

# Music in Islamic Spiritual Care: A Review of Classical Sources

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## ABSTRACT

The primary goal of this paper is to describe spiritual and religious considerations of music in Islamic spiritual care for enhancing spiritual care to Muslims. In medieval times in the Muslim world, music played an important role in healthcare practices. For example music was used not only to enhance spirituality of patients but also to improve their health. Many Muslim scholars and musicians used musical theory and techniques as a way of connecting patients with the Divine, inspiring hope and finding meaning in their crisis, suffering and illness. Therefore music can be used in spiritual care for Muslims as a tool to connect patients with spiritual sources of strength.

## Keywords

Islam, music, Islamic spiritual care

## Introduction

For many Muslim patients, spirituality is closely interconnected with music. Nevertheless, limited work has been done that engages the use of music in Islamic spiritual care. Despite the importance of music in patient care and in our daily life in general, the lack of attention to music in Islamic spiritual care could be explained by some theological arguments that support the idea that Islam prohibits music. Such arguments are especially based on conservative interpretations of Qur'anic chapters (Q 16:529–62; Q 31:6). Using the hadith literature, especially weak (*da'eef*) or forged (*mawdo'o*) hadith, written almost 200 years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, Muslim scholars Abu Bakr Ahmad ibn Husayn Ibn 'Ali Ibn Moussa al-Khosrojerdi al-Bayhaqi (994–1066), Imam Hafiz Abul Qasim 'Ali ibn Hasan ibn 'Asakir (1105–1175), Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (1292–1350), and others defined music as idle amusement (*lahw*). These radical positions influenced modern examination of the use of music in Islamic spiritual care. Therefore, there is a significant gap in Islamic spiritual care literature, which reveals a need for significant attention to the use of music in Islamic spiritual care.

Nevertheless, while there is little research in the field of music and spirituality in the Islamic

context, there are a number of books, articles and reflections, specifically devoted to medieval classical Islamic studies on music and also in the area of Sufi (mystical branch of Islam) music (see, for example, Farmer 1965; Malm 1977; Shiloah 1979 and 2003; Khan 1996). Although some of these articles lack a description of the therapeutic process of music in Islamic spiritual care, they are still useful because they reveal the importance of music in the health of the human soul. Among these books are: Abu Yusuf Ya‘qub ibn ‘Ishāq aṣ-Ṣabbāḥ al-Kindi’s (801–873 CE) *Risala fi hubr ta’lif al-alban* of *Kitab ihṣa’ al-‘ulum*, Abi Naṣr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṭarkhan Farabi’s (870-950 CE) *Kitab al-iqa‘at*, *Kitab ihṣa’ al-iqa‘at* (on rhythms), and *Kitab al-Musiqa al-Kabir*, Abu ‘Ali al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Abd Allah ibn Al-Hasan ibn Ali ibn Sina’s (980–1037) *Javamiu Ilmi al-Musiqa in Kitab al-Shifa; Muhtasar fi Ilm al-Misniqa in Kitab al-Nejat*, Safiyaddin ‘Abdalmu’min b. Yusuf b. Fahir al-Urmawi’s (1225–1294) *Risalat al-sharafiyya* and *Kitab al-Adwar*, Abdül’aziz bin Maraghi’s (1360?-1425) *Nakavat al-adwar*, Hasan Şuuri’s *Tadil-i Emzije*, Ali Ufki (1610–1675?)’s *Mecmua-i Saḡ-ü Söḡ*, Seydi’s (the 15<sup>th</sup> century Turkish musician) *Al-Matla* or the *Book of Music*, etc. In his *Kitab al-Adwar*, al-Urmawi defined music as a noble science (*‘ilm-i sberif*), which was deduced from philosophy (*‘ilm-i hikmet*), astronomy (*‘ilm-i hey’et*), astrology (*‘ilm-i nucum*), medical science (*‘ilm-i tıbb*), and geometry (*‘ilm-i hendese*) (Seydi 2004, 29).

