Musical Sound and Contextual Input: A Performance Model For Musical Analysis

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Introduction[1]

During the struggle for an appropriate paradigm, ethnomusicologists experienced a brief phase of fascination with theoretical models and deductive modes of thinking, mostly proffered by the few trained anthropologists in the field. The immediate need for establishing the discipline, however,—as well as a **sine qua non** for testing theories—was ethnographic: to discover and refine the very special skills required for understanding peoples' music in terms appropriate to them. The resulting commitment to experiential, humanistic, inductive modes of explanation and expression is entirely appropriate to the quality of experience that is inherent in the study of music making. This commitment, however, is hardly weakened by a continuing search for explanatory tools that may serve the equally legitimate goals of comparison and generalization.

This paper is an attempt to isolate such a toolkit, or model, from the particular study it helped to generate. I developed this model for the study of *qawwali*, the music of the Sufi assembly of India and Pakistan (Qureshi 1981b, 1982, 1986.)[2] In my analysis of *qawwali* I found the model capable of integrating the very diverse facets of this multi-layered performance tradition, comprising a rich performance idiom—music and text—, and its performance context—a complex interplay between religious ideology and socio-economic factors. This integration made possible the discovery of "common denominators" between *qawwali* music and context, which in turn led to the isolation of "operating principles" that govern their relationship. I found that testing a consistent explanatory tool on diverse *qawwali* performances yielded results that satisfy the need for a thorough understanding of a particular performance event while also leading toward the goal of appropriate generalisation. The real validity of such a tool, however, can only be ascertained by testing it in application to other, related performance genres, if not to other kinds of music, including music of the Western tradition. It is with this broader goal in view that I wish to put my approach to scrutiny, by presenting it here in outline form. While examples

from Sufi music will be used as illustration where needed, this is not meant to be a paper on Sufi music. The specific results of my application of the model to Sufi music are presented elsewhere (Qureshi 1986).

Theoretical positions have their antecedents, and theorizing means joining the ongoing discourse of one's discipline. While I would like to keep the argument uncluttered, I also wish to acknowledge the intellectual sources that helped to create it and situate it vis-a-vis the work of others, hence the introductory review. If the entire presentation appears unduly positivistic, cold and unsubtle, this is the price being paid here for reducing to a "recipe" the complexities and contradictions of experience, human and musical. And if model building and theorizing at times appear cumbersome substitutes for empathy and common sense, it is the price paid for turning the recipe into a replicable and portable abstraction. Finally, if the language of this presentation appears pedestrian if not pedantic, that is the price I am paying for precise and unambiguous expression, an essential ingredient in theorizing.

The Argument

If ethnomusicology has a paradigm it might read something like "Music is a system of sound communication with a social use and a cultural context." Such a system can be analysed in terms of its sound structure only, and the results may either point to universal features of music or they may identify musical characteristics particular to cultural regions, periods, or styles. They may even lead to inferences about semantic meaning at the level of structure, i.e., relational meaning. But what analysing music in purely abstract structural terms does not provide, is an understanding of the dynamic that motivates the production of music, i.e., the meaning or significance of the sound system in terms of the social use and cultural context—referential meaning in the widest sense of the word. Yet much musical experience does raise this fundamental question about the nature of music: how does musical sound become meaningful outside of itself?

While meaning systems for music can be found embodied in aesthetic theories, the testing ground for the communication of such meaning is performance, the area of specific interfacing of context with music. To inquire whether, and how, such meaning actually operates in performance means, in formal terms, to test the following hypothesis: "Musical sound will vary with variation in the context of its performance." Such an undertaking requires an analytical model capable of representing on one side the musical sound structure and on the other, the structure of the performance occasion. On that basis the contextual input into the music can then be assessed through an analysis of the performance process. Ideally, the resulting "grammar" should enable a musically literate reader to understand how

variation in performance is generated, or how, abstractly, he could generate such variation himself.

In substance, this intention conforms to one of the major aims pursued by anthropologists, namely to focus on systems of communication as cultural knowledge used and realized in behavioral application. Here, however, that anthropological aim is directed at music, a system of sound communication with very special properties which requires equally special analytical procedures. Such procedures have been developed and applied to music by musicologists.[3]

Within the purview of ethnomusicological writings, such an approach shares common ground with studies which situate music within a holistic paradigm focusing on musical performance (Frisbie, A. Seeger, Feld and Stone). My approach differs from them insofar as my primary focus is on the musical sound idiom. Ethnomusicologists have generally tended to reserve such a focus for art music tradition (Powers, Malm, Becker), an analogy with Western musicological analysis. In incorporating a musicological focus into an anthropological paradigm, I am addressing a major theoretical concern of ethnomusicological inquiry (Etzkorn 1974, Asch 1982). That concern is to show, in a testable way, how the inclusion of the contextual dimension is indeed indispensable to gaining a full understanding of musical sound, and how the extra-musical meanings inherent in musical sound give music the power to affect its context in turn.

The Tools

The task at hand is threefold: 1) to analyse the sound idiom as a self-contained rule system for generating music in performance; 2) to identify the context of performance, the total situation in which this music is produced, and to understand its social and cultural dynamics; 3) so as to relate the performance context to the music in a way that will identify the contextual input into the musical sound.

This is a standard ethnomusicological program of action. Appropriate analytical procedures for carrying out such a program, however, are still being negotiated, mainly around two key issues. One is the issue of how to analyse a musical sound idiom in terms appropriate to its properties and structure. The second issue is how to relate context to sound system from an overall analytical perspective which is compatible with both domains. Each of these needs to be resolved in order to make a contextual analysis work.

To deal first with musical sound analysis: Notwithstanding theoretical debates about the appropriateness of a Western, or indeed of any representational system for music (C. Seeger 1957, 1958) ethnomusicologists generally base their musical analyses on a Western musicological framework, using its notational and terminological system as a descriptive metalanguage.

Beginning with Schenker, recent expansions of this framework in response to new analytical needs and to new music (Schenker 1954, 1956, Yeston 1977, Narmour 1977, Beach 1983, Cogan and Escott 1976) have opened new opportunities for dealing with culturally diverse musical phenomena.

Linguistic models, while overrated initially (Feld 1974), add a useful dimension to this metalanguage, especially for the structuring of musical utterances and also for eliciting musical concepts. Although the formidable descriptive apparatus of linguistics has found only limited application, concepts of linguistics, both structural and generative, have enhanced the analytical arsenal for non-Westerns music. Examples are Blacking (1971), Becker and Becker (1979), and Vetter (1981) who provide application of a "language-parole" or generative model, while Powers established "grammatical" rules for raga music from "minimal units" established on the basis of phonetic-phonemic distinctions (1958) to syntactic processes (1977, n.d.).

But a metalanguage, however appropriate, needs to be applied according to valid criteria. Of the two theoretical positions that have generated such criteria, the universalist stance, based on structuralism and elucidated extensively by Nattiez (1975), has yet to lead to convincing applications to music outside the Western musical tradition. The second position arose directly from the experience of "practicing" ethnomusicologists—including indigenous scholars with Western training—who studied non-Western music intensively and discovered what anthropologists and linguists (Pike 1972) had postulated earlier for other cultural systems (Conklin 1955, Frake 1961): namely that music is based on culture-specific principles and must be analysed according to the culture's own criteria. Hence, a culture's own conceptualizations about music can best serve to build a framework for the analysis of specific musical genres or idioms within that culture area.

