

## THE INFLUENCE OF ISLAMIC CULTURE ON THE ALBANIAN CIVIC SONG AND SPECIALLY THAT OF ELBASAN

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### Abstract

To get to the civic song of the City of Elbasan of the XIX-XX century, we should look at the legacy of the religious music of various Muslim rites, which was sung in most cases A-Capella, in the mosque, or at home, on holidays, or birthdays.

How was it and what did this music represent, how was it constructed, what impact did it have on the community?

The first religious songs of Islamic culture began to appear around the 15<sup>th</sup> century, such as Mawlid and Ilahi, which are more or less the same way of expressing musical thought.

Mawlid itself means "To be born", the time of birth. It is a literary, musical work, which shows the coming into this world of Muhammad, about the Miraj and His holy life. Initially, in the Albanian territories, they sang the mawlid in Arabic, but over time Albanian authors have created their own Mawlids, such as Hasan Zyko Kamberi, Hafiz Ali Gjoka (Ulqinaku), who have resisted time best. Mawlid was sung by the Hafiz, or others, who had a beautiful voice, at home, or in the mosque, on the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> day of the blessed month of Muhammad's birth. Other creators of Mawlids in Albanian are Hafiz Ali Korça, Hafiz Ibrahim Dalliu, H. Zemblaku, Sheh Ahmet Shkodra, A. effendi Gjakova, Sulejman effendi Elbasani and others in Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro.

*Keywords:* civic songs, religious songs, mawlid, ilahi

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### 1. Introduction

To get to the civic song of the City of Elbasan of the XIX-XX century, we should look at the legacy created by the religious music of various Muslim rites, which was sung in most cases A-Capella, in the mosque, or at home, on holidays, or birthdays.

How was it and what did this music represent, how was it constructed, what impact did it have on the community?

Since the 15<sup>th</sup> century in Baghdad, in the powerful Abbasid Empire, we have a great development of songs dedicated to Allah, which were monodic and later began to be accompanied by percussion instruments, wind instruments and strings.

These songs were composed on special musical scales, which in the terminology of the time were known as 'mekame'. There are 53 such known songs, which derive from 20 basic music 'mekame' in the Arab world of that period.

It was in this period, that the first religious songs of Islamic culture began to appear, such as Mawlid and Ilahi, which are more or less the same way of expressing musical thought.

Mawlid itself means "To be born", the time of birth. It is a literary, musical work, which shows the coming into this world of Muhammad, about the Miraj and His holy life. Initially, in the Albanian territories, they sang the mawlid in Arabic, but over time Albanian authors have created their own mawlid s, such as Hasan Zyko Kamberi, Hafiz Ali Gjoka (Ulqinaku), who have resisted time best. Mawlid was sung by the Hafiz, or others, who had a beautiful voice, at home, or in the mosque, on the 12th or 13th day of the blessed month of Muhammad's birth. After the Mawlid prayer and chanting, cakes were offered and Salavate and Ilahi (ritual songs of Islamic holidays) were sung. Other creators of Mawlids in Albanian are Hafiz Ali Korça, Hafiz Ibrahim Dalli, H. Zemblaku, Sheh Ahmet Shkodra, A. effendi Gjakova, Sulejman effendi Elbasani and others in Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro.

Various scholars of Mawlid state: "Mawlid is a religiously specific poem with a didactic and aesthetic character, intertwined with panegyric and lyrical nuances, which is mainly dedicated to the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, as well as His peaceful mission to invite all mankind. On the right path of the Islamic religion. Mawlids have their own mecca and notes where for its singing, the compilers are based on the Mawlid of Sulejman Celebija, which is written with the remel meter"[1]. (Eljaz Rexha- The role of Mawlid in the preservation of the Albanian language).

Ramadan Sokoli wrote: "Mawlid has an important place in Albanian literature with the Arabic alphabet. The original form of this Arabic word is Mawlid and has the meaning of birthplace or verse about the birth of the Prophet Muhammad [2]. (R. Sokoli - Religious heritage in our ethnoculture").

Let us look at some Mawlids and Ilahi in terms of form, mode and content.

# Gezon bota islame

## Ilahi

13

cmin fmin cmin fmin A<sup>b</sup>

E - ni të gjith' sa je - mi së bash-ku të kën-dojm' na erdh dit' e Meu-lu-dit  
 Thë-rra-sim ne e - za - ne tu - bo - hen mus - li - mant gë - zon bo - ta is - la - me  
 Me lot në sy për-co-llëm e - dhe kte ra - ma - zan më,,i bu - kur vi - tin tje-tër

4 fmin G7 cmin fmin cmin G7

me gzim po e fes - tojm' All - llah ja dhel xhel - la - lu ja-men-tu keb - ber  
 kën-dojm' e - dhe Kur" an  
 u - rojm' në k'të baj - ram

7 fmin A<sup>b</sup> G7

ha - lek - tel a - le - mi - ne All - lla - hu ek - ber

Dyqan

This Ilahi is constructed in the form of a period with two repetitive sentences, where the construction of almost the same of both sentences stands out. The difference lies in the culminations and in the way of cadence. In the first sentence the culmination reaches the third measure of the sentence, in the seventh degree of 'mekam', while in the second sentence it becomes the same in the third measure of the sentence, but in the eighth degree of 'mekam'.

