



KEREŠMA

KEREŠMA, a musical term denoting a melodic unit (*guša*), or a metric section within a *guša*, based on any modal system (*dastgāh*). The Persian word *kerešma* literally means “wink, nod, glance, looking languishingly through half-shut eyes, an amorous gesture or blandishment, coquetry” (Steingass, p. 1023). A musical *kerešma* is normally sung with a verse composed in the poetic meter *mojtatt-e moṭamman-e maḵbun-e maḥḍuf* (cf. the Arabic pattern *mafā'elon fa'elāton mafā'elon fa'elon* $\cup - \cup - \cup \cup - - / \cup - \cup - \cup \cup -$; see 'ARUŽ). Its distinctive musical rhythm matches the poetic meter with a regular alternation of two beat and three beat units that can be represented in musical notation as a hemiola with a measure of 6/8 (two beats, each equal to three eighth notes) followed by a measure of 3/4 (three beats, each equal to two eighth notes):

meter:	6/8	3/4	6/8	3/4
beats:	1 2	1 2 3	1 2	1 2 (3)
durations:	$\cup - \cup - \cup \cup - -$	$/ \cup - \cup - \cup \cup - (-)$		

The *Boḥur al-alḥān* of Mirzā Moḥammad-Naṣir Forṣat Širāzi (1855-1920) includes a table of *gušas* (pp. 34-37), where a *guša* called *kerešma* is only found in the *dastgāhs* of Čahārgāh, Segāh, and Šur. But Mirzā Moḥammad also describes *kerešma* as a *nağma* (here a synonym for *guša*) that “may be brought to [every *dastgāh*] as an addition” and that “it is in the style of *reng* consisting of the meter *tanān tanān tan tan tan*” (p. 32). In Dāryuš Ṭalā'i's transcription of the *radif* of Mirzā 'Abd-Allāh (1843-1918), we find a *guša* designated *kerešma* in



several *dastgāhs* such as Šur, Māhur, Segāh, Čahārgāh, and Navā. Some *dastgāhs* have more than one *kerešma*: for example, Māhur has *kerešma-ye rāk* in addition to the *kerešma* proper, and Segāh and Čahārgāh have *kerešma* and *kerešma bā muya*.

A metric section that bears the distinctive hemiola rhythm in the *radif* may be called *kerešma*. Hormoz Farhat (pp. 109-10) classifies *kerešma* as a *tekka* (a small or short piece), and states that it is played in every *dastgāh*. He gives examples of *kerešma* in ten different modes: Šur, Segāh, Čahārgāh, Navā, Homāyun, Bayāt-e Tork (cf. bayāt[i]), Bayāt-e Ešfahān, *guša-ye* Ḥesār-e Segāh, *guša-ye* Maqlub-e Čahārgāh, and *guša-ye* ‘Arāq-e Rāst-panjgāh.

Kerešma is the most commonly performed *tekka*, and its distinctive meter serves to set off the rather heavy and serious texture of the non-metric *āvāz* with relaxation and diversion (Tsuge, p. 297). The meter of *kerešma* sounds sad (*ġamangiz*) to Persians, and it is no exaggeration to say that *kerešma* is one of the most “Persian” rhythms.

The Persian word *kerešma* seems to have entered Turkic languages through Persian poetry (Doerfer, III, pp. 590-91, sec. 1627 “*karašma*”). The Uyghur word *kirišma* is derived from *kiriš* “to start, to set about, to interlock” (Schwarz, p. 728) and designates an opening piece (*kirišma muzikisi*; cf. Ahmidi, p. 25).

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