

Changes in the Field of Turkish Music during the Late Ottoman/Early Republican Era¹

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Music theory and notation complement each other. Yet, we can say that any information written on paper does not go beyond being just a hint. Only if both detailed theoretical knowledge and a sophisticated notation method exist can we gain slightly better results. In our music – which depends on oral transmission – prior knowledge and *a priori* recognitions are even more important. In this music, *perde* mean more than just music notes and *makams* mean more than scales. Priority has to be given to the issue of style (*üslûp*).

As it is known, over time Ottoman-Turkish *makam* music, in order to define itself, has made use of different theoretical explanatory and notation methods (as alphabetical notation has spread over a long time). The problem of how these elements were perceived in their time and following on from this, will always remain present. This issue should be considered regardless of the transformation of music itself. If we could consecutively play the music samples, which Cantemir qualified as “old” and “new,” to music listeners or even the musicians of our day, and sounding as authentic as possible, we would barely notice the fine distinctions between them. It has been mandatory to accept the qualifications of Cantemir until today (owing to chronological priority).

We can detect historical transformation not by such personal inferences and repeated common consent, but rather from documents that we can actually see and follow up. Considering that we have scant a limited number of written sources and that inter-textual studies are still a new and modern approach, we might conclude that the period in which one can most clearly observe a supposed “change” is the time when publications on music started to be published, in other words, when knowledge on music and compositions spread. We should remember that such a dissemination of information means engaging a greater part of society as an active part of this process. Printed music materials from the beginning of musical prints on are intended as a continuation of previous periods, but, on the other hand, also form something different. They represent a period after a certain point in history, and hence in fact they imply a kind of “change”. Let us look into some details evident in the material in general.

¹ This article was written while working on the book entitled *Osmanlı Müziğini Okumak: Neşriyat-ı Mûsikî* (Paçacı 2010), and by using the documents which were covered in this text.

Disappearance of Concepts in Music Theory and their Replacement by New Ones

The prototypes of *makam* concepts like *âvâze*, *şu'be*, *terkîb* which are covered in *Kitabu'l kebîr* of Fârâbî (10th century), with some changes by Anatolian *edvâr* writers continued to exist until the 19th century.

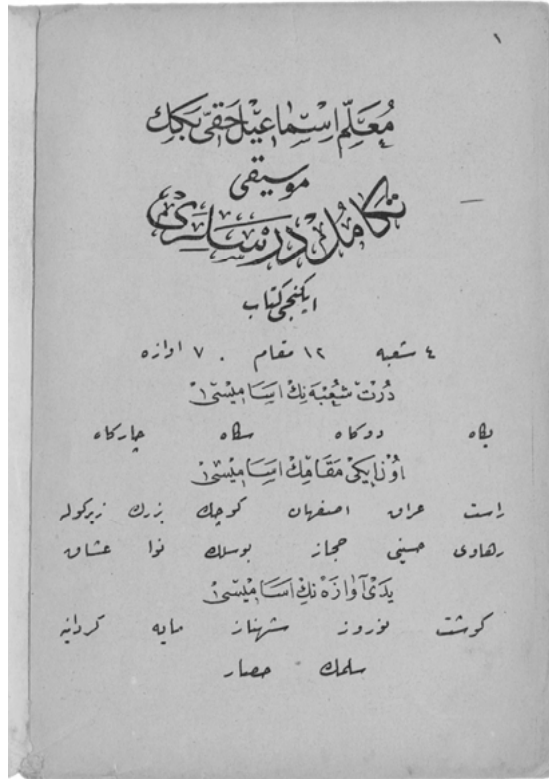
In the *Kitabu'l kebîr*, for example, we find this expression:

“Towards morning, *râhevî*; in midday, *zenkûle*; after the night prayer, *büzürg*; in the time of sleeping, *zirefkend*.”²

These elements were mirrored with some changes until the *Mûsıkî Tekâmül Dersleri* (1926), one of the last books printed in the Ottoman Turkish alphabet – although later printed in the Latin alphabet as well – written by Muallim İsmail Hakkı Bey, a renowned performer, teacher and composer during the Second Constitutional Era. The novelty in this book that needs to be emphasised is that the *seyir* of *makams* are first described and then exemplified with musical notation.