The descent from the octave gives more consistency to the closing of the musical thought and creates a more cheerful atmosphere.

As a construction, the second sentence is even more deifying due to the use of sticky sequences in the third and fourth measure, after which cadence comes convincing and exhausting.

This Ilahi is constructed on the Mekamin (curtain) of "Dyqah", a curtain which is often used in the civic songs of Myzyri, Bodin, etc.

The characteristic of Mawlid and Ilahi, is the perfect coexistence between the literary text and the melody, which makes these parts easily assimilated by the general mass of the people.

**Gecti kervan**

Ah ni-xhe bir\_ u - jur - sun u - jan maz - me - se - en\_

Ah ni-xhe bir\_ u - jur - sun u - jan maz - me - se - en\_

Gec - ti ker - van kall - dek - da - llar ba - she - en - da All-llah A - All-llah

Gec - ti ker - van kall - dek - da - llar ba - she - en - da

All - lla - hu All - llah All - lla - hu All - llah All - lla - hu All - llah

All - lla - hu - All - llah

Dyqah

In this Mawlid we notice many typical features of the construction of this musical form.

Firstly is the simplicity of expressing musical thought. In the definitions of Mawlid in the holy books, it is stated that “for the celebration of the birthday of the Messenger of Allah, sallallaahu 'alayhiwasallam, to have its essential meaning, it should, first, be organized in an Islamic manner, characteristic whose is modesty and piety. Then, this occasion would

become a new impetus for our ennobling with the virtues that have characterized the personality of the Messenger of Allah. It is this greatness and modesty, at the same time, that highlights the musical construction of this Mawlid.

Secondly, the form of this Mawlid seems more advanced. It is presented as a complete verse-chorus song. The period is constructed with two sentences, which are repeated twice. The second sentence stands out, the first time it remains open, in an unstable function, both to create the possibility of the development of musical thought, as well as to break the monotony of the same cadences.

Here we see, in terms of form, that the culmination is not in the refrain, but in the second sentence. This underscores the fact that the chorus is the most popular, where usually sings the whole mass of participants in the celebration. Therefore, the simplicity of the musical construction increases the values of the idea that the artistic creation wants to convey, causing this idea to be embraced by the masses.

On the tonal side, it is built on the Dyqah curtain, but not complete, based on the sol (G). The interweaving of the major-minor system gives this creation a special light in displaying the joy of the holiday. Modality predominates harmoniously, instead of using the dominant major. Cadence in Sol major comes either after Lab major (second degree) or after fa minor, (seventh degree). Exactly this is an influence that is mostly felt in the creativity of the civic song of our country in the cities above Shkumbin (rarely in the Berat songs).

**Mevludi Sherif**

**a piacere**

Erdh ne dy - nja n'a - të çast që

u be - su - u - u Gjith - çka ish - te

e kri - ju - me u shen - du

Shpirt e pa shpirt gur e dru thi

rren me za Gjith i thoj shin

mir - se er - dhe - Mus - ta fa

Huzam

In this Mawlid, we have exposed exactly what this artistic creation represents, both literally and musically; we have the unfolding of everyone's joy for Mustafa's coming to life. Thus, in different periods, Mawlid was also created for honorable people, who belonged to the higher spheres of society.

Composition "Ad Libitum" (optional, a piacere), is another way of expressing joy as emotion. This way of singing requires deeper vocal skills and the emotion that is conveyed is greater.

The form of this composition is with two identical periods, which are repeated one after the other. Each period is constructed of two sentences, where the first has six measures and the second has five measures. In fact, we find such a form in most cases of the creations of "A Piacere", this comes from the way of singing and especially from the way of cadences that the performer does. It is noticeable that the cadence of the first sentence (sixth measure) is in fa, the seventh degree of the base sol (g).

On the modal side, it is built on the truncated HUZAM curtain, based on sol (g).

Usually, this type of Mawlid was sung A-Capella (unaccompanied) and the second repetition, could be played accompanied in unison by two or more singers.

Score

## Ban dua k'ndo ilahi

MIDI 1

O o i ma - dhi

Pe - e - re - en - di tē shoh me ze - mēr t'sho - oh me - e sy n'shpi - irt tē ka ty

çdo - o nje - e ri - i - i - i La a i la - he i - il la - all - llah i - il - la - all - llah

Dyqah

As mentioned above, after the recitation of Mawlid, on marked days, cakes were distributed and Ilahi was sung. These pieces of music were simpler in construction and created a more joyful atmosphere.

An elongated orchestral introduction stands out, which comes from the instrumental accompaniments, usually showing their values during the performance. So this Divine is built in three parts: a) The introduction, which always depends on the instrumental accompaniments, b) The period, which consists of two similar thematic bubbles, which represent the first sentence and c) the chorus, constructed by two different thematic bubbles, answer questions, which represent the second sentence, which cadences in Sol (G).

On the modal side, it is constructed on the Dyqah “Mekame”, a mode widely used in Arabic music, but which has commonly entered our civic music.

### References

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