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Theory by and for whom?

The gap between praxis and theory in 20th century Classical makam Music (of the Ottoman period)

In der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts erfuhr die Makam-Musik einen radikalen Wandel, bei dem mehrere ihrer grundlegenden Elemente abgeschafft wurden. Die Ursache für diesen Wandel war weder musikalischer noch pädagogischer Natur. Die Vereinfachungen, Komplikationen und Missverständnisse, die auf die Umgestaltung folgten, führten zu einer Unstimmigkeit zwischen Praxis und Theorie und hinterließen bei Pädagogen, jungen Musikern und Komponisten ein abstraktes und dysfunktionales Modell.

Die abrupte Abschaffung der Meister-Lehrlings-Linie und des Modells der mündlichen Überlieferung wurde seit den 1930er Jahren durch statische Partiturdarstellungen ersetzt, die auf eurozentrischen theoretischen Konzepten beruhen. Die Nachwirkungen der damaligen Theoriereform stellen die heutige Makam-Gemeinschaft vor mehrere Herausforderungen.

In diesem Beitrag sollen die grundlegenden Konzepte der melodischen Entwicklung zusammengefasst und theoretische Fragen erörtert werden, beginnend mit der Analyse von Taksim-Aufführungen (vorstrukturierte Improvisationen). Diese Erkenntnisse, kombiniert mit Interviews mit zeitgenössischen Makam-Meistern und dynamischen Darstellungen von kommentierten Tonhöhenkonturen, können einen integrierten, praxisbezogenen Rahmen für das Verständnis der Konzepte der Makam-Musik bilden.

Makam music underwent a radical transformation in the first half of the 20th century, with several of its fundamental elements being abolished. The root cause of this change was neither musical nor educational. The simplifications, complications, and misconceptions that followed this transformation resulted in inconsistencies between practice and theory, leaving educators, young musicians, and composers with an abstract and dysfunctional model.

The abrupt discontinuation of the master-apprentice lineage resulted in the oral tradition model being replaced in the 1930s by static score representations based on Eurocentric theoretical concepts. The aftermath of that period's theory reform has left today's makam community facing several challenges.

This paper aims to summarize the fundamental concepts of melodic development and address theoretical issues, beginning with the analysis of taksim performances (pre-structured improvisations). These insights, combined with interviews with contemporary makam masters and dynamic representations of annotated pitch contours, can constitute an integrated, practice-based framework for comprehending the concepts of makam music.

SCHLAGWORTE/KEYWORDS: analysis; improvisation; makam; praxis; taksim; theory

Introduction

After receiving an invitation from Johannes Walter to deliver a keynote presentation on the microtonal aspects of makam¹ music for the 2021 GMTH edition, I wanted to deliver a speech on a theme that would captivate the diverse audience consisting of conservatory-trained composers, improvisers, jazz, classical, and early music musicians.²

As I found myself in the final stages of my Ph.D. dissertation—and drawing from my personal experiences dealing with mistranslations and misinterpretations of the modal characteristics of microtonality in makam music when presented to a less specialized audience—I decided to shape the narrative around the theme of the discrepancy between praxis and theory. This discussion would be rooted in the early 1920s to 1930s, a pivotal era where theory was constructed by a group of non-makam specialists. For several politico-historical reasons—among which are various misinterpretations, as well as the inclusion of music as a tool for creating national identity—the (theoretical) framework of makam music was radically reshaped to resemble the established models of Eurogenetic music genres.

This theory would serve as the foundation for the education of individuals who, for various reasons, either didn't require or couldn't benefit from such a model. Those models were the dominant force behind makam music education until recently, when a number of scholars and performers began to bridge the gap between historical research, theory and praxis.

During the conference presentation, we employed real-time visualizations alongside an ad-hoc performance³ to accentuate the practical dimensions of the

1 The term makam is used to denote modal music genres originating from Mediterranean and Middle Eastern music cultures. It encompasses not only the melodic-based musical systems within these cultures but also all the elements that contribute to the unique character of each mode, also referred to as the makam (Cholevas, Michail, *Makampedia: from taksim mastery to makam theory*, 1).