Fig.1: Muallim İsmail Hakkı Bey:
Mûsıkî Tekâmül Dersleri

4 *şu'bes* – 12 *makams* – 7 *âvâzes*
Names of four *şu'bes*:
yegâh – *dügâh* – *segâh* – *çargâh*
Names of twelve *makams*:
rast – *irak* – *isfahân* – *kûçbek* – *bozorg* –
zîrgüle –
rehâvî – *hüseynî* – *hicâz* – *bûselik* –
nevâ – *uşşak*
Names of seven *âvâzes*:
geveşt – *nevruz* – *şehnâz* – *mâye* –
gerdâniye – *selmek* – *hisar*



² “Subh-i kâzib vaktinde RÂHEVÎ / Nısfü'n-nehâr vaktinde ZENKÛLE / Yatsı namazından sonra BÜZÜRG / Vakt-i nevmde ZİREFKEND”.

The concept of *makam* after Rauf Yekta, Arel and Ezgi, then based on tratrachords and pentachords and divided into the categories of basic (*basit*) – compound (*mürekkep*) – and transposed (*şed*) *makams* goes beyond the concept of change.

The Juxtaposition of Old and New Knowledge

The most well-known collection of lyrics of its period, the *Haşim Bey Mecmû'ası* (first printed in 1269 AH/AD 1853, second printing in 1280 AH/AD 1864) contains in its beginning a section on music theory. After a description of a total of 89 *makams* starting with *rast*, further sentences are added, that describe *makam* in the “*ala franga*” (European) style. For example for *rast makam* the following phrase is added: “Because this *makam* exists in the European style (*alafranga*), it is defined as basic scale (*usûl ton*). See notation in appendix”. Obviously, in addition to this different approach, the traditional knowledge is also preserved (see Fig. 2).

This dual approach continued to exist until a later time, as it is understood from the following phrases in the small theory book *Mebâdî-ı mûsikî* (“Basic knowledge of music”) which was published in 1326 AH (AD 1910):

“Third part: music (mûzik) and vocal (vokal), major (macör), minor (minör), notation of the scales of the makams (gamm-ı makamâtın)”

In this part Turkish translations are suggested for western musical terms:

“Ronde: Müdevver; Blanche: Beyzî; Noire: Siyah; Croche: Çengelli; Double croche: Çifte çengelli; Triple croche: Üçer çengelli; Pause: Tevakkuf; Demi (half) pause: Nim tevakkuf; Soupir: Nefes; Demi (half) soupir: Nim nefes; Quart soupir: Rub’ nefes; Demi Quart: Nim rub.”

“Largo: Âbeste; Larghetto: Âbestemsi; Adagio: Muhteşem; Andante: Âdetâ; Allegro: Sür’atli; Presto: Serî, cimmastik.”

(See Fig. 3)

The dosage of the different concepts can change according to the amount of time passed and the writers. For example, it is stated that “this is written according to the program of “*Mekâtib-i Sultânîye* in the year 1339 AH (AD 1920)” on the inner cover of *Mûsikî Nazariyatı* (music theory) of Kâzım (Uz) Bey and in its introduction he writes “acknowledging Western music theory as essential, this book covers the theory that corresponds to the Eastern music.”

The image shows two pages from a manuscript, each containing a 7x7 grid of Persian text. The left page is titled "فنايل نامی ایامی و سبعة سیاره به نسبهای و قسوس ساعات تصادفی اشوحد و لن تنظیم اولیاد" and the right page is titled "حکیمه ملک ساتن نمه ملک تا شیراقی و سبعة سیاره به نسبهای". Both tables are 7x7 grids with Persian text in the cells. The text in the cells appears to be a combination of planetary names and musical notes, arranged in a systematic way. The right page has a small number '۷۰' in the top left corner of the grid area, and the left page has a small number '۷۱' in the top left corner of the grid area.

