

Special Feature:

**The Encounter with Religious Others through Music and Musician
in the Islamic World**

Editor's Note

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This special issue is based on the international workshop ‘The Encounter with Religious Others through the Music and Musician in Islamic World’ on 2nd July, 2022 initiated by the Kenan Rifai Center for Sufi Studies, Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies, Kyoto University. I would like to express my many thanks to respected speakers in the workshop. Also, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. TONAGA Yasushi, for his great support in organizing the workshop and publishing this special issue. This special issue is also supported by grants for ‘Research on Moderate Islam in the Non-Arab World: From the Cases of Indonesia, Pakistan, and Turkey’ (Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (A), 22H00034, JSPS) for publication in journals.

The Islamic cultural sphere covers a broad area that extends throughout West Asia, including the Arab world, Central Asia, India, and Southeast Asia. Due to this vastness, Islamic ideology and the way of being a Muslim have developed uniquely in each area based on the geographical environment and religious background of each community. The same is true for music, while the careful relationship between religion and music in the Islamic world is described as a major premise. Each region has its own unique way of dealing with music because of differences in Islamic ideology, community composition, and other factors. How have they formed their own music, especially with religious elements, and what role have they given it in the community? The purpose of the research conference was not only to analyse each kind of music in one area of the Islamic world, but also to examine how music in general has been formed in contact with ‘religious others’ in a wide range of regional milieux from the analysis of the music and performers in each region.

The following is the list of speakers and their presentation titles in the workshop:

Ako MASHINO (Tokyo University of Arts)

‘Performing Arts in Procession as a Contact Zone for Muslim and Hindu Balinese’

Haruo INOUE (Kyoto University)

‘The Musical Interaction in the 18th Century Kashmir Described in *Tarāna-e Sorūr*’

Razia SULTANOVA (Charles University and Cambridge Muslim College)

‘The *Sufi* Soundscape in Central Asia and Beyond: Genres, Rituals, and Chants’

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Hande SAĞLAM (University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna)

‘Islamic and Sufi Soundscape in Central Asia: Genres, Rituals, and Laments’
‘Textual Characteristics of the Religious Songs of the Alevi Âşiks: An Analysis of a Semah’

Manami SUZUKI (Kyoto University)

‘Alevi Ritualistic Practice and its Transmission in Austria as the Religious Other’s
Society’

These five scholars provided the audience with presentations on Islamic music as it has been shaped and performed in various ways in relation to religious others in Indonesia, India, Central Asia, Turkey, and Europe, respectively, and contributed papers based on their presentations to this special issue. Dr. Mashino focused on the performing arts in processions as unique contact zones where Muslim Balinese (a religious minority on the island) and Hindu Balinese (the majority) encounter one another in terms of sound and body movements and pointed out several factors of the processions that enabled the Muslim and Hindu participants to experience the other’s cultural forms and try to collaborate. Dr. Inoue focused on the *Tarāna-yi Surūr*, a Kashmīrī manuscript from the 18th century, and examined the relationship between Indian rhythmic theory, which evolved in the 18th century under the influence of Persian music, as described in this manuscript, and the relationship between the Indian rhythmic theory that evolved in the 18th century under the influence of Persian music and today’s Hindustani music. Dr. Sultanova draws on her 30 years of ethnographic fieldwork examining Islamic and Sufi music forms in Central Asia—specifically, the flow of local indigenous mystical knowledge within the rarely researched practices of female communities. Dr. Sağlam presented an analysis and consideration of the religious metaphors contained in the lyrics of the songs sung by Alevi Âşiks for Semah (religious ceremonial whirling), based on her own research on the Alevi Âşık tradition in Anatolia, which has taken a uniquely shape in contact with Sunnis as a religious majority in Anatolia. Dr. Suzuki showed how migrant Alevi, an Islamic religious minority in the Christian society of Austria, use *deyiş* (religious songs) and *semah* (dance-like religious whirling) to pass on their religious traditions to the next generation. is discussed in the case of *Religiösunterricht* (religious education) and *cem* (Alevi’s ritual) for children.

We hope this special issue will provide a more multifaceted understanding of “music in the Islamic world” and contribute not only to musicological studies but also to Islamic studies and humane studies.