2 I had previously met Johannes at another conference he co-organized on microtonality, approximately ten years prior to this event, held at the Music Academy of Stuttgart under the title “Microtonality: Praxis or Utopia?” (Walter and Pätzold, *Mikrotonalität - Praxis Und Utopie*). I was already acquainted with Johannes' genuine curiosity and profound interest in the subject. Therefore, I saw this as the perfect opportunity to revisit the topic and further clarify some of its concepts for myself before presenting them to an audience.

3 Video 1, extracted from the documentation of the keynote presentation (Cholevas 2021, GMTh Basel).

subject matter (Video 1). This approach actively engaged the audience and facilitated a hands-on experience during the Q&A session.



https://storage.gmth.de/proceedings/articles/352/attachments/352_video_01.mp4

Video 1: Music from beginning of the Keynote presentation with visualization

Contextualization

The historical context of the music reform

The paper delves into the issue of praxis versus theory within the realm of makam music education, particularly in the context of classical music of the Ottoman period, as it has evolved over the past century within institutional frameworks.

Each makam possesses distinct characteristics that define its individual ethos. Although these characteristics cannot always be precisely delineated, they are often described by those immersed in this genre with terms like flavor, color, feeling, emotion, or soundscape. Within this field, a particularly pivotal aspect of performance is the taksim. Taksim is an instrumental improvisational performance that can serve as an introduction, an epilogue, or a connecting point, acting as an intersection between two pieces based on the same or different makam modes.⁴

Educational, Historical, and Political Context of the Theoretical Framework and Its Inconsistency with Praxis

Historically, the educational process in makam music was rooted in the traditional context of *Meşk*,⁵ which revolved around the master-apprentice system. Under this system, all facets of the music were transmitted to and absorbed by students in a gradual and organic manner. This method placed greater emphasis on memorization as opposed to reading from scores.⁶ Furthermore, it encouraged students

4 Ederer, *The theory and praxis of makam in classical Turkish music 1910–2010*, xxvi.

5 Akkoç, “Constructing a theory of Turkish music based on practice by traditional masters”, 2.

6 Cholevas, *Makampedia*, 42.

to embody a substantial portion of the repertoire within the specific stylistic context of makam genealogy.

This approach prevailed until the early 20th century, fostering a deep connection between students and their masters and prioritizing the experiential understanding of makam music.

Five -ations of makam transformation

At the onset of the 20th century, a radical transformation in the realm of makam music unfolded, particularly within the geographical region now known as Turkey. This shift from the traditional Meşk system to a new educational paradigm was underpinned by five fundamental pillars: Nationalization, Modernization, Staff Notation, Westernization, Institutionalization (Conservatory Education).

Nationalization

Following the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the emergence of new states, there was a concerted effort to nationalize culture, and music played a pivotal role in these nationalization agendas for identity creation.⁷

One of the most evident examples of the detrimental effects of nationalization on makam music can be seen in the aftermath of the Cairo conference of 1932. At this conference, the musical framework shifted its focus from praxis to the pursuit of a numerical model based on equally-tempered microtonal divisions, resembling the 12-tone equal temperament (12 TET) eurogenetic system⁸. This approach became the foundation for both practical education and theoretical discourse.

The question of how to disseminate makam music both to national and international (Western-trained) audiences found its answer in precise measurements of intervals and the concept of authenticity, which was demonstrated by establishing direct connections between the proposed systems and Pythagorean ma-

7 Cholevas *Makampedia*, 4; Kallimopoulou, *Music, meaning and identity in a contemporary Greek urban movement*, 45; Öztürk, “The conception of ‘contemporizing music’ in the founding ideology of early republican Turkey”, 82.

8 Şentürk, Holzapfel and Serra, “Linking Scores and Audio Recordings in makam Music of Turkey.”, 2.

thematical principles. This led to the belief that these systems held higher value than the Eurocentric theoretical system due to their historical precedence.