Fig. 2

"This scale disposes the relationship of melodies to the days effecting them and the seven planets, and at what time they coincide"

"Influences of the hours of the night on melodies and their relationship with the seven planets."

۲۸

شبه جدول اولی مقامات تاثیر و تقریر کوسنور

رهایی	صبح کاتب	حسینی	صبح صادق	راست	خجسته
زساک	غیر کوهی	زیر کوه	انفالیاو	عشاق	وقت ظهر
عشاق	عصر اول	عراق صبا	عصر ثانی	اصفهان	قبل الغروب
نوا	وقت الغروب	زیر کوه	بعدالغناء	زیر کوه	وقت التلوی

شبه جدول اولی مقامات وجه تاثیر کوسنور

راست	الاصفان	رهایی	بکا	زیر کوه	زیر کوه
زیر کوه	خجسته	اصفهان	جوده	نوا	لذات
عشاق	عشاق	زیر کوه	نیم	عراق صبا	شجاعت
زساک	وقت	حسینی	صلح	جواز	تواضع

۳۰

فصلنامه شماره سی و نهم ساعت تاثیر و تقریر شبه جدول کوسنور

ساعت	شبه	چشم	بجهت	چهارشنبه	ساعت	شبه	چشم
۱	راست	زیر کوه	دوره	مثنوی	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۲	زیر کوه	مثنوی	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۳	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
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۵	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
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۷	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۸	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
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۱۰	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۱۱	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۱۲	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره

۳۱

فصلنامه شماره سی و نهم ساعت تاثیر و تقریر شبه جدول کوسنور

ساعت	شبه	چشم	بجهت	چهارشنبه	ساعت	شبه	چشم
۱	راست	زیر کوه	دوره	مثنوی	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۲	زیر کوه	مثنوی	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۳	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۴	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۵	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۶	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۷	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۸	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۹	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۱۰	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۱۱	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره
۱۲	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	عشاق	دوره

Fig. 3

(pg. 29 above) "This table shows the effects of times on the twelve *makams*"; (below) "This table shows the form of effects on the twelve *makams*."

(pg. 30) "This table shows the relationship between the melodies and the seven planets, and the daytimes and hours of effects."

(pg. 31) "This table shows the relationship between the melodies and the seven planets, and the night times and hours of effects."

Approaches Changing Alongside Music Theory

The most prominent issues that can be observed in printed musical publications are the changes of genres and forms, the signs that represent notes and intervals in Turkish music and the basic scale. It should be noted that the idea that the material in question appeals to the public plays a decisive role. The purposes of transferring music, teaching music, composing and performing a composition gradually changed. A noticeable issue in these publications is the particular emphasis on “accuracy” and “authenticity.” Hence we see that the dissemination of information is considered important. In addition the fact that both the existing theoretical knowledge and the repertoire is about to become permanent in this way gives rise to a feeling of responsibility.

For example, similar sentences were written in the opening of the publications made by the brothers Şamlı Selim, İskender and Tefik who published sheet music in Istanbul since the 19th century:

It is known that I all along printed and distributed all the corrected notations of the unique works of our music in the form they reach us, by their circulation from instrument to instrument, with the purpose to protect them against mistakes and mixture by oblivion. (Collection *Sazende* – Şamlı Selim (ed.))

“Our notations are printed after having been corrected by talented masters” (excerpted from a public announcement for Şamlı İskender’s shop).