Predictably, this premise has been applied to some art music traditions where musical parameters have been conceptualized and verbalized, and are thus accessible to the analyst in terms of an indigenous music theory. Applying this premise beyond art music, however, Zemp (1978, 1979), Feld (1982) and others (Ames and King 1971, Stone 1982) show that indigenous musical conceptions can be discovered even in cultures without an explicit music theory. These scholars brought to the study of music an anthropological approach to verbally articulated categories—derived ultimately from linguistic models—and thereby added rigor as well as breadth to the ethnography of music. What is yet required is to build from such culture-specific musical concepts and categories a coherent analytical framework for dealing with the musical sound idiom as a whole.

Students of Indic music, fortuitously, already have such a framework available, since Indian musical theory has its own, long-established set of

principles for describing and analysing musical sound. In accord with Brahminical scholarly tradition, successive reinterpretations of such sources have resulted in a theoretical edifice covering dimension of melody (pitch and pitch relationships), of rhythm (pulse and duration) and of form (structure and composition). Given the primacy of vocal music and of the melodic line in Indian art music, with the rhythmic dimension articulated separately through drumming, it follows that Indian music theory has primarily focused on the analysis of pitch. Basic concepts cover pitch classes as constituents of an acoustically movable framework of pitch relationships, with special emphasis on the classification and articulation of these pitch relationships. Duration is dealt with in parallel terms, though with less elaboration. Concepts of formal structure are derived from the units of song text structure and include principles of combining such units. Both melodic outlines and rhythmic structures are preserved in the form of a rudimentary system of notation using letter symbols, but a body of music in notation is largely lacking.

The cross-fertilization between Indology and Western musical scholarship has resulted in the development of Indic Musicology, enhanced by a new emphasis on musical practice and on the description or analysis of actual music in terms of an appropriate theoretical conception (Bhatkhande 1953–55, Sambhamoorthy 1960–1969, Jairazbhoy 1971, Stewart 1974, Powers 1970, 1977). As a result, the broad outlines of a descriptive analytical framework have now largely been worked out for Indian classical music on the basis of musicians' own verbalized theory and amplified, as well as standardized, with reference to classical Indian scholarship (Powers 1980a). In general, the compatibility between Indian and Western musical parameters facilitate interchange between Indian and Western musicology, as well as input from other Western disciplines, leading to more refined analyses of Indian musical structure.

This theoretical framework of Indic musicology constitutes an appropriate tool for analysing the music of particular South Asian performing traditions. At the same time, such music must be considered as a distinct idiom, not to be subsumed within Indian art music which generated the theoretical framework. The only way to avoid imposing even the appropriate categories of indigenous art music in an inappropriate way is to follow careful eliciting and verification procedures based on intensive musical study and participation. For the many "professionalized" traditions, like Sufi music, such elicitation is facilitated by the fact that the musicians are hereditary performers with a tradition of teaching and talking about their music in terms compatible with art music. Hence most musical conceptions are available literally for the asking.

The second key issue, how to relate the context with the sound system from a mutually compatible analytical perspective, arises from a "prob-

lematic" which has always been inherent in studies of musical context: their inability to deal satisfactorily with musical sound. Informed by anthropological or sociological theory and method, such studies initially centered on the uses and function of music, but did not incorporate the music itself into their analytical scheme.[4] Either they did not deal with musical sound analytically (McAllester 1954), or analysed it according to strictly Western criteria unrelated to the contextual analysis (Merriam 1967). A growing concern with cultural appropriateness and ethnographic rigor, influenced by developments in cognitive anthropology, sociolinguistics and folklore, led to the analytical separation of conceptual and behavioral levels of musical context (Asch 1975a). Thus music is being investigated as a cognitive system of conceptions rendered meaningful by their linkage with other socio-cultural norms and institutions or practices (Frisbie 1967, 1980, Blum 1975, Blacking 1971, 1973, 1979). More important, such culture-specific knowledge about music serves as a necessary tool for a culturally appropriate interpretation of the behavioral domain of music: the performance context (McLeod 1971, Herndon 1971, Asch 1975b). In this "ethnography of communication" approach to music the focus is on the concept of the musical occasion as "a cultural and social entity that includes music but also the totality of associated behaviors and underlying concepts" (Herndon 1971:339). Studies of specific performance traditions demonstrate the potential of "emic" analysis, i.e., applying an indigenous conceptual framework to the interpretation of behavior. Furthermore, such analyses are being extended to deal with behavorial choices in the decision-making process of participants in the musical occasion, thus contributing to an understanding of the dynamic of context (Herndon and Brunyate 1976, McLeod and Herndon 1980, Stone 1982).

The ethnographic model of the performance occasion is appropriate to the many types of musical assembly, including the assembly for Sufi music in the Indian sub-continent. They in fact, constitute what Indic anthropology has identified as a "cultural performance" (Singer 1972:148f), that characteristic institution central to Indian society because it presents "encapsulated expressions" of its forms and values. The fact that this very "cultural performance" concept contributed seminally to the formation of the ethnography-of-performance approach in ethnomusicology, makes Indian musical performance traditions appear particularly suitable for such an analysis although, curiously, the approach has rarely been applied to them.

The musical sound system, however, finds no more than partial inclusion in most anthropologically oriented studies. A few significant exceptions (A. Seeger 1980, Asch 1975a) indicate that there are musical rules which are derivable from features of the performance setting, both in an im-

mediate and wider cultural sense, thus providing concrete evidence that music and context are indeed related. However, they scarcely account for all the musical sounds in a performance, and without such an account, our understanding of the musical sound idiom must remain incomplete.

Clearly, an analysis of musical performance based on context alone, leaves a gap in the analysis of musical sound, a gap which can only be filled by means of a compatible framework for music analysis. In other words, what is needed is a synthesis between the approaches inspired by musicology and anthropology, between sound-oriented and context-oriented ethnomusicology. Such a synthesis presupposes a single conceptual framework so that both music and context can be analysed in a way compatible with one another. If ethnomusicology appears as yet to lack such a framework, it is due to its dual disciplinary underpinnings, but also because sophisticated musical ethnography, just emerging, is only beginning to call for theoretical refinement.

In summary, two kinds of tools have been found useful for the analysis which I propose. First, there are tools for understanding the rule system of the musical sound system, using systematic eliciting from musicians on the basis of indigenous musicological concepts as adapted to a Western musicological frame of reference. Second, there are tools for analysing the context of performance, in terms of both concepts and behavior, structure and process, using anthropological theory and methods of eliciting and observation. In order to use these tools together, a single analytical scheme is required, so that both music and context can be analysed in a mutually compatible way. Such an analytic framework can be generated from anthropological theory, but it needs to be extended, and endowed with a concrete methodology that is compatible with the special needs of music analysis. In short, the approach has to be truly ethnomusicological.