The conflicting theoretical frameworks presented by Arabic, Greek, and Turkish musicologists during the Cairo conference have since dominated the concepts of makam music in conservatory-level education.

Modernization

As a direct consequence of nationalization, modernization emerged alongside the creation of a centralized theoretical framework for music.

The straightforward application of a Eurocentric music theory system⁹ onto the makam system, along with the radical simplifications that ensued¹⁰, gave rise to a concise yet problematic theoretical representation and didactic model of makam music. This model was subsequently adopted by academic institutions and has been in use ever since.

It's worth noting that this new system was developed without the involvement of makam masters. Instead, Western European-trained musicians, who were unfamiliar with the concept, function, and practice of makam music, were the ones responsible for designing and shaping this reform. As Öztürk states

“[i]t is also clear that the main priorities of the modernizers were not to understand better the old theories. On the contrary, they gave more importance to modernizing the makam theory without wasting time.”¹¹

The establishment of this new makam theory diminished the significance of metaphorical language, neumatic notation, memory, and the traditional master-apprentice learning process. In their place, staff notation became the primary point of reference.

Another consequence of modernization was the transformation of musical ensembles. In the Classical Ottoman period until the early 20th century, ensembles typically consisted of small groups of musicians performing on instruments with distinct tonal colors and functionalities. These instruments included the tanbur or oud (plucked instruments with quick attack and steady pitch, each with a recog-

9 Bozkurt, Ayangil and Holzapfel, “Computational Analysis of Turkish makam Music”, 7.

10 Öztürk, “How was the traditional makam theory westernized for the sake of modernization?”, 1779; Wright, “Çârgâh in Turkish classical music”, 236

11 Öztürk, “How was the traditional makam theory westernized for the sake of modernization?”, 1779.

nizable sound character and registers), the ney (later often replaced by a clarinet), and the yayli tanbur or kemençe (blown and two-bowed instruments, all with continuous sound but contrasting timbres), accompanied by percussion and a singer.¹² This ensemble setup had the advantage of being able to cover all aspects of music while projecting a colorful sound. Moreover, it was flexible enough to allow for respectful interpretation of compositions, enabling musicians to color and interpret stylistic elements heterophonically and idiosyncratically within the genre's boundaries.

Westernization

The introduction of large, conductor-led ensembles that resembled symphonic orchestras, together with the performance of makam compositions in unison¹³ which gradually became the norm after the establishment of the republic, led to the marginalization or near-elimination of elements of idiosyncrasy and idiomatic expression.¹⁴ As a result, the character of makam music underwent a profound transformation, shifting from a heterophonic to a homophonic style. Concepts of musical freedom and interpretive elements such as dynamics, ornamentation, and articulation were obliterated, thus devaluing and reducing the richness of the genre to a static form. This transformation often resulted in performances that were perceived or criticized as being dull, overly educated, and lacking in soul.¹⁵

To provide context, one could draw an analogy to the unison performance of a jazz piece by a conductor-led Western classical symphonic orchestra following a Real Book score. This analogy illustrates the radical shift from the improvisational and expressive nature of makam music to a more regimented and standardized approach influenced by Western classical music traditions.

However, these conducted orchestras, structured into sections of multiple instruments, and performing melodies either monophonically or harmonized through traditional harmony, conveyed an impression of a Westernized ensemble

12 Stubbs, "*The art and science of taksim*", 13.

13 Öztürk, "The conception of 'contemporizing music' in the founding ideology of early republican Turkey", 86.

14 Öztürk, "How was the traditional makam theory westernized for the sake of modernization?", 1778.

15 Kallimopoulou, "Music, meaning and identity in a contemporary Greek urban movement", 144.

setup. In the eyes of the reformers, this setup positioned makam music as being of equivalent artistic importance to symphonic orchestras in the Western context.