Taking into consideration the importance attached to music in medieval Islamic classical works and the extensive analysis of the importance of music in the care of the soul, it is important to pay significant attention to the therapeutic use of music in Islamic spiritual care. It is my hope that this article will address some of the gaps in the literature. As the field of Islamic spiritual care in a health care setting is evolving in the world, Muslim spiritual caregivers seek various ways and methods to enrich their practice. Such attempts spark curiosity about the role of music in Islamic spiritual care. Therefore, this paper indicates the importance of considering music as a tool in Islamic spiritual care. This paper (a) highlights the history of music and spirituality in Islam; (b) describes how classical beliefs and practices on music influence the practice of music therapy with Muslims. After briefly introducing the basic concepts of Islamic spiritual care, I present the foundations of

music therapy in early classical Islamic sources, especially in al-Kindi, Farabi, Abu Bakr Razi, ibn Sina, and Seydi. Finally, I emphasize the implications for clinical practice with a variety of Muslims patients in Islamic spiritual care.

### **A Brief Historical Overview of Music in Islam**

The extensive work on music in the medieval Islamic era demonstrates that a rigid and radical stance against music could not prevent advancements in many areas. We are especially indebted to the efforts of Ikhwan- Safa, al-Kindi, Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakariya al-Razi or Rhazes (864–925), Farabi, ibn Sina, al-Urmawi, Maraghi, Yusuf b. Nizameddin b. Yusuf al-Rumi al-Mawlawi and others. Since the 9<sup>th</sup> century, these authors contributed to our understanding of music, examining it from the perspective of philosophy. Ikhwan al-Safa, for example, emphasized that the art of music must be analyzed within the universal understanding of morality.

We also need to note here that in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, music was especially developed in some parts of Iran, Azerbaijan, and Anatolia (Taqi Binis 1992). It is no wonder that some of the aforementioned Muslim scholars and philosophers, who engaged music in their works were either from Azerbaijan or from Ottoman Turkey. Most of these great Muslim musician scholars were related to famous Sufi chambers and attempted to develop spiritual music for the soul care. For example, Nayi Ali Mustafa Kevseri Efendi (d. 1770), who was known as Mustafa Efendi, was a Mevlevi Dervish. He was also known for his attempts to renew Turkish Music theory in his *Mecmua-i Kevseri* (Journal of Kevseri), also known as *Kitab-ı Musikar* (Popescu-Judet 1998). Another Muslim musician of Turkish origin, Nasır Abdülbaki Dede (1765–1821), was a dervish (an ascetic) from the Istanbul Yenikapı Mevlevihane (Sufi chamber of Istanbul Yenikapı). He also developed his notation system, called *Tabriyye-Tabrir-i Fî'l-Musiki*. Al-Urmawi, al-Maraghi, Muhammad b. 'Abdalhamid al-Ladiqi (d. 1485), Jalal al-Din Rumi, and many others even established their own schools of music. For example, Rumi developed *sema* music and dance, which later became known as spiritual music of the Mevlevi (Mawlawiyah) Sufi sect. In some parts of the Muslim world, these devotional songs of Sufi music are called *marfat* (in Bangladesh), *mumashshab* (in medieval Muslim

Spain), *nashid* (in Arabic), or *ilahi* (in Turkey). Some of this devotional music was composed for a specific purpose, for example to accompany *qasidas* (poems) praising Prophet Muhammad or to commemorate the tragic events in Kerbala on October 10, 680, when the Prophet's grandson Hussain was martyred. These songs are known as *jari* in Bangladesh and *marsiya* in Iran and Azerbaijan.

This brief introduction to the history of music in the Islamic world shows that many Muslim scholars and musicians developed their theories and practice under the influence of religious Sufi rites, which could also be heavily felt in the future direction of Islamic music, such as the Turkish music *Peşrev* (overture) and *Saz semaisi* (a kind of instrumental music) (Alaner 2000; Terzioğlu 1972, 24; Grebene 1978, 25; Yiğitbaş 1972, 34; Ak 1997; Güvenç 1993 and Güvenç 1985). In addition, these scholars studied the effects of music extensively, particularly 400 melodies (*maqams*), on human emotions and organs; furthermore they laid the foundations of music as a therapeutic tool, examined the relationship between language, sounds and music, and classified voice types and their impact on human health. It is also known that some of these scholars (such as Farabi and al-Urmawi) made experimental observations to describe how music affects the audience. According to Nilgün Dogrusöz (n.d.) from Istanbul Technical University, upon the threat to prohibit music in all spheres of life, with the permission of the caliph, al-Urmawi made an experimental research of the effectiveness of music on the camel, which was thirsty for forty days. In a public demonstration in Baghdad, the camel was untied and was presented water and *Nebet-i müretteb* in the *maqam* of *Zirgule*. It is reported that as soon as al-Urmawi started singing, the thirsty camel listened to al-Urmawi's performance with tears in his eyes, rather than moving towards the water. In order to prove the reliability and validity of the research, al-Urmawi performed the test three times consequently; each time, the result of the study was the same. Thus, al-Urmawi could prove that music is a natural aspect of life and should not be prohibited. Such scientific tests on music had never been attempted before.