The Model

An essential condition for building an analytical model that should provide testable procedures and replicable results is conceptual clarity. This is especially important for the study of musical performance where two different sets of assumptions have traditionally governed the different elements to be analysed together. To begin with, then, the analysis of musical sound must be subjected to the same assumptions as the analysis of its context. The following assumptions, derived from anthropological theory, constitute for me a starting base for an ethnomusicological analysis of musical performance:

Assumption 1. The analysis should focus on what can be tested: the observable. Observable music is the complex of sound a musician makes, and its observable context is the performance situation in which he makes

them. Hence, analysing the relationship of the two requires dealing with behavior in very specific terms, musical as well as non musical.[5]

Assumption 2. The conceptual domain is analytically distinct from the domain of behavior, with a dialectical relationship obtaining between them. The implication significant for analysing the behavioral realm is that concepts inform behavior and can therefore serve as a key to analysing behavior. But a norm is not per se a practice.[6]

Assumption 3. Music, too, has a conceptual and a behavioral dimension; access to the conceptions underlying a musical idiom can be used to analyse its behavioral unfolding in performance. An indigenous music theory provides direct access to appropriate musical parameters for such an analysis. But functional conceptions underlie all music making, they only need to be discovered and the metalanguage for musical analysis expanded accordingly.[7]

On the basis of these three assumptions an analytical approach may be delineated which includes the dimension of both context and music, dealing with each at the conceptual level of structure and then at the level of process where structure is realized behaviorally. What remains to be clarified is the question of how to deal analytically with the dynamic that underlies any process per se, including the process of music making. This requires stating a final assumption regarding process and its analysis:

Assumption 4. Process means making structure operational. It constitutes the behavioral realization of concepts. But process, no matter how culturally and socially complex, originates in individual human action which is based upon individual strategy or motivation and dependent on the individual's vantage point in the situation. From this perspective, the process of a musical performance results from the interplay of such action (i.e., inter-action) by two kinds of participants: those who "operationalize" music, and those who "operationalize" context—i.e., performer and audience. Thus the key to understanding musical sound in its process of performance is to analyse it from the vantage point of the performer, since it is his action that takes the form of musical sound production, and it is through his perceptions that the actions of the audience affect the music.[8]

Incorporating these assumptions into the analytical approach results in a model which may serve as the framework or blueprint for the proposed analysis. As schematized in Figure 1, it also accounts for the fact that musical and contextual structures are informed by sociocultural background dimension, while the musical-contextual interaction process, based on the strategy of the participants, is informed by their own vantage point or self-interest.

It now remains to make this analytical framework operational, i.e., to translate the blueprint into a concrete analytical procedure. Substantively,

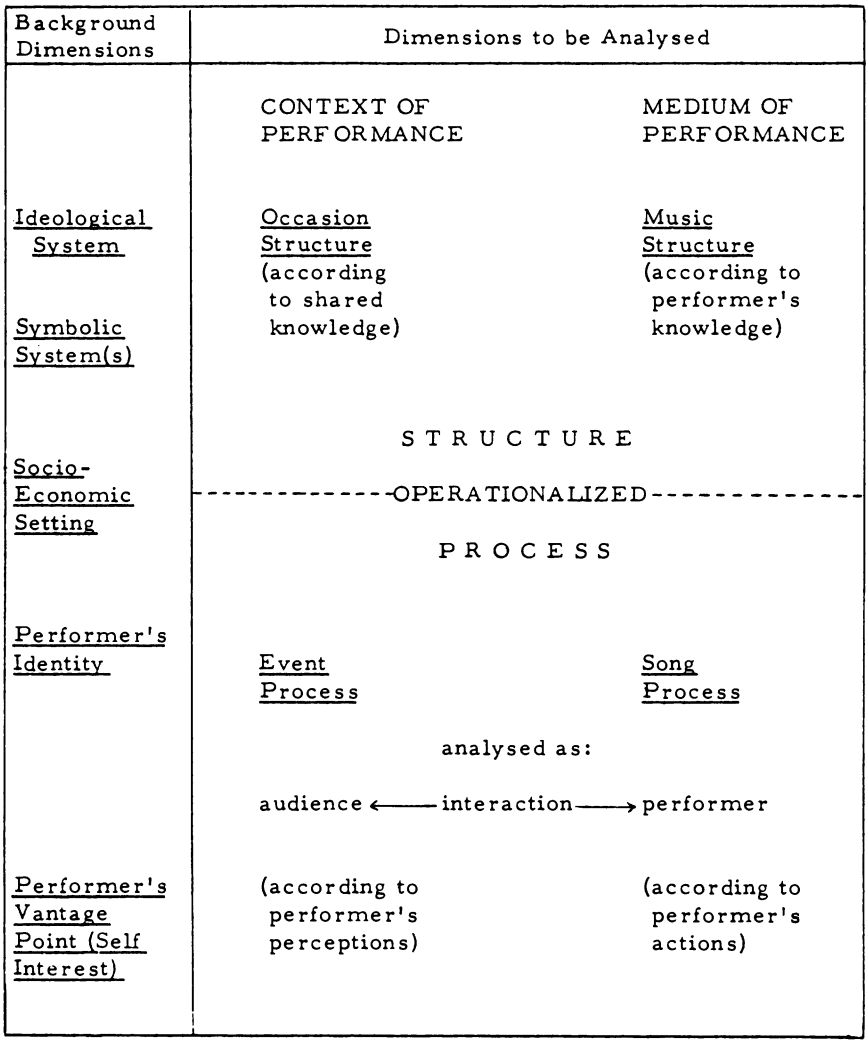


Figure 1: Analytical Model

this procedure comprises two stages: the first one addresses structure, the second, process. But the actual analysis must proceed in three steps:

Step 1 is the analysis of the musical idiom as a structure consisting of musical units and rules for their combination, in the sense of a formal grammar.

Step 2, logically parallel to Step 1, is an examination of the perfor-

mance context as a structure, consisting of units and rules of behavior. This also needs to include a consideration of the larger cultural and social structure behind the specific performance occasion which gives sense to it.

Step 3 is the actual analysis of the performance process. This requires switching to the vantage point of the performer, the music maker, who converts the musical structure into a process of sound performance on the basis of his apprehension of all the factors relevant to the performance context. Once charted, this context-music interaction is then reduced to its underlying principles so as to identify the contextual constraints operating on the music during the performance. The ultimate goal is to incorporate these into what should amount to a context-sensitive grammar of the music. Such a grammar should account for the total process of music production and make possible the testing of the initial hypothesis (i.e., musical sound will vary with variation in the context of performance).

Before proceeding with the analysis it is necessary to present a capsule description of Sufi music in order to render the exemplification comprehensible. Sufi music, in its dominant South Asian form, takes the form of a recognized musical genre called *qawwali*. A lead singer heads a small vocal group accompanied by drum, harmonium and rhythmic clapping in a continuous sequence of mystical poems which are sung in a fluid responsorial style, characterized by repetition and improvisation. The Sufi assembly, performance occasion for *qawwali*, is a gathering held under a spiritual leader for the purpose of listening to this music in order to achieve a spiritual experience of ecstasy. The Sufi devotees respond spontaneously, but in accordance with religious and social convention, expressing states of mystical love. The musicians, on their part, structure their performance to activate and reinforce their listener's emotions, while also attempting to elicit offerings which represent their remuneration.

The Music Analysis

In order to achieve the larger analytical goal, the music analysis needs to be structured in such terms as to satisfy two essential requirements. One is accessibility to tests of verification, replication and comparison; the other is usability and manipulability in the context of a broader analytical perspective that includes non-musical variable. This requires that basic musicological assumptions be clarified, especially as regards the input from indigenous music theory.

Given the logical priority of the analyst's categories, the basic musical concepts and terminology to be used in this analysis are Western, as is the system of notation. Indigenous musical concepts, when used, are noted and identified as such, but rendered ultimately in terms of a Western framework consisting of a set of four musical parameters: pitch, duration, formal

structure and acoustic articulation. The last parameter approximates what is more conventionally termed "performance style" (Nettl 1964); the term "acoustic articulation" is chosen to clearly set apart features of performance style which are part of the musical sound against other, non-musical aspects of performance presentation.