Staff Notation

In the 1920s, the rigid and static representation of makam music through staff notation was imposed, and subsequently became the foundation of music education in academic institutions. This imposition led to the institutionalization of the genre but also diminished the significance of many expressive elements. The common practice of describing makam as a scale constructed by combining n-chords within an octave,¹⁶ following imposed models of traditional Eurocentric music theory, excluded numerous phrasing and melodic development elements from musical discussions. It also transformed elements of dynamic pitch movement into fixed and established intervals.

For instance, consider the performance of an Ussak Taksim on the clarinet by Sukru Tunar as an illustrative example. (Video 2)¹⁷



https://storage.gmth.de/proceedings/articles/352/attachments/352_video_02.mp4

Video 2: Şükrü Tunar plays dynamic intervals on Uşşak Taksim

While on the musical score, the second degree is consistently represented as a static interval, specifically 8/9ths of a whole tone above the tonic, the extracted melodic curve reveals a dynamic interval. This interval exhibits a wider range, influenced by the gravitational pull exerted by the tonic, gradually lowering the pitch of the second degree.

Furthermore, when musicians trained in Western music transcribed and archived compositions using staff notation, there was often a lack of understanding regarding the melismatic elements, their significance and functionality within the genre. Additionally, the registration of melodic material within the extended rhythm cycles of Classical Ottoman music posed challenges.

Inaccuracies or errors that occurred during the transcription process had a lasting impact on the translation and registration of the music onto a staff score. This

16 Öztürk, “How was the traditional makam theory westernized for the sake of modernization?”, 1773.

17 Cholevas, *Makampedia*, 7 and Video 2: Şükrü Tunar plays dynamic intervals on Uşşak Taksim.

simplified staff score has since become the primary reference point for both trained and untrained musicians in the field.¹⁸

Examples of neumatic Notation systems

Η ζωή εν τῷ φω - Yassouh El hayat Nouazimak

Ἦχος λ̣ ᾠ Πα



Image 1: Byzantine (Parasimantiki) notational system

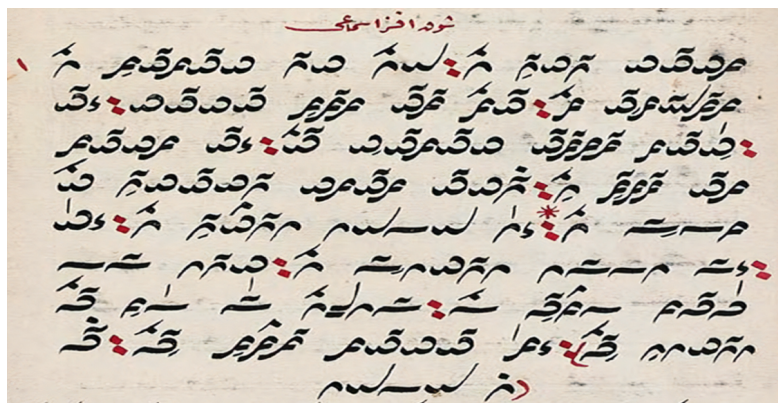


Image 2: Hamparsum notational system¹⁹

¹⁸ Alternative systems used in the past by musicians of the field such as the neumatic notational systems of Hamparsum (Ederer, 2011; Yarman, 2008; Ayangil, 2008) and the Byzantine system of Parasimantiki (Skoulios, 2005), although static representations, seemed to be far more suitable for the description/depiction of makam music.

¹⁹ Image location <https://silpayamanant.wordpress.com/alt-strings/resources/scores/near-eastern-middle-eastern/>.

Institutionalization (Conservatory Education)

With the establishment of Western European-style academic institutions such as conservatoires and universities, makam music underwent further adaptations to align with their organizational frameworks.

Since the inception of conservatory education and the subsequent evolution of curricula, influenced by both national and international agreements (with the Bologna process being particularly impactful), makam music programs in universities and conservatories gradually allocated fewer practical hours. For instance, in a typical curriculum for a Bachelor's or Master's degree in music performance, students may have only one hour per week of practice-based, one-on-one music education, in stark contrast to the extensive daily practice sessions of the master-apprentice model. The drastic reduction in educational interaction, the centralization of regular examinations, and the structure of performance examinations and their assessment procedures have compressed various aspects of makam education. This compression extends from the value attributed to practicing Taksim to the volume of repertoire (both compositions and makam modes) and the formation and practice of makam ensembles. The step-by-step institutionalization of makam music is gradually eroding the character and ethos of this music genre, pushing it slowly but inevitably toward extinction.

