3rd degree.

These early renditions of *Maqam Dasht* are remarkably different from the *Maqam Dasht* documented and performed later in the second part of the 20th century, to the point that some authors (Kojaman 2001: 201) classify them as two separate *Maqams*.

Another relevant source about Iraqi *Maqam* is Shaoubi Ibrahim (1925-1991), a *joza* player who accompanied singers like Yusuf Omar and Husayn al-Adhami.

Shaoubi Ibrahim taught Iraqi *Maqam* from 1971 to 1991 at the Institute of Melodic Studies in Baghdad (Hassan 1992: 264). He documented his lectures in a book accompanied by tape recordings of his own performances on *joza* and voice (Ibrahim 1982).

Having to deal with his own limitations (he was not an accomplished singer) and practical difficulties, such as teaching a complex tradition to group classes, his book and recordings reveal many shortcomings (Hassan 1992: 265). Nevertheless they represent an almost unique resource.

Ibrahim's performance of *Maqam Dasht* (CD#8) has been transcribed and analysed by Simms (2004: 99-101). He begins with a very short *tharir* before exposing the typical *Dasht* phrases on the 5th, from below (3-4-5) and from above, in various melodic shapes. Interestingly, he occasionally touches the lowered 5th in descending phrases towards 4th.

The *meyana* is very short, mirroring the *Oj* of the Persian *Dastgah* with a phrase centred on 8th and including the 6th half-flat.

The *Qit'as* following the *meyana* are quite unusual, but fully intentional. Shaoubi Ibrahim documents three modulating *Qit'a* (1982: 41): *Lami*, *Hijaz Gharib*, *Husseini*, and performs them accordingly.

Lami, the first modulation, is a relatively recent Iraqi mode; Ibrahim settles on *Lami* on 2nd natural, in evident contrast with the characteristic 2nd half-flat of *Dasht*. Then he quickly moves to *Hijaz* on the 1st, and finally modulates to *Husseini* on 5th degree, before returning to *Dasht* for the final *teslim*.

A high-level representation is sketched here, based on the transcription by Simms, highlighting the root tetrachords used in the modulations.



Considering also the quick pace of the modulations, made of very short *Qit'as* which do not really settle in the corresponding modes, it seems indeed unconventional, even for Iraqi standards.

Analysing what renowned Iraqi singers do in practice can shed some light on these modulations.

The performance of Iraqi *Maqam* can vary to a great extent. The singer has control over the direction of the modal development, specifically regarding the choice of the modulating pieces.

Listening for example to a performance of *Maqam Dasht* by Yousuf Omar (CD#9), accompanied by Shaoubi Ibrahim himself, no modulating *Qit'as* are performed, as Yousuf Omar never leaves *Dasht*.

While Omar's recording may not be considered canonical given its informal context, a more “official” rendition of *Maqam Dasht* can be heard in the performance of Ali Rzuqi on the national Iraqi television (CD#10). His interpretation is very accurate, following the *Dasht* patterns (such as the distinctive beginning

3-4-5-4-5, and the frequent 5-7-6-5) all along. After the short *meyana* (6:50), Rzouqi goes straight back to *Dasht teslim* with no modulating *Qit'a*.

This performance of Ali Rzouqi was part of a TV program on Iraqi *Maqam*, supervised by Hashim Rajab (1921-2003), who was considered an authority in the field and a representative of the traditionalist branch (Hassan 1992: 265).

In his book on Iraqi *Maqam*, Rajab mentions *Dasht* with just one modulating *Qit'a* in *Lami* on the 5th degree (1983: 186). A much smoother transition from and to *Dasht*.



The instrumental introduction (*moqadamme*) performed by the ensemble in the two recordings by Omar and Rzouqi deserves some attention. Based on the rhythm of *jurjina* (a fast-paced quintuple meter, notated as 10/16), it is strongly associated with Iraqi *Maqam Dasht*, despite lacking most of its distinctive features, such as the 3-4-5 opening, the prominent 5th and the lowered 5th.



The role of the 2nd half-flat, quite active in the melodic statements, is noteworthy and new for *Dasht*. The upper tetrachord is exposed in the 3rd line and makes extensive use of the 6th half-flat, which is later (4th line) changed to flat in the descending cadence, a behaviour characteristic of *Husseini*.