By virtue of the demand and kindness of our dear customers, our store publishes every week *peşrev*, *saz semaîsi*, *şarkı* and *kantos* including every *makam* and free of mistakes and inaccuracies. (From the back cover of *saba fasıl*, published by Onnik Zadoryan)

Such expressions can be found frequently from the 1870s onwards when the use of Western notation grew like an avalanche, hence the local musical note publications using only one flat or sharp. The notations published by Notacı Hacı Emin Efendi as a supplement to the magazine *Ma’lûmat* created a growing number of followers. On the one hand the necessity to learn musical notes gradually became felt more. As Emin Efendi openly expressed in his book *Nota Muallimi* (1302 AH/ AD 1884):

Advantage of Notation

In our country the science of music is taught by two ways, one of which being *alaturka*, hence the memorisation of the names of notes and *dîim tek*, the other being European notation. If a person who is enthusiastic about learning the science of music with Turkish method starts his education in his youth with a talented music teacher and engages in it to the utmost, he/she can acquire considerable amount of knowledge about it. However, a student who starts his/her education in the *alafranga* way, thus with notation, can within some month acquire the notes and the beats of the *usûl* by reading notations. Within a few years he/she will learn on which notes the *makams* of *peşrevs*, *semaî* and *şarkı* he/she performs are build upon, and how the notation of a *şarkı* he/she had listen to has to be arranged. In the end he/she will learn the science of music perfectly.”

We find similar expressions in sheet music publications which gained distinctive characters with their differing layouts and ornaments. They found acceptance in social life, and made the repertoire and the *fasıls* of the *Direklerarası* entertainments tangible:

Although the dissemination of the music that cannot be denied to cheer people up and clear the consciences is thought to happen owing to amusements and entertainments, the fact that it happens entails gratitude. In fact our music has been advanced previously. However, because notation was not in use it could not be disseminated. If it was, even the most simple *şarkı* would have been spread with distortion. And within a very short time it would be forgotten. Now that the scripture of the musical language, which means the rules of notation are appreciated by the public, many works devoted to music have been published and disseminated. (The back cover of *kürdilibicazkar faslı* by Arşak Çömlekçyan)

Towards the end of the 19th century a discussion had begun regarding how to define a genuine Turkish music theory and the natural intervals inherent to this music according to changing trends. The *Dârü'l Elbân* as the first music institution, was connected with the results of this discussion.

The article *Notalar Hakkında İhtâr-ı Mahsûs* (Special Information about Music Notes) by Ali Rıfat Bey can be taken as the first proposition on this topic. It was printed on the back of the 47th issue of the sheet music supplements of *Malumat* and starts with these words:

The biggest and the most respected feature of the *alafranga* (Western) music is that an *alafranga* melody can be played with every note. As a matter of fact the most biggest shortcoming of the *alaturka* (Turkish) music is that such practice is impossible! So with the future notation signs, that word “impossible” would disappear.

After all the propositions, it is known that a system was developed that tries to describe our music using Western-based terms. Until Yekta, and even including him, instead of the *makam rast* (which was known as the “mother of the *makams*”, *ümmü'l-makamât*), *çargâh* was adopted as a basic scale and accepted as equivalent to a pure do major. *Makams* were defined on the basis of tetrachords and pentachords and so forth. We can call this period and trend the “*Tevhîd-i Tedrîsât* (The Unification of Education Law) of Turkish music.”³

The striking point is that in the following years this approach became widespread without any enforcement or similar efforts. The fact that the Arel-Ezgi system made perception easier and simpler in the beginners' stage played a big role in this phenomenon.

Another issue we need to point out is the problem of tuning caused by the use of notation and its dissemination even though it is not understood from the printed compositions. As it is known, an incorrect practice that dates back to

³ A part of the Kemalist reforms of the early Turkish republican period the “Unification of Education Law” from 3 March 1924 unified the Turkish school system and introduced western education as a general rule.

Donizetti created a difference between the notes of Turkish and Western music, and as a result the notes of contemporary Turkish music are not played or sung according to the places they are located in the notation. A note notated for a “mansur ney” for example will sound a fourth lower than written.