It is not surprising that many students in makam programs seek additional education through summer masterclasses and workshops offered by non-academic educational organizations, such as those at *Labyrinth Music* in Crete.²⁰ If the curricula of academic institutions continue to evolve in the same direction, a plausible future educational scenario could involve collaborations between academic and non-academic institutions. In this way, students may receive the essence of their education from the non-academic entity, and the title from the academic institution.

20 The Musical Workshop *Labyrinth* was launched in 1982 by Ross Daly (artistic director of MWL) as a creative group of friends whose aim was that of exploring various modal musical traditions from around the world, as well as of the potential for creative interaction between them. <https://labyrinthmusic.gr/>

Theory by whom

Comparing Music Concepts of Meşk and Contemporary Education Approaches

There exist numerous disparities between the Meşk and non-Meşk education systems in their approach to various music concepts. This chapter seeks to elucidate and contrast some of these differing concepts. Table 1.1 below presents a summarized overview of the general approaches from these two distinct practices:

Music Concept/Framework	Meşk Approach	Contemporary Approach
Pedagogy	Informal, master-apprentice	Formal, structured curriculum
Learning Style	Oral, experiential	Notation-based, theoretical
Repertoire	Extensive, memorization	Limited, often from sheet music
Improvisation	Core component	Minimal emphasis
Individuality	Encouraged	Standardization
Musical Freedom	Fosters creativity	Conformity to established norms
Performance Practice	Heterophonic, flexible	Homophonic, structured
Teacher-Student Bond	Strong, personal connection	More formal, less personal
Specialist	Performer, Improviser, Composer, Teacher	Theoretician
Makam	Language (orthography, grammar, syntax)	Simple monophonic melodies
Interaction	Daily long sessions in groups	one hour one to one per week
Educational focus	idiosyncrasy, metaphoric language	technique, exam preparation

Table 1.1: Summary of Contrasting Approaches in Meşk and Contemporary Music Education

Music-making Concepts in Meşk

Within the Meşk system, the teacher assumes a multifaceted role as the specialist and transmitter of knowledge. In stark contrast to the more specialized and divided roles often found in Western musical education institutions, the Meşk teacher is also a performer, improviser, composer, and theoretician. This teaching framework is deeply rooted in tradition, with the primary responsibility of passing on the art to the next generation, effectively forging a new link in an unbroken chain. In this context, one cannot simply perform without also teaching the art to the next generation. Neumatic scores, if present, serve merely as reminders

of the melodic journey, representing intervals, time, and sometimes suggesting ornamentation. They function as simple guides or melodic maps. However, the performance process relies heavily on the existence of musical memory. Musicians must have the music in their ears to play it in the appropriate style. As musicians develop their ability to perform the style accurately and nurture their idiosyncrasies, they become less dependent on the score and gain greater freedom in reinterpreting or improvising within certain stylistic boundaries. Teaching sessions are typically conducted in groups, allowing each musician to listen to others, both those playing the same instrument and those playing different ones, thus facilitating their development.

In this context, makam is viewed as a language complete with its own orthography, grammar, and syntax.²¹ During makam music training, metaphorical language serves as the primary tool for technical and musical explanations. The development of idiosyncrasy is strongly encouraged in performance, improvisation, and composition. Music is closely intertwined with the poetry that accompanies existing compositions and compositional cycles. Additionally, calligraphy plays a significant role in the creation and registration of neumatic scores (as in image 1 and for Byzantine and Hamparsum systems).