#### **Abu Yusuf Ya‘qub ibn ‘Ishāq aş-Şabbah al-Kindi**

Al-Kindi, who was famous for his title “the philosopher of the Arabs,” was a great philosopher,

astrologer, alchemist, optician and music theorist. He attempted to integrate the views of Plato and Aristotle, and regarded Neo-Pythagorean mathematics as the basis of all science. Unfortunately, not all of his books remain for us. According to Amnon Shiloah, al-Kindi wrote two hundred and sixty-five works; however, most of them have been lost (Shiloah 2001). Nevertheless, it is generally agreed that al-Kindi developed geometrical and physiological optics, based on the *Optics* of Euclid, influenced Roger Bacon's (c. 1214–1292) *De aspectibus* via Gerard of Cremona (d. 1187) (Shiloah 2001). Al-Kindi wrote almost ten books regarding music: *Kitab al-A'zam fi al-Talif*, *Risalah fi isabi al-Zamaniyya*, *Risalah fi Sina'ati al-Akvali al-Addiyyah*, *Mubtasar al-Musiqa fi Te'lif al-Nagham wa San'at al-Ud*, *Risalah fi alMadkhal ila Sina't al-Musiqa*, *Risala fi Qismat al-Qanun*, *Risalah fi Hubr Sina'ar al-Telif*, *Kitab al-Musawwitat al-Watariyya min Zat al-Watar al-Vahid ila Zat al-Asbrat al-Antar*, *Risala fi al-Lubun wa al-Magham*, and *Risalah fi Ejza Hubriyya fi al-Musiqa*. Although six of these books are lost, four of them are still available (Turabi 1996, 38).

In his three or four works on music theory, especially in his *Risala fi hubr ta'lif al-alhan* (On the Composition of Melodies), al-Kindi explored Greek music theories and developed the Arabic music theory. For him, rhythm (*iqā'*) was a constituent part of Arabic music. In addition, al-Kindi was the first musician to provide a mathematical description of a twelve-tone chromatic scale, which was the first tuning, identified the tones of the lower and upper “octave,” and the musical qualities of tones (Turabi 1996). Based on Greek music theories and the Ebjed alphabet, in which the letters have numerical values, al-Kindi also developed his 'Ebjed Musical Notation' system. It is narrated that al-Kindi used music to help patients who were going to die, to say their last will before death.

### **Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakariya al-Razi**

Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakariya al-Razi (or Rhazes) is one of the greatest physicians in the Islamic world and of all time. He was described as “generous and gracious in his dealings with others, and most compassionate towards the poor, whom he treated free of charge and even maintained out of his own purse” (al-Razi 1950, 7). Al-Razi was well trained in the works of Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Hippocrates, Galen, Euclid, Orbasius, Paul of Aegina, and many other Greek philosophers,

mathematicians and physicians. He was also the director of Baghdad's great hospital, which was named after the Buyid ruler 'Adud al-Daula (d. 983). Arberry argues that this hospital in Baghdad was completed after al-Razi's death, in 978 (Al-Razi1950). Nevertheless, during al-Razi's life time, Baghdad was already known for its "fully equipped hospitals, well-stocked libraries, and a sound tradition of teaching and research" (al-Razi 1950, 2).

Al-Razi was especially known for his books on medicine, including the *Kitab al-Mansuri* ("Liber Almansoris"), the *Kitab al-Muluki* ("Liber Regius"), and the *Hawi*, an encyclopedia, known as the *Continents* in Latin (al-Razi 1950, 3). Like many philosophers and physicians of his time, al-Razi also wrote about the effects of music on human health.