The Differentiation Caused by Musical Training

One of the results of the increasing publication efforts was that musicians began to write practical method books in Turkish musical education. As generally known, violin methods were brought from abroad and translated into Ottoman-Turkish, Turkish violin teaching books began to be published from the end of the 19th century, e.g. *Alaturka Muallimi* (“Alaturka Teacher”) by Kemanî Zafirâki and *Usûl-i i Ta’lîm-i Keman* (“Method and Education of the Violin”) (1331 AH/AD 1913) by Seyyid Abdülkadir Töre.

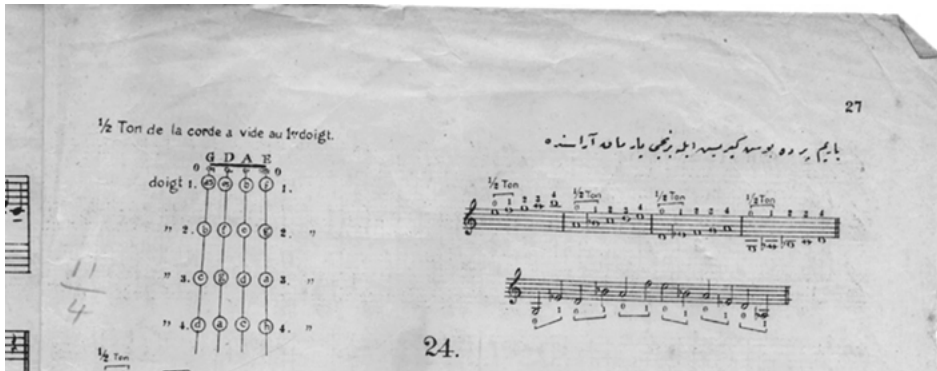


Fig. 4: *Ecole de la Technique de l'Archet* (The School of Bowing Technique) violin teaching book signed by Christides.

In the introduction to his teaching book Kemanî Zafirâki emphasises the different nature of his approach:

Some people – in order to learn to play violin in an regular and orderly manner – want to continue *meşk* practice with European methods. However, because the bowing techniques as shown in European methods are not suitable for Ottoman tunes, most of these people are not successful at playing a *peşrev* or a *beste*, and they are not able to perform the beauty of the masterworks of our music, nor the famous art of sophistication of a *taksim*.

As I understood from my experiences regarding this shortcoming, this obstacle can only be overcome by arranging a method that shows the rules of *alaturka* tunes being applied to notation. Hence in order to show the tones of the *seyir* of the mentioned *makams* together with their fingering position, I created this humble book based on my 12 years of experience and research.

In the method of Seyyid Abdülkadir Töre, the sensibility about teaching how to play violin in accordance with Turkish music notes is striking:

(...) as I thoroughly believe that my modest book is preferable to the violin methods which are not sufficient to the needs of our music and are inconsistent with the regulations and the theory of the Eastern music, I believe my brief explanations on this issue should be included in books in a short form and explicated further.

In the beginning of the method, there is a table with “old and new names of the notes” as edited and having been ascribed to the collection *Hânende Mecmuası* by Abdülkadir Töre.

We can further see that since the early 20th century, *ud* teaching books have also begun to be published. Examples can be cited: *Ud Muallimi* (Selanik 1308 AH/AD 1902) by Hâfız Mehmed Bey, *Hocasız Ud Öğrenmek Usûlü* (1326 AH/AD 1910) by Ali Salâhî Bey², *Nazarî ve Amelî Ud Dersleri* (1336 AH/AD 1920) by Udî Mehmed Fahri (Kopuz) Bey.



Fig. 5: Photos of Ali Salahi Bey showing how to hold an *ud* and its *mızrap* (plectrum)

In addition to the teaching books, the increase of books devoted to the musical education of children is remarkable. In the beginning the old information as well as traditional melodies known in everyday life only by ear were included in these publications. As a typical example we can give this school song, in which we can feel the impression of *kâr-ı nâtuks* that conveys information particular to our traditional music.