Contemporary makam Educational Concepts

With the introduction of the theoretical framework in the 1920s, a significant shift occurred in makam music education and practice. The role of the theoretician became prominent, and these individuals, often not practically trained in the makam artform themselves, assumed a specialized role in the field. To this day, the term for the notation system, as well as the numerical model for calculating intervals, is referred to as the Arel-Ezgi-Uzdilek System, after the names of its founders. Students pursuing academic-level education in makam music are initially introduced to the numerical comma system to learn and understand intervals before embarking on practical education.

Information is primarily derived from the static staff notation, which inaccurately depicts makam concepts. Compositions are graphically represented in staff scores, serving as copies of the melodic maps presented in neumatic notation. Following this development, musicians newly introduced to the genre tend to perceive the descriptive context provided by pentagram scores as the actual

21 Cholevas, *Makampedia*, 16.

framework for performing these compositions. Consequently, compositions are often viewed as simple monophonic lines that must be recited directly from the score. An illustrative example of this is the different behavior of the same degree in various makam modes, such as the Segah note, what Necdet Yaşar called “heavy traffic areas,”²² as opposed to the common static approach on such degrees.

The inconsistency reaches a critical point when it comes to the practice of taksim. In this context, both the simplified theoretical explanations and the representation of taksim on the pentagram are so far removed from the actual practice of taksim, as seen in recordings of taksim masters, that the current educational system falls short in adequately preparing newcomers to the field. A common response to students who struggle to grasp the true essence of taksim examples, based on the theoretical framework they are provided is, “...but they are masters, masters can improvise as they please.”

The road to taksim development in contemporary institutional programs follows the trajectory: Theory on Pentagram → Compositions on Pentagram → Performance → Improvisation.

The current framework of makam education and its impact on the learning process and performance of makam music should not be underestimated. In contrast to the daily, extended group sessions that a makam master has with a group of students under the Meşk system, academic education often follows a different approach. Typically, students receive one hour per week of instrument lessons, while ensembles and theory are taught separately by different instructors due to the fragmentation of the curriculum and the division of roles between theoreticians, musicians, and ensemble coaches. This pattern persists in the current shape of academic education, which spans 3-4 years for undergraduate programs and 1-2 years for Master’s degree trajectories.

The organization of lessons under the Meşk system can still be found in non-academic institutions like Labyrinth Music. It is intriguing to note that the Meşk framework now exists in academia primarily in the form of masterclasses. What was once the primary mode of education has been condensed into short training periods, typically reserved for the most elite students.

Taking a closer look at the previous comparison of elements between the two approaches, we can identify significant differences in the fundamental blocks of the two different music-making practices.

²² Cholevas, *Makampedia*, 9.

Musical/Technical fundamentals	Meşk Approach	Contemporary Approach
Phrasing	Flavours	n-chords (4chords, 5chords)
Repertoire	Memory, Metaphoric language	simplified score
Makam	Mode, Soundscape, melodic development	(exotic) scales
Rhythmic cycles	Backbone of compositional forms	Rhythms
Degrees	Dynamic, Microtonal performance $f(x)$	Static: Where, precise fixed position
	is a function of $x \rightarrow$ melodic gravity	

Table 1.2: Technical and musical fundamentals in Meşk and Contemporary education

Once again, the two approaches employ contrasting concepts for makam education, beginning from different focal points, praxis and theory.

In Meşk:

- a) The teaching of phrasing in both composition and taksim performance is rooted in terms like “flavor.” Teachers often use a combination of makam flavors to describe a melodic itinerary, allowing students to grasp and express the fundamental character and essence of a makam through the construction of phrases.
- b) Repertoire is memorized, and its intricacies are explained using metaphorical language, which is employed by makam masters to express the ineffable elements of music making.
- c) makam modes are described in terms of their capacity to create identifiable soundscapes, often referred to as ›Ethos‹ or each makam mode’s disposition. The scale plays a limited role in forming the character of makam, with elements of melodic development having a more significant impact.
- d) Compositional forms are based on long rhythmic cycles closely tied to poetry. Rhythmic cycles can be extensive, with musicians trained to keep them using hand movements while singing and memorizing compositions before playing them on instruments. The old treatises of music written in the Ottoman language were titled “İlm-i Edvâr,” which literally translates to “the science of cycles.” This choice of title underscores the fundamental importance of rhythmic cycles in composing music.²³ In Turkish, the term for composition is “beste,” which means “to set” or “to attach.” This term carries a poetic concept,

²³ Cholevas, *Makampedia*, 119.

suggesting that when a spontaneous melody is set or attached to a fixed rhythmic cycle, it transforms into a composition.