Since the analysis is based on the interpretation of indigenous musical concepts, it is also necessary to present these in their original form—or rather, their indigenous form as apprehended by the analyst; this provides ethnographic evidence so as to give the reader better access to verification. I chose to summarize this evidence in a set of appendices, to be read in conjunction with the tables which contain my own analysis of this musical data.

At the level of musical description it is quite possible to identify the features of *qawwali*—or indeed of any musical idiom—in terms of its musical parameters. However, the result would show *qawwali* music differing in only a few respects from a number of other musical idioms of the larger region, i.e., Northern India, without accounting for those features that identify *qawwali* music particularly. The fact is that musical structures are not unique to single communities or styles. Rather, they are generalized systems of sound communication which are used throughout a "musical area,"[9] often transcending linguistic, regional, religious or ethnic boundaries. Within that common musical frame of reference, different musical idioms exist side by side, serving different purposes in different contexts of performance. To the extent that they share that common musical frame of reference, these idioms may be said to be mutually intelligible in terms of the overall musical sound structure. What distinguishes them from one another, and thus identifies any particular musical idiom, are one or more individual musical features related to, or associated with the idiom's particular function or context of use.[10] Indeed, these may be said to constitute the "distinctive features"[11] of such a musical idiom.

To reflect this musical reality appropriately, I propose that the analysis of a particular musical idiom like *qawwali* should consist of two stages. In the first stage the musical structure is identified in terms of the larger frame of reference—for *qawwali* this in North Indian music. For this purpose elements of pitch, duration, and formal structure are analysed separately, along with the organizing principles which govern those sound elements. For if music is organized sound, it is the principles of musical organization that render the elements intelligible. Indeed, these organizing principles, once identified, may provide a key to test the very isolation or definition of those elements—or "minimal units"—of the music in question.[12] In accordance with these premises, I have dealt with pitch duration and form by establishing for each parameter first the frame of reference and the units of

organization, and then the principles of structuring that are applies to those units within their frame of reference.

The second stage in the analysis of the musical structure consists of identifying those musical features that distinguish the musical "dialect" of the particular performance tradition—*qawwali*—from the common musical "language" background of North Indian song. This means that a procedure for isolating distinctive or characteristic features of that idiom must be incorporated into the music analysis. For *qawwali*, I found that the key to such a procedure lies in the specific function of the music. The basis for such a claim is that *qawwali* participants themselves identify the musical features of *qawwali* in terms of their association with its function; indeed, it is this very association which makes such feature distinctive to them. Thus the musicological model had to be expanded to accommodate contextual or functional "clues" that lead to the derivation of distinctive musical features for *qawwali*.

The first step in this process, then, is to define the function of the musical idiom in terms of its components and then to isolate these functional constraints as they relate to their functional basis. Then it can be shown how these constraints operate on the musical framework, and how they are manifested in specific musical traits.

The function of *qawwali* music, in accordance with its place in the ideology of Sufism, is to serve the presentation of mystical poetry in order to arouse mystical emotion in an assembly of listeners with spiritual needs which are both diverse and changing. Three basic components characterize this function: 1) arousing, 2) use of texts, 3) diverse listeners. For systematic presentation, these functional components need to be isolated so that each can be linked to the contextual constraints it generates. It can then be shown how each of these constraints operates on the musical framework in specific musical terms. Figure 2 illustrates in summary form the relationship between function, contextual constraints and musical idiom for the musical parameter of rhythm.

Having arrived at an inventory of musical units and rules for their combination by putting together both Musical Frame of Reference and Distinctive Features, it remains for this structure to become operational. What is needed is a blueprint potentially capable of generating what constitute a standard "item of performance." For *qawwali*, this can best be represented by a "roadmap" (to borrow a popular musician's term) for the formal structuring of a complete *qawwali* song, based on the sequential structure of the song text. Given the structural flexibility of these songs—which derives from their function to serve diverse and changing audience needs—, such a roadmap can be no more than an abstraction in the form of a minimal song

Functional Components and Requirements		Musical Execution: Distinctive Features
1. Spiritual Arousal	a) Supply strong rhythmic framework	Duration: -meter with regular and frequent stress repeat
	b) Supply strong stress pattern	Acoustic Presentation: -stress intensified by handclaps and open-hand drumming
2. Text Priority	a) Clarify text acoustically (clarity of words)	Acoustic Presentation: -high volume through voice quality -high volume through group reinforcement -sharp enunciation -continuous text presentation through group alternation
	b) Clarify text structurally (clarity of syntax)	Duration: -poetic meter represented in durational arrangement of melody (rhythm of tune) -poetic meter reflected in musical meter Formal Structure: -strophic form represented in musical structure -rhyme scheme represented in sectioning of tune Pitch: -units of strophe and poetic meter represented by melodic phrasing and contour
	(c) Clarify text semantically (clarity of content)	Visual Presentation: -content emphasis through gestures "actions"
3. Listeners' Requirements	a) Provide flexible structural framework for text manipulation	Formal Structure: -all kinds of text units represented by musical units -manipulability of all musical units within overall structure through directional movement, manifested principally in alternative endings of musical units (alternative text options indicated by alternative endings of musical units)

( ) = controversial, nonstandard feature

Figure 2: Functional Constraints and Distinctive Features

sequence, listing the alternatives to choose from as to both units and rules of combination.

The result of the musical analysis is a structure, including a repertoire of musical choices and the mechanics for executing them. What is lacking is the motivation for articulating the structure, i.e., how the music is programmed or put together into an actual musical sequence. This calls for a procedure to discover the dynamic behind the programming process. In the

case of *qawwali*, the very explicit functional link of the music with serving audience needs leaves no doubt as to the locus of this dynamic: the context of performance.

The Performance Context

The analysis of the context dimension constitutes a major excursus away from the music; however, it is being undertaken from a perspective directly consistent with the larger goal of analysing music as a process taking place in performance. The focus therefore is on the performance occasion in its totality, to be considered as a socio-cultural institution with an established setting and procedure, supported by a shared conceptual framework and functioning within a particular socio-economic structure.

Implied in this perspective are two analytical assumptions that should be clarified. At a general level of analysis it is assumed that any cultural institution or tradition with a social component will be subject to the socio-economic constraints under which its participants operate as members of that society. Hence, the musical occasion may serve a purpose directly related to social or economic factors that may or may not be congruent with the ideological purpose or function it is explicitly serving. To accommodate this dimension it is useful to make the analytical distinction between manifest and latent function (Merton 1957) especially where ideology plays a major role, as is the case in *qawwali*.

The second analytical assumption, more specific to the structure to be analysed, concerns the distinction between "occasion" and "event."[13] *Occasion* designates the performance context as a generalized "cognitive and social entity"; thus it represents the abstracted norm that is evoked by the question: what is a *qawwali* assembly. *Event* designates any one particular manifestation of that general norm; thus it represents the concrete occurrence evoked by the question: what is *this qawwali* assembly. Implied in this distinction is a perspective that encompasses two dimensions of structure. The practical or behavioral dimension comprises the ingredients of the performance process, while the theoretical or cognitive dimension comprises the conceptions or norms that underlie these ingredients.