The children's songs in the school book titled *Medhâl-i Mûsikî* ("Introduction to Music", 1330/1924: 29f) by M. Sahib makes use of the names of the notes while singing/playing the same note. Additionally various musical terms are included in the lyrics.

In this row, the natural scale thogether with the names of accidental are given:

Musical Accidentals (ârza-i mûsikîyye): all sharps and flats

Natural scale (silsile-i tabîyye): do re mi fa sol la si

The lyrics with a melody in two lines and with a sign of fast (*sür'atli*) *Allegro* in the beginning (see Fig. 6):⁴

1. A group of clouds in the sky, a group of goose in the court
Where are their notes? *La sol fa mi do re si*
2. The arms of my shirt, the mingling you did
Where is its makam? *La sol fa mi do re si*
3. *Do re mi fa sol la si*, a music booklet
Where is its scale? *La sol fa mi do re si*
4. *Sol la si do re mi fa*, in the beginning a dry head
Where is its tonic? *La sol fa mi do re si*
5. *La si do re mi fa sol*, left there is a clef in *sol*
Where is its hat, where is its head? *La sol fa mi do re si*
6. A creek on a high mountain, the *fasıls* are always on trust
Where is its rest, *la sol fa mi do re si*

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- ⁴
1. Gökte yıldız küme'si, avluda kaz kümes'i
Nota bunun neresi? *la sol fa mi do re si*
 2. Gümleğimin kolası, ettiğini bulası
Makam bunun neresi, *la sol fa mi do re si*
 3. *Do re mi fa sol la si*, bir nota risalesi
İskalası neresi? *la sol fa mi do re si*
 4. *Sol la si do re mi fa*, başta bi'kuru kafa
Reis bunun neresi, *la sol fa mi do re si*
 5. *La si do re mi fa sol*, solda bir kledir sol
Fesi, başı neresi? *La sol fa mi do re si*
 6. Yüce dağlar deresi, fasıllar hep veresi
Fasılası neresi, *la sol fa mi do re si*
 7. Çengelli mi karası? Opera maskarası
Macör minör neresi? *la sol fa mi do re si*
 8. Rıhtımın iskelesi, si bemol iskalası
Arızası neresi? *la sol fa mi do re si*
 9. Operetle dramı, mûsikinin pogramı
Şed ve îka neresi? *la sol fa mi do re si*
 10. Kaval koyun havası, evfer oyun havası
Valsi, dansı neresi, *la sol fa mi do re si*

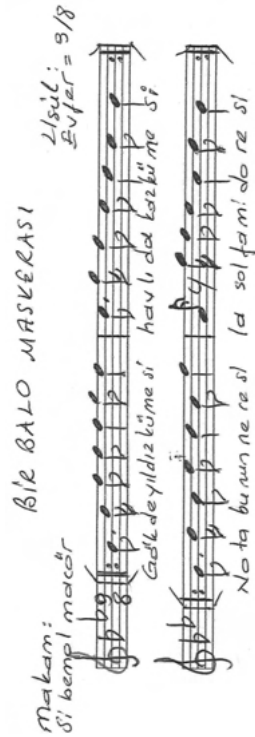


Fig. 6

Lesson 26: cvfer (*usûl* with nine beats)

16 – A Masquerade Ball

Türkî form*Makam gerdaniye* = Bb major*Usûl evfer* = 9/8*Zemin* (Couplet)

۲۵. بر بالو ماسکه‌راسی

مقام : سی به مول ماجور [۸] اصول اوفر = ۹/۸

سی سه کو نه ده به سی سه کو نه ده کوک

سی سه کو نه ده به سی سه کو نه ده کوک

سور

۱. کوکله ییلدیز کوممسی : حاویلده قاز کوممسی .
نوطله بونک ندره سی ؟ لاسول قانی دوره سی .

۲. کومله کیملک قولاسی ؛ ایتدیکینی بولاسی .
مقام بونک ندره سی ؟ لاسول قانی دوره سی .