- e) Certain makam degrees move within a limited area, following melodic development and being attracted by modal centers.

These degrees are a function of melodic gravity and phrasing, with their positions being flexible based on the current gravitational center and phrase characteristics.

In response to a question by Feldman²⁴ regarding the precise positioning of the Segah degree, Necdet Yasar offers an intriguing perspective. He does not refer to these notes as fixed positions, but rather as “heavy-traffic areas.” He explains that he needs to move his hand back and forth to find the right place for them on each occasion. This perspective shows how these degrees are influenced by melodic gravity and phrasing. In different makams and various movements within the same makam, some degrees may have alternative positions depending on the current gravitational center they are attracted to, and the character of the phrase—for example, whether the phrase is conclusive or inconclusive, among other factors.

- f) Intervals are flexible and ideosyncratic, dependent on the performer and the style. However, they do serve functional purposes and follow specific rules within a given style.
- g) Technique on instruments is not a prerequisite for starting music education. Students of varying levels and instruments are grouped together, learning through a process of imitation. Technique is a byproduct of the learning process, with students encouraged to advance according to their musical preferences and needs.
- h) Ensembles are small and consist of instruments with distinct roles. This setup allows musicians to utilize their idiosyncrasies, creating a heterophonic ensemble sound. Typically, there is no single leader in an ensemble, as all members actively listen and respond.

²⁴ Feldman, *Music of the Ottoman Court*, 210.

In Contemporary educational environment:

- a) The subunits of makam and phrasing are introduced using concepts like 4chords and 5chords, which are static entities of a makam's scale.
- b) Compositions are taught using simplified scores, as pentagrams do not efficiently represent melismatic movement. The role of the score has shifted from being a melodic map to the primary framework for performance.
- c) makam is considered a scale with specific directions, such as ascending, descending, or combined directions within defined limits. The scale is constructed by adding tri-, tetra-, and pentachords.
- d) Compositional forms and long rhythmic cycles are treated as time signatures.
- e) Non-TET degrees of the makam are fixed, with the system based on a 53 equally-tempered comma system.
- f) Intervals are mathematically fixed, with microtonal movement considered a stylistic element.
- g) Technique is emphasized from the outset, with students receiving dedicated technique lessons. Technical skills are assessed based on specific criteria and carry their own weight in grading, independent of performance, improvisation, or composition skills.
- h) Ensembles are expanded to resemble symphonic orchestras, especially for television and radio shows. Each instrument section includes multiple instruments, with a conductor leading both the orchestra and the choir. The pursuit of westernization has led to a unison sound, with dynamics clearly notated in the score or directed by the conductor.

Theory for Whom?

With the insights gained from the previous chapter in mind, we must consider the question of who the new theoretical framework is designed for and whether it effectively fulfills its purpose of introducing musical concepts and training newcomers to the field of makam music. In the context of academic education, the question concerns the undergraduate programs offered by higher educational institutions (or 3 and 1 years respectively for certain curricula offered in Europe).

Based on the author's experience as an educator in such an institution, unless students enter the program with a solid background in makam or related musical genres, statistically, it appears highly unlikely that they will be able to grasp the

essence of makam within the constraints of the current educational model. In most cases, upon completing their studies, students can outline the theoretical elements of a makam, including notating the correct accidentals, calculating intervals in commas, describing the direction or melodic movement of the makam, and naming the makam. However, they often struggle to successfully perform an improvisation in the style of Taksim or recognize by ear the intricacies of a Taksim, such as modulations into other makam modes.