Nevertheless, al-Razi had different views about playing musical instruments. Although he used to play the lute in his youth, later on he did not recommend playing musical instruments and argued that this activity is for youth (al-Razi 1950). However, his recommendation not to play a musical instrument in adulthood is controversial and we cannot say that he was under the conservative interpretations of music in Islam. As a freethinker and great philosopher, al-Razi was against the rigid interpretations of the Islamic tradition. In addition, he had a firm belief that music should be used for psychological distress. In his *Kitab al-Mansuri* for example, al-Razi prescribed music (listening to songs) to Amir Mansur b. Nuh b. Nasr, who was suffering from a chronic ailment, sadness and grief. He argued that music, like other recreational activities such as fishing, hunting, playing games, talking to people loved by the patient have therapeutic effects. This fact shows that for al-Razi, music could be used in the psychological treatment of mentally ill patients. Al-Razi's controversial attitude to playing musical instruments can be explained with his general dislike of excessiveness of any activity. For example, al-Razi also advocated against any recreational activities and spiritual practices that posed pain and danger to life; for example, "blood sport except when practiced against carnivorous beasts such as lions, tigers and wolves" (al-Razi 1950, 13).

**Abu Nasr Muhammad ibn Muhammad Farabi**

Abu Nasr Muhammad ibn Muhammad Farabi is known as Alfarabius in the Western world and *ustad-i Sani*, *Hâce-i Sani*, *Muallim-i Sani* (the first teacher is Aristotle) in the Muslim world. As a great Muslim philosopher, physician, psychologist, and mathematician, Farabi produced approximately one hundred and sixty works: eight of these books explored music, the power of letters and sounds. In these books, he also provided a detailed description of musical instruments, such as the lute (*'ud*), pandore (*tonbur*), flute or reed pipe (*mezmar*), oboe (*sornay*), rebec (*rababa*), lyre (*me'zafâ*) and harp (*şanj*), and their performance (Farmer 1965, 27-28; Sawa 1989, 8-20; Shiloah 1979, 104-107). Farabi can also be called a music historian because his works are reliable sources about early Islamic musical practices in Mecca, Medina, and Damascus, and also music practices during the Omayyads and the early 'Abbasid era (Sawa 1989, 14-17). However, only four of these books have survived: *Kitab ihşâ' al-'ulum*, *Kitab al-iqa'at*, *Kitab ihşâ' al-iqa'at* (on rhythms), and *Kitab al-Musiqa al-Kabir* (The Great Book of Music), which is one of the most influential books on music (Sawa 1983-84, 32).

He wrote his *Kitab al-Musiqa al-Kabir* at the request of Abu Ja'far Muḥammad b. al-Qasem Karkî, the vizier of the caliph al-Razi (d. 329/940), who asked Farabi to write a book about the science of music according to the ancient Greek theorists. In this book Farabi explored the Greek works and found serious weaknesses in Greek theories about music. However, he also included the fact that these weaknesses presented in the books may also be due to the poor quality of the translation (Sawa 1989, 14). Besides the Greek works on music, Farabi also explored Islamic sources, particularly Khalil b. Ahmed, al-Kindi's and Işâq Mawşeli (d. 235/850), a famous singer, lutist, composer and theorist of his time. Farabi argued that their works contained serious shortcomings with regard to music theory and techniques. For example, according to Farabi, al-Kindi failed to have a critical approach to Greek music theory and analyzed how the terms, concepts and paradigms of arithmetic, Euclidean geometry, Aristotelian logic, architecture and textile, civil and mechanical engineering, politics, Arabic grammar, phonology, prosody, poetics, rhetoric, and Qur'anic sciences influenced music theory. Also, Işâq Mawşeli could not produce well-established music theory and technique because he did not have the philosophical training which could equip him with the proper

methodologies and logical approach in his works. Therefore, in his *Kitab al-Musiqa al-Kabir*, Farabi developed the theory of music, and was selective with regard to his approach to the Greek works on music: he selected Greek works that were relevant to Middle Eastern art and culture. On his contribution to music, Seyyed Hossein Nasir and Mehdi Aminrazavi state:

‘he (Farabi) was a master of music theory; his *Kitab al-Musiqa al-Kabir* (The Book on Great Music), known in the West as a book on Arabic music, is in reality a study of the theory of Persian music of his day as well as presenting certain great philosophical principle about music, its cosmic qualities, and its influence on the soul (Nasr and Aminrazavi 2007, 135).