۳. اوبهرت ایله درامی ، موسیقی نك پروغرامی .
شدو ایتاق . ندره سی ؟ لاسول قانی دوره سی .

[۸] موسیقی عثمانی ده غیر مستعمل ایله ده سیری کردانی کیلر ده . بونکی نظریه تزییف دینور بری ده سگاه نعلاندده .

7. Is the black one a quaver? Masquerade ball
Where is major and minor? *la sol fa mi do re si*
8. The framework of the rhythm, the scale of b flat
Where are the accidentals? *la sol fa mi do re si*
9. Drama with operetta, the program of music
Where is the transposition and where is the *ika*? *la sol fa mi do re si*
10. A shepherd melody on the *kaval*-flute, evfer oyun havası
Where is the waltz, where is the dance, *la sol fa mi do re si*

The lyrics with a melody in two lines and with a sign of *Larghetto* – *Âhestemsi* in the beginning (see Fig. 7):⁵

1. My beloved music lesson: Knowledge of music
Thousand thanks to the author: *do re mi fa sol la si*
2. I will apply the *usûl*: stop, rest;
I will separate the notes: *do re mi fa sol la si*.
3. One round two ovals, a crotchet is half of a minim
One crotchet two quavers, *do re mi fa sol la si*
4. Our steps are really regular; almost slowly;
Gymnastics, speed, splendid; *do re mi fa sol la si*
5. Musical accidentals: all sharps and flats
the natural scale: *do re mi fa sol la si*
6. I know the makams; both major and minor
I know the rests: *do re mi fa sol la si*
7. I love beautiful notes: the enthusiasm to excite
I read and dance: *do re mi fa sol la si*

⁵ 1. Sevgilim muzıka dersi: Mebâdi-i mûsiki
Müellifine mil mersi: *do re mi fa sol la si*
2. Usûle tatbik ederim: tevakkuf, teneffüs;
Notayı tefrik ederim: *do re mi fa sol la si*.
3. Bir müdevver iki beyzi, siyah beyaz yarısı
Bir siyah iki çengelli, *do re mi fa sol la si*
4. Hatvemiz gayet muntazam; adeta ahestemsi;
Cimnastik, sür'at, muhteşem; *do re mi fa sol la si*
5. Ârza-i mûsikiyye : diyez, bemol hepisi
Silsile-i tabiiyye : *do re mi fa sol la si*
6. Makamlarını tanırım; macör, minör ikisi
Fasılalarını bilirim: *do re mi fa sol la si*
7. Güzel sadâyı severim: tahrik eder hevesi
Hem okur hem dans ederim: *do re mi fa sol la si*

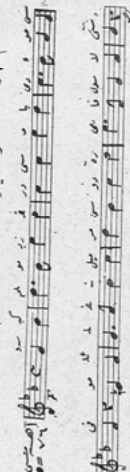
— ۲۶ —

موسیقی طلبه‌سی

نشیده

مقام نوازند = سول مینور

اصول نیم دو یک = $\frac{2}{4}$



۱. مبادی موسیقی : سوکام موزیکه درسی :
دوره می فاسول لاسی . مؤلفه میل مرسی :

۲. توقف ، تنفسی . اصوله تطبیق ایدرم :
دورمی فاسول لاسی . نوطی قریق ایدرم :

۳. سیاه بیانک یارلسی . بریواراق ایکی بیضی :
دورمی فاسول لاسی . برسیاه ایکی چشکلی :

۴. عادتاً ، آهسته‌می . خطوط غایت منتظم :
دورمی فاسول لاسی . زیناسیک ، سرعت ، مختتم :

۵. دیباز ، بچول هلیسی . عارضه موسیقیه :
دورمی فاسول لاسی . سلسله طبعیه :

Makam Nihavend
Sol Minor

MÜSİKİ TALEBESİ
Neside

Lilâli
Nim diyek = $\frac{2}{4}$



Alıştım! Sev'gi limmizi ka ders'i me ba di' mü si
ki Mü za li fi ne mi l me si do re mi fa so l la si