The current system seems inadequate to provide a framework through which musicians can not only logically understand, but also deeply comprehend makam concepts.

On the other hand, the current system appears to work reasonably well for musicians who are already experienced in the field of makam. Such musicians can perform in specific makam styles when provided with a simplified score, using it as a foundation and melodic guide upon which they can build their makam performance. Contextual knowledge and experience with the elements of makam enable them to interpret the score dynamically, akin to how a jazz musician can create music in various jazz styles by reading a simple real book score. This brings to mind Erguner's comment that one cannot perform makam music without having its memory in their ears first.²⁵

Therefore, when considering whether this is a successful model for makam education, the answer appears to be that it is primarily successful for those who do not rely heavily on it—those who have already advanced in their understanding of makam, those who use the staff score as a mere reference or a basic framework for musical elaboration, and those who can navigate beyond the limitations of Eurogenetic theoretical descriptions of makam.

Possible Solutions

Considering the current trend of shorter academic curriculums and the inclusion in music education of non-musical modules such as entrepreneurship and pedagogy, along with the addition of non-style specific music modules, it is important to explore ways to improve the teaching of makam within the existing format of education. The author believes that this is achievable and offers some suggestions for achieving this desirable outcome:

²⁵ Cholevas, *Makampedia*, 42.

- a) Begin by addressing the problematic nature of the current theoretical framework, providing a historical overview of its evolution and the reasons it has reached its current state.
- b) Recognize that practice is essential, and since a strong musical foundation relies on students' memory, theory lessons could be designed to be more practical. This could involve placing greater emphasis on exposing students to a wide range of audio examples, helping them understand and develop phrasing through both imitation and proactive processes such as transcription and analysis of taksim and composition performances.
- c) Offer more contact hours for students by organizing longer sessions in which they can have a deeper immersion in makam music. This approach might reduce individual attention from the teacher, but would resemble the format of a masterclass.
- d) Reintroduce the use of metaphoric language as the primary means of explaining makam characteristics and encourage students to embrace it when discussing makam phenomena.
- e) Address the limitations of traditional staff notation, especially in representing intervals, tuning, degree movement, and functionality. Explore alternative ways to represent musical phenomena that work in conjunction with staff notation.

A successful example of such a representation comes from AUTRIM,²⁶ a research project focused on representation of Raga (North Indian classical music performances). AUTRIM uses computer-aided audio-synced melodic contours to represent melismatic elements. A similar approach adapted for makam education has been developed by the author, combining audio syncing of melodic contours with simple staff notation in a complementary score. This score helps demonstrate micro-movements, improvisation structures, degree tuning, and basic score reading on a combined, complementary representation.²⁷

This complementary, audio-synced score does not replace the gradual, experiential comprehension that comes from practicing and immersing oneself in makam music. Instead, it acts as a valuable tool to engage students, combine visual and auditory learning, and potentially expedite the learning process. The continuous melodic contour effectively portrays the dynamic nature of movable de-

²⁶ Further information about AUTRIM see: <https://autrimncpa.wordpress.com>.

²⁷ Cholevas, *Makampedia*, 80.

grees, providing a visual aid for understanding melodic gravity and enhancing the grasp of functional idiosyncrasies (Video 3).



https://storage.gmth.de/proceedings/articles/352/attachments/352_video_03.mp4

Video 3: A recording by Cemil Bey with visualisations.

Finally, with the use of annotating software, annotations can be added to provide audio-synced analysis within specific areas of interest, leveraging ethnographically gathered data. This can serve as a supplementary educational tool, acting as a form of “absent teacher”²⁸ by providing further insights and guidance for students.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution to fully replicate the traditional master-apprentice format within the confines of contemporary academic education. However, for classical music genres like classical makam of the Ottoman period to endure the challenges posed by the modern academic environment and increasing popularization, a new educational reform is essential. This reform should incorporate elements from fields such as digital humanities and practice-based learning, leveraging technology and traditional methods to transmit the rich heritage of these art forms across generations and re-facilitate the strong personal bond between teacher and student.

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