The rhythmic phrases in the 2nd line may recall some *setar* passages in the *Gham-angiz gushe* (Tala'i 2000: 165). Certainly this *moqadamme* has a strong melodic and rhythmic identity, which helps to establish a generic *Beyati* mood before the *Dasht tahrir*, even if *Dasht* features can hardly be found in its development.

In the context of the Iraqi tradition, it is important to mention the generation of Iraqi Oud players which emerged from the Institute of Fine Arts of Baghdad in the mid-twentieth century. In particular the two brothers Munir and Jamil Bashir brought the Oud to international recognition with their technical abilities and choice of repertoire, deeply rooted in the tradition.

Their adaptations of Maqam Dasht reflect a fresh approach to the Iraqi Maqam, accompanied with the respect and awareness of the tradition itself.

Munir Bashir (1930-1997) forges a remarkable balance between the seriousness of the original material and the accessibility of a short instrumental performance on the Oud, called *Taqasim Dasht* (CD#11). Always starting his melodic statements on the 3rd, he seems to follow the vocal patterns. First an ornamented 3-2-1 *tahrir*, followed by two sections announced by the characteristic 3-4-5-4-5. In the middle of each section, the lowered 5th, performed with a glissando followed by a loud bass 4th, introduces a clear partition in the melodic presentation. The *meyana* section gives space to some virtuosity, before the lowered 5th introduces the final cadence. Overall, a familiar AABA structure.

In the end, the rhythmic *moqadamme* serves as an instrumental *finale* instead of introduction.

Jamil Bashir (1921-1977) follows a minimalist approach (CD#12): no *moqadamme* and much shorter statements for a 2 minutes piece called *Dacht*.⁹

The general structure is again AABA, with the *Dasht* fingerprint at the opening (3-4-5-4-5). The lowered 5th is performed with fast 3-4-5-4-5-4-3 phrases, recalling the Persian instrumental *Daramads*. In addition, the fast phrases in the high register always hint at *Lami* on the 5th degree, showing awareness of the prescribed modulation.

9 Jamil Bashir's Oud is tuned one tone higher, following his teacher Serif Muhiddin Haydar. Therefore his *Dacht* sounds in A instead of G.

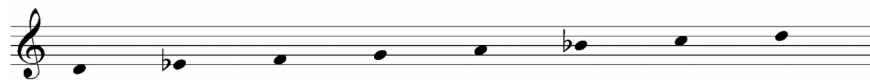
Mugham Dasht

The traditional music of Azerbaijan reflects strong links with neighbouring countries and cultural influences from the past. The art of *Mugham* embeds elements of Iranian, Arabic, Armenian and Turkish music and reached a significant development during the 19th century (During 1988: 36) with the emergence of a music tradition with strong similarities with the Iranian one.

Specific characteristics of the Azeri modal system include the theoretical absence of the interval of $\frac{3}{4}$ of tone, so much popular in both Arabic and Persian systems, and the use of smaller fractions (1/8 tone) for ornamentations.

Dashti is a secondary *Mugham* with a simple identity, requiring a limited understanding of the otherwise extremely complex system of Azeri traditional music. *Dashti* inherits from its Persian relative the prominent role of the 5th, but it does not include its lowering by half-tone (During 1988: 109). In addition, due to the absence of the $\frac{3}{4}$ interval, the 2nd is also flattened.

The resulting scale is equivalent to what is known as *Bayati Kurd* in Azerbaijan.



Originally part of *Mugham Bayati Shiraz*, *Dashti* is nowadays seldom performed (During 1988: 109).

In 1989 a young Alim Qasimov sung *Mugham Dasht* in Paris in his very first recording (CD#13). Possibly the choice was also influenced by the short length of *Dashti* (10 minutes), which could fit in the space left on the CD after the much longer *Mugham Rast*. In any case it is remarkable that Qasimov chose *Mugham Dashti* on such an important occasion.

Azeri *Mughams* are performed by a traditional ensemble which includes a singer, who also plays the frame drum, the spike fiddle *kemenche* and the *tar*. The instrumentalists have an active participation in the modal development, with call-response patterns and sophisticated accompaniment textures.