In addition to exploring music as a science, Farabi also explored music as one of the branches of practical knowledge and its effect on the soul (for him, logic, metaphysics, etc., are the theoretical sciences; whereas, music, politics, mathematics, moral sciences are the practical ones).

As a musician Farabi could make his audience laugh, cry, and sleep against their will. Farabi did not support the theory of this time that argued for the connection between musical sounds and numbers or celestial/zodiacal signs. This perspective was widely present in the works of Ikhwan al-Safa and al-Kindi (Turabi 2004, iii). Farabi also explored the effects of the Adhan and “prescribed” the following *maqams* after five daily prayers because of their impact on human emotions: *Rehavi* and *Hüseyni* after the morning prayer; *Rast* after the sun rise, *Zengule* in the middle of the afternoon, *Neva* after the evening prayer, *Buzurg* after the late night prayer, and *Zirefkand* before going to bed. For him, *Rast* gives happiness and calmness (*sefa, nese, buzur*); *Rehavi* – the feelings of eternity (*beka*); *Küçük* - the feelings of empathy (*hassasiyet; duyarlılık*); *Büzürk* – the feelings of fear and hesitation (*khauf, çekinme, sakınma*); *Isfahan*—the motion and the feelings of trust (*güven*); *Neva* – the feelings of flavor, taste and freshness (*lezzet; ferahlık*); *Ussak*—the desire of mirth, laughter (*gülme; 'dilbek'*); *Ziryule*—the desire to sleep (*uyku; 'nevm'*), *Saba*—the feelings of strength and courage (*ecaat; cesaret; kuvvet*); *Buselik*—the strength; *Hüseyni*—the feelings of peace, relaxation (*sulh; sükunet; rahatlık*); and *Hicaz*—the desire of humbleness (*tevazu; alçak gönüllülük*) (Reseptif Müzik Terapi, Türk Musikisini Arastırma ve Tanıtma Grubu n.d.).

Farabi’s works influenced the medieval and contemporary genres of music in the Middle East: *avaç, tasnif* (in Persian music), *mowāššah, mammal, layali* and *taqsim* (in Arabic music), and *peşrev*,



*semi*, *gazel* and *taksim* (in Turkish music). Therefore, after al-Kindi, Farabi is considered the second great Muslim scholar with his contributions to the field. What makes Farabi especially important is his contribution to the role of the music as a therapeutic tool in the treatment of diseases. According to *Emraz-ı Rubiye-i Nagamat-ı Musikiye* of the physician Gevrekzade Hafız Hasan bin Ahmed, Farabi used music in his practice of medicine before Hoca Nasireddin Tusi, Hoca Abdulummin Sofi ve al-Urmawi. In this regard, Ibn Sina also followed Farabi's lead and called the perspective that defends the idea of the connection between sounds, numbers and zodiacal signs an 'old perspective' (Ibn Sina 2004, 1).

### **Ibn Sina**

Ibn Sina was under the direct influence of Farabi. However, he also independently developed a systematic music theory. It is narrated that at the age of 17, Ibn Sina studied all branches of science and said: "Here is the human: where are the other branches of science?" However, when he attempted to practice music, he said: "This is the science; where is the human?" (Turabi 2004, v; Shehadi 1993, 68). This is a simple demonstration of the importance Ibn Sina gave to music. Ibn Sina's analysis of music was independent from his works on philosophy and medicine; however, like al-Kindi, he analyzed music from a psychological perspective, but also presented music as the third branch of mathematics (Ibn Sina 2004, 6). It is no wonder that he organized his chapter on music under the section of mathematics in his *Kitab al-Shifa*.