While the cognitive-behavioral distinction owes its conceptualization to ethnoscience, I use it here as a tool to deal with process and its underlying structure, not as an approach to analysis itself. The ethnoscientific approach is based on the assumption that there are two ethnographic domains, the cognitive and the behavioral, and that they yield two types of analysis, one formal, componential or semantic, the other situational. Research generated by this approach has significantly refined the analysis of the cognitive domain and thus clarified the distinction between analyst's and informant's categories of perception. In particular, the approach pro-

vides useful analytical categories for dealing with the semantic framework of conceptualizations underlying a performance tradition like *qawwali*. However, thus separating ideology analytically creates the illusion of a dichotomy between an ideal and a real, or behavioral domain. This interferes with an understanding of the complex interplay that actually takes place during a performance event between norms or standard expectations on one hand, and individual strategies or behavioral responses on the other. Thus, rather than dealing with conceptualizations as a separate, cognitive domain, I propose to deal with the performance occasion as an ethnographic entity, but from a cognitive as well as a behavioral perspective.

In concrete terms, analysing the structure of the performance occasion means ascertaining the norms of both setting and procedure which are shared by the participants. In the case of a ritual like *qawwali*, the fact that these norms are informed by a set of articulated concepts facilitates the inquiry, but what is ultimately relevant is the "working knowledge" individual participants have of them. As with the musical structure, good ethnographic practice suggests giving articulation to informants' concepts—arrived at by the analyst—separate from the analyst's interpretation of them.

A systematic inquiry into the *setting* of the performance occasion governs the range of factors that remain constant throughout the occasion, or are prerequisite to it; they include the dimensions of time, place, personnel, and rationale.[14] *Procedure* comprises everything that is relevant to the way the performance is to unfold. This includes norms governing the "programme" or musical sequence as well as the behavior of participants, in the role of both performers and listeners. The listening process, in particular, needs to be analysed both at the level of audience behavior and of the meaning structure expressed thereby.

Complementing these manifest norms of procedure is a consideration of their social and economic implications which may well result in divergent emphases. In the case of *qawwali*, a religious ritual, religiously insignificant facts can become central: that the listeners' social status may constrain their responses, and that the offerings serve to pay the performers.

Finally, it goes without saying that an understanding of the particulars of a musical occasion is based on socio-cultural knowledge which for the participants is assumed. Thus, except when dealing with the analyst's—and the reader's—own musical culture, the entire discussion of the performance context needs to be prefaced with an outline of the relevant ideological-cultural and socio-economic background dimensions that underlie the particular performance tradition. For *qawwali*, the first comprises the Sufi belief system and its textual message, the second, the social reality of Sufi shrines and performers.

The Performance Process

Armed with two structures, that of the music and that of the context, the analyst attempting to investigate their interfacing in performance must first consider a dual "problematic." First there is the problem of having to deal with an interaction between two domains which qualitatively are totally different from each other, each consisting of a divergent range of variables. The second, more fundamental problem, is having to analyse process, an ongoing dynamic, by means of a procedure—conventional analysis—which operates by segmenting its object so that the dynamic linking the pieces, the very crux of process, tends to be left out of an analysis which by its nature tends to turn process into structure.

The first problem can only be solved if the dynamic link operating between the two domains can be perceived as a common denominator which can act to generate some form of equivalence between musical and contextual variables. It is in the same direction that the second problem, analysing process in terms of structure, may find a possible solution. For if the common denominators are in fact dynamic links, that dynamic must be identifiable as a channel or referent along which a context variable can cause the occurrence of a corresponding music variable or vice versa. Indeed, it will be by means of these denominators or referents, finally, that context variables can be "plugged" into the music, and contextual constraints can thus become part of a musical grammar.

But this procedure provides only half the answer to the problem, for it sets up a model for the mechanics of the interaction process without accounting for the motivation that leads to specific choices made by using this mechanic. It is here that the human actor must be brought on the scene—even though in analyses dealing with musical sound, he is often conspicuously absent. Logically speaking, the decisions and actions of all participants together make up the performance interaction. But the goal of this investigation is an analysis of the music, hence it must be built on the music maker who alone knows and uses the medium of performance. For this reason, all other participants and their actions, i.e., the entire interaction process, are relevant to this analysis only inasmuch as they affect the performer. Accordingly, the performance process needs to be charted from the vantage point of the musician, for he makes music on the basis of his understanding of contextual variables. This charting procedure needs of *qawwali* to include musical decisions made prior to the performance; in the case of nearly all of them are made in the assembly which of course facilitates the analysis.

The method to be employed for charting the performance process needs special mention. I propose the use of video-recording in order to obtain a detailed record not only of the music, but of the visually observable

interaction taking place. Within the limits of what a camera can be made to see[15], this makes possible a "note-by-note" analysis of the music-audience interaction, a significant addition to observational data and sound recordings.

In order to actually capture both detail and dynamic of the interplay between music and audience behavior, I developed two methods of transcribing and interpreting video-recorded performances of *qawwali*. The "videograph" (see Fig. 3) provides an accurate visual record of audience behavior as it occurs in response to the ongoing song performance which also supplies the temporal axis for plotting that behavior. The more interpretive "videochart" (see Fig. 4) traces the interaction between the musician's ongoing performance decisions and the audience responses as he perceives them, along with the resulting song sequence—needless to say, such an interpretation is only as good as the analyst's understanding of the musician and it must stand up to the musician's scrutiny. The two "notational systems" are complementary in emphasis: the videograph effectively portraying the complexity of multiple audience responses, the videochart focusing on the interactional dynamic of the performance.

For my performance analysis of *qawwali*, the detailed interpretation of video-recorded performances establishes how performers use music to speak to their audience, how they express context and manipulate it. But the result is a multiplicity of variables in the performer's decision-making process which do not allow any conclusions as to the principles operative therein (Fig. 5 illustrates Setting Variables alone). In order to make sense of the rule system at work, there is a need to reduce those variables to principles underlying the musician's decision-making process, so as to identify the general criteria which enable him to link context and music in each particular instance.

The first step toward this goal is to generalize the particular instances of performance interaction into a coherent sequence, systematically taking into account contextual and musical variables through an outline of the performance process in the abstract. The aim is to map the performer's strategies by moving with him through an entire performance and thus to ascertain how contextual variables serve him as cues for his use of musical options. This needs to be done with reference to the priorities his own vantage point imposes on his knowledge of the musical idiom and of the structure of the musical occasion which he shares with other participants.