Fig. 7

Twenty fifth lesson: sol minor with two accidentals

15 – Music Table

Kosma form

Makam nihavend = G minor

Usûl nim diyek = C (polka)

Zemin (Complet)

The Differentiation of Music Terms and Approaches

It is striking how much the form of traditional explanations is changing between these publications, and sometimes even this change was not enough. For example, Mehmet Baha Bey covered explanations of *makams* in his article titled “*Timsâl-i Makamat*” (“Symbols of *makams*”), published in his magazine *Âlem-i Mûsiki* in 1335 AH/AD 1919, in Bursa. Some of these explanations include:

Rast: He is a real philosopher with the deep lines of the life, bushy and grey moustache on his clean, pure face.

Hicaz: He/she is scorched in his/her own misery and misfortune without expecting any consolation from anywhere.

Hüzzam: His/her orphanage grievances rouses a feeling of despondence and pain even in stony hearts.

We can conclude that a search for such different explanation styles which seem unsophisticated today were very popular, just by looking at the following complimentary statement in a letter which was sent to the magazine where this article was published by Rauf Yekta Bey. The latter claimed to be the founder of modern Turkish musicology and was unquestionably one of the music authorities:

I was so touched by the lines about the spiritual characteristics of the makams *rast*, *‘uşşak*, *hicaz* under the title of *Timsâl-i Makamat* that I cannot describe it. If you continue this peculiar style which you have the honour of initiating and give your best efforts to write about how these makams in question impressed, you would add an immortal book to our literature of music.

As a matter of fact, we can see in the article titled “*Kökler*” (“Roots”; translated again by Rauf Yekta Bey) that the explanations in this style could be practiced until ‘Abd al-Qâdir Marâghi, in other words until the 14th and the 15th centuries. He used the following similar words to explain a section which he cited from *Zühdetü’l Edvâr*:

Because the *makams* *‘uşşak*, *nevâ*, *bûselik* increase and fortify the courage in the soul, the Turks and the Mongols who have such characters out of their inherent disposition, use most of the time music in these three *makams* in particular in their singing.

As we look at the issue from our times, we can say that in the publications and compositions a transformation and simplification of the language began to be implemented, leading to a general impoverishment. The following definition can be given as an example of this: “The music is a science that informs about the notes of paramour and speaks of the sounds of feelings. The sounds of music can be called ‘the sounds that express feelings’.”

In his article titled “*Dâri’l Ellân’da Alaturka Konser*” (The Concert in Turkish style at the Conservatoire Istanbul) (February 1340/1924), Muharrir Osman Cemal Kaygılı wrote these sentences:

I can think of a musical entertainment without alcohol, but is it possible that music in Turkish style goes without any moans or sighs? (...) As I am sure the teachers would forgive me, I argue that the names of makams should be simplified. There are more than 200 *makams* in Turkish music, but there are hundred and fifty compositions that one can bask in listening to. Do you know what it is like? Do you remember that there were hundreds of offices, thousands of editorial offices and clerks but despite that there was no work done in these offices. Our music is in just the same condition today. Many regulations were made in the offices and this last time many people were put out of work and retired. Our music-lovers too should actualize the same regulations in *makams* and at least 3/4 of this more than 200 *makams* should be deemed ineffective and put out of work.

Finally another important point needs to be remembered: When in the early 20th century sound-recording technology began to become widespread, it added another dimension to the printed materials devoted to music. As oral tradition, so to speak, began to be used again and – if I may say so – music notation fell back to secondary importance, then even the performer got involved as a middleman and compositions moved further away from their original state. Compositions which were notated in order to save them permanently and were disseminated by printed publications gradually suffered because under these conditions memorization was no longer in use, and the music became alienated from itself. On the other hand, sound-recordings lead to the immortalizing of the last period of traditional music in its authentic conditions, in a state where it happened to be “not correctly played because it was not precisely notated.”