Ibn Sina's views on music are mainly explained in his encyclopedic works such as: *Javamiu Ilmi al-Musiqa* in *Kitab al-Shifa*; *Muhtasar fi Ilm al-Musiqa* in *Kitab al-Nejat*; the music chapter in *Danish-name-i 'Alai*. In addition, he also wrote about music in his books such as *Risalah fi al-Huruf*; *Risalah fi al-Nafs*; *Risalah fi Bayani Aksam al-Kikmetiyyah wa al-Aqliyya*; and *al-Qanun fi al-Tibb*. According to Ibn-i Sina, music plays an important role in medicine. He is famous for his saying that "*Inter omnia exserviatia sanitatis cantane melius est*" (singing is the best practice to protect health) (Shehadi 1993, 75). He wrote that one of the most effective ways of treatment of disease is to increase the rational and spiritual strength of the patient and develop his sense of courage to overcome the disease. In order to

achieve this goal, he suggested listening to music and arranging visits from individuals the patient loved and preferred (Avicenna 1956).

For Ibn Sina, the impact of music on human health is strongly related to the effects of sounds, because sound is inherent in human nature and carries several functions, including delivering the message of needs (such as a need for protection, sex, and joy) (Ibn Sina 2004, 3). Nevertheless, what makes music different from animal sounds is that humans attach additional meaning to music with the words of the song (Turabi 2004, vii). Ibn Sina also argued that the harmony of sounds attracts and influences the spirit for many reasons.

### Seydi

As we have mentioned in the Introduction, many Muslim scholars and musicians used music as a spiritual tool to achieve perfection of personality or spirituality and achieve enlightenment. One of these musicians is the medieval Turkish musician Seydi, who said:

Explain the enigmas of the science of modal cycles (*'ilm-i edvar*), make clear the subtle details of the melodic modes (*makamat*).  
Out of the place where the musicians (*ehl-perde*) uncover the secret,  
come forth, you too, from that place, begin (*agbaḡ eyle*) making music (*saḡ*),  
so that you will learn the basic forms of the melodic modes (*makamatın usulu*),  
(and) how many ways there are from the starting point to the end.  
Those who have come to partake intimately of burning love  
should listen to the voice of music  
until they drown the blazing fire with their tears,  
and capture a moment of tranquility within the state of bewilderment (*sburidelik*) (Seydi 2004, 5).

Seydi practiced Sufism and recommended that those who want to study music must "earnestly don the robe of asceticism (*riyazet cubbesi*)", because "this science (*'ilm*) (endowed) with passion (*beva'i*), ascetics (*ehl-i riyazet*) discover this beneficence" (Seydi 2004, 5). In this regard he follows his predecessors, especially al-Urmawi, whom he presents as Shaikh Safiyuddin 'Abdulmu'min, who used music as an aid for ascetic discipline (Seydi 2004, 23). He also describes how Omar Ibn-i Bahr al-Jahiz, another great Sufi musician, used to listen to music with the ear of his heart and soul. Seydi explained the relationship between Sufi practice and music by arguing that it is important to give music its due rights, because it "had emerged from the gateway of love (*'ishk*

*devazesi*)" (Seydi 2004, 9).

Seydi also wrote on the therapeutic effect of music on health. He said that people listen to music in order "to assuage his pain with (this cup) (*shusak*) of (medicine)" (Seydi 2004, 9). He mentions that Shaikh Dik Ebu 'n-Nik requested him to teach the science of music to his daughter, whose name was Dilshad: Shaikh Dik Ebu 'n-Nik believed that music is a medicine and would cure her.

The therapeutic effect of music is explained with "the different modes, and which mode is connected to which planet (*ildiz*), which mode is related to which zodiacal sign (*burj*), which has the quality of earth (*hake*) or water (*abi*) and which of wind (*bazj*) or fire (*ateshi*), which is hot (*germ*) or cold (*serd*), and which dry (*hosbk*) or moist (*ter*), so that her life may be improved, and her existence become sweeter" (Seydi 2004, 15). For Seydi, Farabi and al-Urmawi extensively explained this therapeutic importance of music. However, as we have mentioned before, Farabi and Ibn Sin refuted the idea that there is a connection between the zodiacal signs and music even though such opinion was present in the works of Ikhwan al-Safa and al-Kindi. Nevertheless, the underlying argument is that the origin of music is divine. For example, Seydi writes: "the Most Exalted and Glorious God (*Hakk-i Subhanehu ve te 'ala*), when creating the celestial spheres (*felekler*), ordered them to circle around (*donmek*), and when they rotated the sounds (*avazeler*) came into being" (Seydi 2004, 21).