The next step is to subject this outline—essentially an ethnographic abstraction—to an analytical evaluation, starting from the premise that the context-music interaction operates on the basis of determinable underlying principles which constitute the "common denominators" linking the musical idiom with the context of performance. These principles serve as the

Verse 2, Line 2

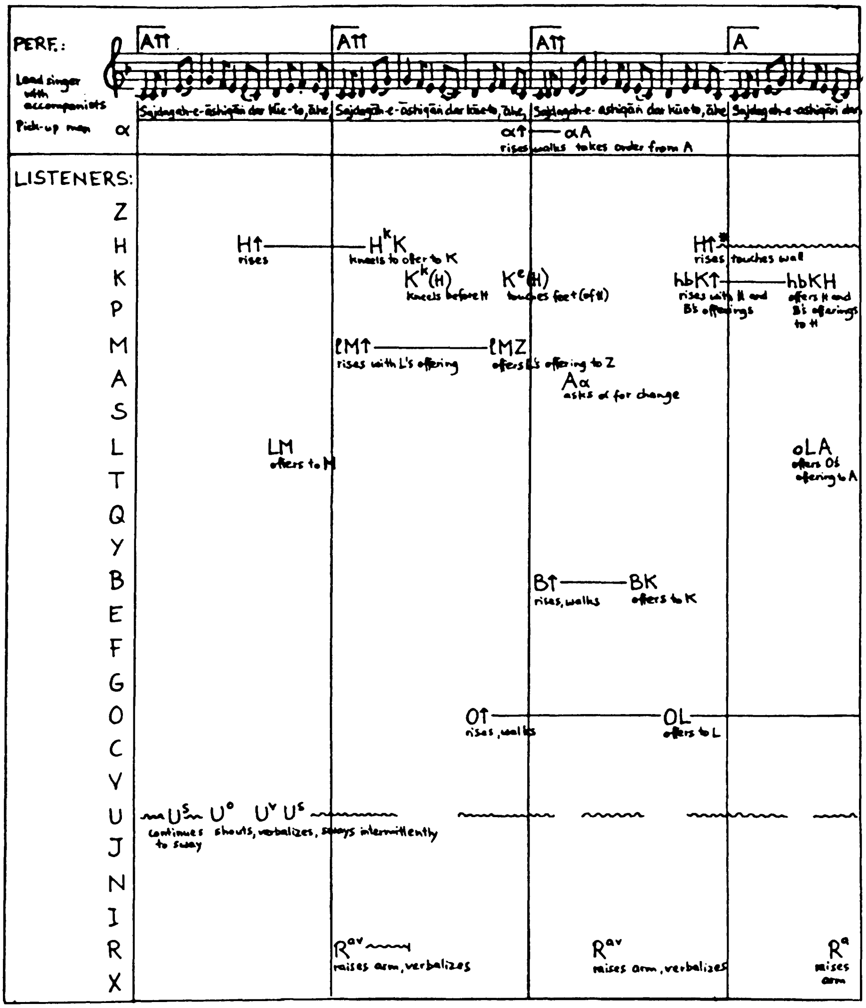


Figure 3: Videograph

referents, "translating" context into music, and in turn expressing context musically, thus making music hold contextual meaning. Seen analytically, it is these operational principles which provide the performer with the criteria of interpretation for his evaluation of contextual factors and, accordingly, for the appropriate selection of musical features. In *qawwali*, this process underlies the selection of performance items and it continues to operate

VERSE II	PERFORMER	INTERACTION	AUDIENCE
Statement 2			
2.			
(3x) A1	Expects to expand this line to allow full meaning to sink in	→	D moves with increasing intensity
(1/2x) A2	Interrupts A2 to insert Farsi verse as girah, to amplify meaning of line and impress sophisticated listeners	→	D becomes still instantly
Insert:			
(1/2x) Line 1	Begins girah in solo presentation	→	S immediately signals performers to stop insert and continue repeating A2, giving priority to D's aroused state
(3x) A2	Instantly obeys S and returns to repeating A2	→	D instantly turns round to performers and breaks into loud weeping
3.			
(3x) A1	Returns to beginning of line to keep its message intact	→	D, shaking head, searches pocket, stands up with a shout and makes offering to L, bowing low
(3x) A2	Waits for offering to reach him, repeating A2	→	L passes offering to S who hands it on to performers D, meanwhile, stands up, raises arm and shouts several times while starting to turn on the spot, having reached ecstasy L and S rise in recognition of D's state
	Completes A2 as soon as everyone is standing	←	Everyone follows L's lead and stands up

Figure 4: Videochart

		Sponsor's identity				Audience				Performing Conditions				Occasion/Place	
		spiritual		personal		special		common		Party turn		Communal		Saint's celebration	
		saint's rep	Sheikh h/l	sophis-ticated	popular	Sufi	rich	ordinary	young	early	single	party follows	only	ritual	place
TEXT															
Theme:	God														
	Prophet							x		x*					
	Saint	xx						x						xx**	x
	love	x	xx						x						x
	ecstasy		x						x						x
	separation														
	ritual	x												x	
	author		x											x	
Language:	Farsi			xx											
	Hindi			x	x			x							
	Urdu				xx			x	x						
Style:	high			xx											
	low				x			x	x						
MUSIC															
Tune:	old			x		x									
	modern				x		x	x	x						
Rhythm:	hard			x		x									
	easy				x			x	x		(x)				
PRESENTATION															
Duration:	long										x		x		
	short											x			
Style:	sophist.			x		(x)	(x)								
	popular				x			x	x						
Leadership:	mask											x			
	compete											x	x		

x preference
xx strong preference

*Thematic hierarchy rule prescribes precedence of Prophet theme
**Ritual repertoire rule prescribes specific songs with saint theme

Figure 5: Music Variables as Affected by Setting Variables

throughout the song performance. Its starting point is always the performer's evaluation of the audience and their responses, that is, of the context.

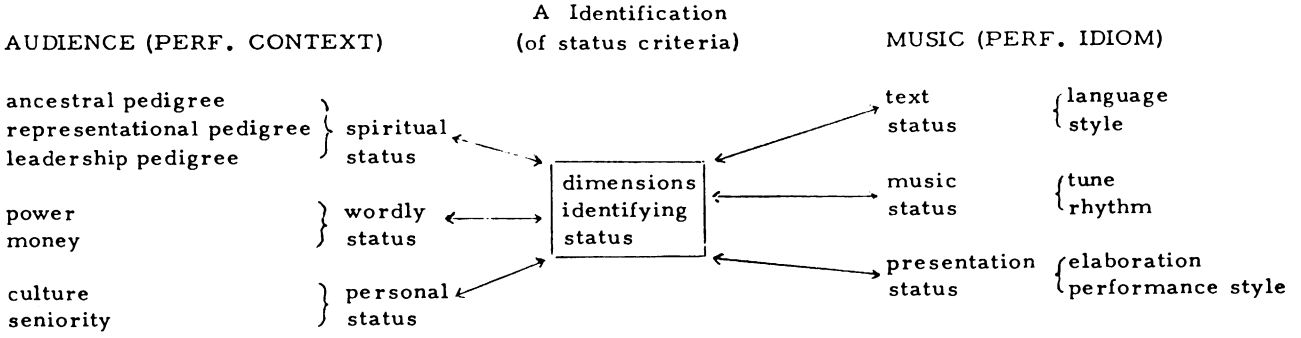
My analysis of the *qawwali* performance process, in consultation with performers and listeners, led me to identify four "semantic referents." The first two semantic referents relate to the structure of the performance event: one refers to the listener's *spiritual identity,* the other to *status*, a composite of spiritual and social dimensions. The other two semantic referents relate to the ongoing process of the performance: one refers to the listener's *state of arousal*, the other to the performer's *selective audience focus* which is chosen on the basis of the first three referents. Each of these four referents have very specific musical expressions. To illustrate, Figure 6 shows one such referent, Status, with both its contextual dimensions which serve the musician to evaluate status, and the musical dimensions which serve him to express it.

