

First International Conference On Analytical Approaches To

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**Cadenza, Aleatory and Koranic Chant at the Norfolk Superior Court: What moves?
What doesn't? So what?**

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This is an exercise in cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary analysis, in which variability has been selected as the lens through which musical and social events may be viewed and compared. Examples of repertoires from Turkey and from 18th century and 20th century Europe are placed side-by-side with the events of a recent Massachusetts criminal trial in order to observe how the actors within musical and legal settings negotiate the tendencies of these fields toward both stable repetition and variation. The theoretical and methodological moorings for this exercise include: 1) the evolutionary processes of biology, where variation and replication are equally necessary for the origin of life and for the development of higher forms; 2) the concept of mouvance as developed by the French literary scholar Paul Zumthor, a scholarly approach to texts which accepts variability, no less than fixity, as a benchmark of cultural study; and 3) the studies of oral tradition by the classicist-turned-anthropologist Albert Lord and the historical musicologist Leo Treitler. Can the study of distinct regional musical practices of variability shed light on each other and on non-musical processes such as law? What does a focus on variability in music and law tell us about their respective tendencies toward canonization?