Seydi divided the sounds into songs worldly (*aghani*) and spiritual (*ruhani*). For him the origin of music evolved from those spiritual sounds (*ruhani avazeler*) (Seydi 2004, 23). Therefore, the human spirit likes music because "the souls (*can*) have heard these sounds in the world of the spirits (*'alam-i ernal*)" (Seydi 2004, 25). Seydi also cautioned against the indifferent attitude to music and he called these people far from any spirituality: "if someone hears beautiful voices (*hub-avaz*) and the moving playing of instruments (*suz-saz*), and is not affected (*mute'essir*), this indicates that the spirituality (*ruhaniyyet*) of that person is not preponderant (*galib*), but rather that his animal nature (*hayvaniyye*) prevails" (Seydi 2004, 25).

### **The Implications of Classical Studies on Music in Patient Care**

In medieval times, a number of Muslim hospitals, such as Adudi Hospital in Baghdad, Mansuri Hospital in Qahira, Nuri Hospital in Sham, Gevher Nesibe Hospital and Giyaseddin Keyhusrev Medical School in Kayseri (1206), Keykavus Hospital in Sivas (1217), Hospital of Turan Melik in Divriği (1228), Gök School or Pervane Bey Hospital in Tokat (1275), Atabey Ferruh Hospital in (1235) Çankırı, Ali b. Pervane Hospital in Kastamonu (1272) used music therapy in patient care. According to Evliya Çelebi (1611-1682), since the Seljuk dynasty there had been various health centers in Anatolian cities such as Edirne, Kayseri, Sivas, Amasya, Manisa, and Bursa, where music therapy was used extensively in treatments (Çelebi 1896/1938). For example, the hospital in the city of Sham in Syria, built by the Seljuk ruler Nureddin Mahmud Zengi (1118-1174) known as the Just Ruler (*al-amir al-adil*), required doctors to apply music therapy in his hospital (Terzioğlu 1982).

It was during the Ottoman Empire that music as therapy reached its culmination (Terzioğlu 1985, 16). Evliya Çelebi mentions that in Edirne, Sultan Bayazid II built the state hospital (*dariyyisifa* – the houses of healing) in 1488, where water sound and music therapy were regular prescriptions in the treatment of diseases, particularly in the treatment of mental illnesses. On different days of the week, the music therapy team of the hospital performed for the patients. The doctors, who were also well trained in the effects of music on human health, observed how different melodies (*maqams*) affected the heartbeat or which melody was suitable for various illnesses. It was generally accepted that the *maqam Isfahan* benefited patients who suffer from memory problems; the *maqam Rehavi* was good in the treatment of anxiety; and the *maqam Kuchi* was good in the treatment of depressive thoughts and dysthymia. Çelebi also reports that another famous ruler of the Ottoman Empire, Bayezid Veli established his own charity hospital and appointed ten musicians, who played in flute (*ney*), string musical instruments such as *santur*, *keman*, *çengi*, *ud*, for patients at least three times a week. Çelebi claimed that patients benefited from various *maqams*, especially from the *maqams Zengule* and *Buselik*.

All these classical Islamic sources on the effect of music on human health encourage Islamic spiritual care practitioners to use music as a way to cope with some of the symptoms of

disease and side effects of their treatment. In addition to the aforementioned Islamic music, contemporary Islamic music by Yusuf Islam, Sami Yusuf, Mahir Zain and others can also be used to help Muslim patients overcome their distress and illness. Nevertheless, we need new research to support the idea that listening to Islamic music treats anxiety, pain, mood, quality of life, heart rate, respiratory rate, and blood pressure in patients.

### **Conclusion**

Classical Muslim scholars gave importance to music for its role in the health of the human soul. They laid the foundation for professional music therapy and explained the rules and ethics of music. Based on their empirical and philosophical explanation of music, in medieval times many Muslim hospitals hired professional music therapists to serve as part of patient care teams. Any financial expenses related to music therapy were covered by charitable organizations or by the state. Based on their experiences, music is a valuable tool in Islamic spiritual care in order to bring about a significant improvement in the emotional, spiritual, mental and physical health of patients.

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