The final step is to integrate the totality of contextual input into the music, thus providing a summary of context-constrained musical features. Figure 7 exemplifies this integration in simplified form for the *qawwali* idiom. The way these features operate in performance, of course, is in a simultaneous interplay of all four referents through which context and music are linked in kaleidoscopically varying constellations. How that process takes place of "plugging" the relevant contextual referents into the musical "roadmap," can only be illustrated in a simplified form, as is done in Figure 8 for *qawwali.*

Evaluating the Results

The application of the proposed model to *qawwali* has, I believe, adequately tested the hypothesis that musical sound varies with variation in the context of performance. The outcome of this application substantively validates the hypothesis. This validation rests on the conclusion that contextual variables are identified and given expression through significant musical variables. On the basis of these findings it becomes possible to interpret the performance process of a particular *qawwali* event and, on that basis, to decode the ongoing musical message as to its social-contextual meaning—how the performer uses his musical language in performance, what he says, and why he says it. Furthermore, the "context-sensitive" grammatical outline of the *qawwali* idiom generated by this model should make it possible to generate an appropriate *qawwali* communication, although testing this claim is admittedly a problematic proposition.

My claim to validity for the analysis is ultimately based on ethnographic evidence. Indeed, the application of any model can only be as valid as the analyst's understanding of the musical tradition he is applying it to—good theory is no substitute for good ethnography. While I believe that my own



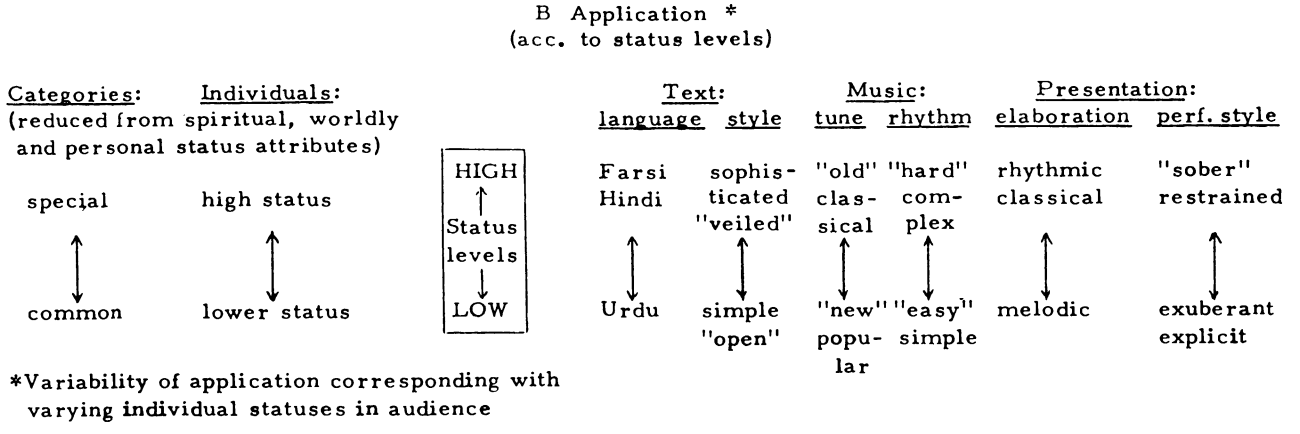


Figure 6: Application of Semantic Referent 1: Status

	Text Dimension	Music Dimension	Musical Presentation
Choice of Prelude, Introductory Verse and Song	Language varies: 1)acc. to status Style varies: 1)acc. to status Content varies: 1)acc. to identity 2)acc. to state Association varies: 1)acc. to identity 2)acc. to state	tune type varies: 1)acc. to status rhythm type varies: 1)acc. to status	performance style varies: 1)acc. to status
Sequencing of Song	type of repetition varies: 1)acc. to state (observed or desired) 2)acc. to sel. focus unit of repetition varies: 1)acc. to state (observed or desired) 2)acc. to sel. focus insert varies: 1)acc. to state (observed or desired) 2)acc. to status 3)acc. to identity word call signals vary: 1)acc. to status 2)acc. to identity	type of repetition varies: 1)acc. to state (observed or desired) 2)acc. to sel. focus unit of repetition varies: 1)acc. to state (observed or desired) 2)acc. to sel. focus insert-melodic varies: 1)acc. to status elaboration varies: 1)acc. to status	accentuation varies: 1)acc. to state acceleration varies: 1)acc. to state actions vary: 1)acc. to state 2) acc. to status

Figure 7: Qawwali Performance Model: Context Input Summarized. "Qawwali Music Varies According to Context"

application of this model to Sufi music has been solidly related to its ethnographic roots at all stages, there is one claim for which no amount of theoretical and analytical rigor can achieve more than partial validation: the claim to control the variable of the performer's strategy or intent. Neither my teachers, the performers of *qawwali,* nor I had any illusion about the ultimate elusiveness of this factor, even during the investigation. Therefore its results—along with all such results—need also to be placed in a humanistic perspective of individual autonomy.

Returning the focus to the original goal of music analysis, the results of the *qawwali* application allow us to establish that there are musical features which contain contextually derived meaning. However, these features ac-

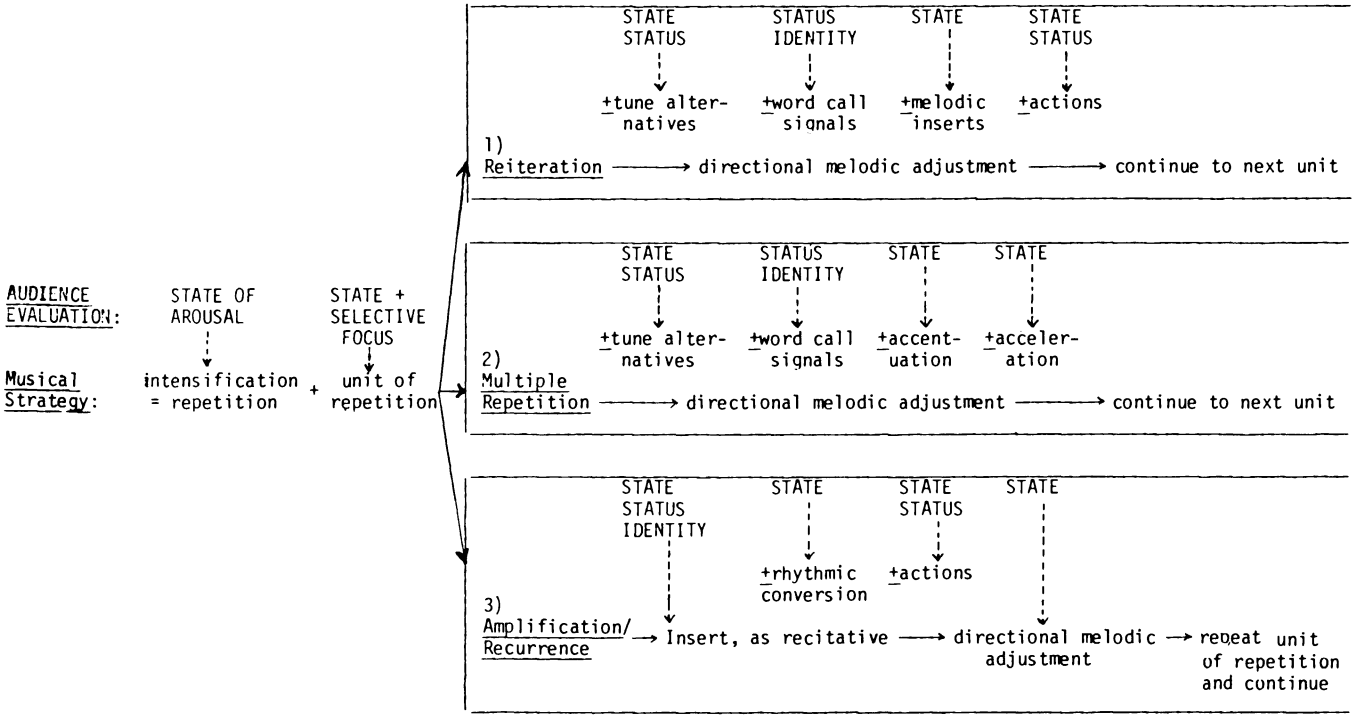


Figure 8: Qawwali Performance Model: Sequencing Process Summarized. "Qawwali Music Varies According to Context"

count for only a limited number of musical elements in the performance idiom. Indeed, this example illustrates why approaching performance analysis from a contextual perspective alone will not suffice, since that would leave much of the musical structure unaccounted for. Indeed, the contextually meaningful elements function semantically as an integral part of that larger musical structure. These elements, however, do carry referential meaning, and it is these elements which the performer uses in order to "speak" to his audience. The nature of his communication is directly linked to the nature of these meaning-carrying musical features themselves.