In Qasimov's rendition, *Mugham Dasht* is preceded and followed by two *Tesnif*, slow ballads in 6/4 usually sung to modern texts. Primary *Mughams* have specific instrumental introductions (*daramad* and *bardasht*); in the case of *Dasht* the *Tesnifs* play a similar introductory role.

The melodic line of the first *Tesnif* is transcribed here¹⁰.

The musical score is presented in three systems, each containing two staves. The first system is labeled 'A' and represents an instrumental section. The second system is labeled 'B' and the third is labeled 'C', both representing vocal parts. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and repeat signs. The key signature consists of two flats, and the time signature is 6/4.

Sections B and C are vocal. Section A is instrumental, played at the beginning and between B and C.

The melodic movements of the vocal part are reminiscent of *Dasht* typical melodic patterns: the 3-4-5 opening, the prevalence of 5th, the alteration of the 6th in ascending movements.

A noticeable difference is the role of the 7th as a resting note in the approach to the climax, and not just as a passing one.

¹⁰ The original recording is in F. The transcription has been transposed one tone higher to G.

Similar patterns can be heard in the *Mugham* itself, which starts after a short improvisation by the *tar*.

Qasimov seems to rely on the following theme, repeated under the poetry lines.



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Recordings

Track	Title & Performer	Notes
1	Avaze Dashti: Daramad Mahmud Karimi	Recorded in mid-seventies. Subsequently published as 5 CDs with the book Masoudieh, Mohammad Taghi. <i>The Vocal Radif of Traditional Iranian Music</i> . Mahoor Institute of Culture and Art. Tehran. 1995
2	Avaze Dashti: Oj Mahmud Karimi	
3	Avaz-e Dashti: Daramad Dariush Tala'i	<i>Traditional Persian Art Music – The Radif of Mirza Abdollah</i> . Bibliotheca Iranica: Performing Arts Series #3 Mazda Publishers. 2000.
4	Avaz-e Dashti: Oj Dariush Tala'i	
5	Avaze Dashti Nur Ali Borumand	<i>The Radif of Mirza Abdollah (for the Tar & Setar)</i> Mahoor Institute of Culture and Art. 2006. Recorded in the seventies.
6	Maqam Dasht Arab Ahmad Zaydan	Recording provided by Haitham Al Malak. Date not known.
7	Maqam Dasht Arab Rashid Al Qundarchi	Recording from the original tapes (date unknown), published on <i>The Scribe – Journal of Babylonian Jewry</i> , Issue 76, 2003. Website accessed on 28 Dec. 2013 http://www.dangoor.com/issue76/articles/76026.htm
8	Maqam Dasht Shaoubi Ibrahim	Tape recording distributed with the book <i>Dalil al-angham, li tullab al-maqam</i> . Wizarat al-Thaqafah wa-al-Ilam, Dairat al-Shuun al-Thaqafiyah. Baghdad. 1982
9	Maqam Dasht Yusuf Omar	Private concert, Baghdad. 1975. The original recording was directly followed by Maqam Lami (here removed)
10	Maqam Dasht Ali Rzuqi & Al-Chalghi al-Baghdadi	Audio extracted from the "Al Maqam Al Iraqi" program, broadcast in the 1980s on national Iraqi TV, under the supervision of Hashim Rajab. The final <i>peste</i> "Khayif 'Alaiha" is faded out.
11	Taqsim Dasht Munir Bashir	<i>Irak: L'art du 'ud</i> CD. Ocora Radio France - C580068 Recorded at Masion de la radio. Paris. 1971
12	Dacht Jamil Bashir	<i>Arabesques 4: Luth Traditionnel en Iraq</i> EMI Pathé Marconi 066-95160. 1974. Recorded by Jean-Claude Chabrier. Baghdad. 1973.
13	Mugam Dashti Alim Qasimov	<i>Alim Qasimov - Anthologie du Mugam d'Azerbaidjan – vol. 2</i> INEDIT W260015 1989 Recorded in 1989 at Maison des Cultures du Monde. Paris. With Malik Mansurov (tar) and Elkhon Mansurov (kemanche) • 0:00 Tesnif • 3:39 Mugam Dashti • 8:15 Tesnif