In examining the semanticity of these musical features, two characteristics stand out. One is the limited range of meaning options assigned to each individual feature, usually no more than two (see Fig. 6B)—possibly something of a disappointment to those of us nurtured on the study of complex music. Complexity comes about through the second characteristic, namely through the fact that more than one meaning variable operates simultaneously in performance. What this implies is that the music is capable of, and does carry meaningful communication at several levels at once, each level being to an extent capable of independent articulation. By thus making available a number of simultaneous meaning channels, the musical code makes it possible to convey a range of intensity by uttering a single meaning through any number of channels, the maximum being when all channels "say the same thing."

On the other hand, the musical code makes it possible to convey a range of different or divergent meanings, simply by uttering each meaning through a different channel. While both the number and the range of these individual meaning variables may be limited, the collective range of meaning that can be contained in a single musical utterance is considerable as regards both intensity and multiple specificity, at least for the music analysed in the Sufi assembly. Indeed, this leads me to speculate whether the generally assumed "non-specificity" or "connotative" nature of musical meaning might not more accurately be identified as "multi-specificity." In other words, this analysis suggests that music might be seen to operate as an open-ended semantic code which allows both the performer and listener to choose from among, or combine, several meanings, each of which is itself quite specific.

Evaluating the Model

These conclusions, based on the analysis of a specific Indo-Pakistani performance tradition, need to be reviewed in a wider musical context. The most appropriate starting point would be other musical performance traditions within the same "musical area," especially since the Indo-Pakistani region abounds in a great variety of clearly defined "cultural performance"

contexts for music. Indeed, from the specific perspective in Indic musicology, further applications of this contextual approach could contribute directly toward refining the concept of an "Indic music area," with its related musical idioms.

Looking beyond, the logical places for further testing of this model are musical cultures that have a verbalized theory. From the perspective of music analysis, Western musical traditions would appear suitable for this type of investigation. However, there is no doubt that Western performance occasions and their socio-cultural background context will generate a different type of dynamic to motivate the contextual input into the music, which in turn will be manifested in different semantic referents. The special problem to be considered in Western music is that of the alienation of the music maker from his audience. This starts in the classical tradition with precomposed music into which the composer already incorporates contextual input, in anticipation of its actual performance, leaving the performer with a minimal area of musical variability to do the same in response to the live context. The alienation of the music maker from the context of performance becomes complete under the influence of recording technology and industry, where all kinds of music, even the most functionally context-linked, end up by being subject to total pre-control. This constitutes a qualitatively different, more total subordination of the performer to socio-economic controls, leading to the crucial question whether the maker of the music is still a performer, even when he does not control the sounds the audience hears. In the light of this question the model developed for *qawwali* would certainly have to be modified. However, even if the very concept of performance context and performer may need to be redefined, this does not mean that the same basic postulate is not testable; namely, that the music is constrained by its context of performance, varying with contextual variation in accordance with semantic referents that convey socio-cultural meaning. To carry out an analysis of a Western musical tradition on the basis of this hypothesis may involve dealing with more complexly organized and articulated relationships, but that would not, I believe, alter the process of analysis substantively.

Finally, there are the majority of the world's musical systems which lack a verbalized musical theory or even conceptualizations about music. Can the approach outlined here contribute to the analysis of such music in performance? There is no reason why music, like any communication system, cannot be subject to elicitation and systematization in terms appropriate to a culture's own meaning system. Such a process of elicitation can be pursued just as languages and other meaning system can be elicited; the process will simply take more time, skill, patience and musical sensitivity than most researchers can put out. The important point is that such elicitation

has to be governed by a conceptual model to make it usable analytically. The investigation of contextual constraints for the identification of distinctive or salient musical feature adumbrates a promising approach for this purpose, I believe.[16] To identify such features without reference to a pre-existing musical theory or grammar is theoretically possible; their identification may even be facilitated by the absence of pre-established musical categorizations. On the other hand, context derived features alone can never account for, let alone program, a piece of music, simply because such features only represent a small part of the total musical system. Every musical system, no matter how simple, consists of a culturally prescribed sound structure—units and rules—with only certain variables governed by contextual meaning. Thus to actually program music in performance, the entire system has to be accounted for analytically. That much this analytical model does not claim to accomplish, although it does provide a framework which can be used for a systematic analysis of musical sound, provided some musical conceptualizations supply the necessary clues to its application. How to get at such conceptualizations in the absence of a musical theory is another question, to be considered in a different context.

What, then, can be suggested about the wider applicability of this model? My own application makes me believe that the approach may provide a means of explaining how musical systems are used in performance on the basis of contextual meaning. It remains for further applications to show whether this might bring us closer to the larger goal of creating a general theory of musical performance.

Notes

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology 1983 in Tallahassee, Florida. Its substance comes from my doctoral thesis (Qureshi 1981b) and has also been incorporated into Qureshi 1986. Useful editorial advice from K. Peter Etzkorn is gratefully acknowledged.

2. The field study of *qawwali* was carried out in 1975–76 with the support of SSHRC (Canada) and SSRC (US) fellowships.

3. The term musicologist and musicology are used in the sense of Musikwissenschaft (Adler 1919) throughout this paper, notwithstanding the separation of music theory from (historical) musicology perpetuated in North American academia which I deplore.

4. See Etzkorn 1974 for a critical review of such studies and a call for significantly relating social data to musical attributes.

5. See Situational Analysis as pioneered by Goffman (1964, 1971).

6. See Ethnoscience as pioneered by Sturtevant (1964) and others.

7. See the Competence-Performance model of structural linguistics pioneered by de Saussure (1979) and Jakobson (1960).

8. See the humanistic anthropological stance of Geertz, especially his interpretation of art and the artist (1976).

9. I am adopting this term in analogy to Emenau's "linguistic area" (Emenau 1956).
10. For North Indian examples other than *qawwali* see Qureshi, 1969, 1981.
11. I am adapting the term in analogy to its use in structural linguistics (cf. Lyons 1968).
12. See the work of Powers of South and North Indian art music (1958, 1970).
13. Adapted from Asch (1975a) following Herndon (1971).
14. This last term was chosen since the more appropriate "occasion" is already preempted by its use in "occasion of performance."
15. Video recording has its own problematic, see Qureshi 1984.
16. The work of Zemp (1978, 1979). A. Seeger (1982) and particularly Feld (1982) provides ample support for this assertion.

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