

*Özgün Makale*

# **An Archive of Variants - Hampartsum Notation and Variability in the Transmission of Ottoman Art Music<sup>1</sup>**

## **Bir Varyantlar Arşivi - Osmanlı Sanat Müziğinin Aktarımında Değişkenlik ve Hamparsum Notası**

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### **Abstract**

Especially Ottoman music culture is known to have a rich written music archive. A substantial part of the musical repertoire of Ottoman art music has been notated by various scribes in manuscripts using Hampartsum notation since its invention in the early 19th century until the 20th century. When those notebooks are compared, it is observable that they usually contain different versions of a piece of music. While there is often no explanation for these different versions, some variants are attributed to different composers or performers according to personal stylistic characteristics, while others are chronologically characterized as "old-new". In addition, in some cases the notation was corrected by the scribe or a later hand, or notes were made about the quality of the present version. The fact that musicians educated in an oral tradition (meşk system), where repetition and imitation of the teacher are of great importance, made such evaluations during the written transmission of music cannot be considered independent from the practices of the oral tradition and provide important information about the underlying musical concepts. This study aims to examine the variability in Ottoman art music in the light of various examples selected from Hampartsum notebooks, in parallel with cultural paradigms.

**Keywords:** Music Manuscripts, Hampartsum Notation, Meşk, Ottoman Music, Versions.

### **Öz**

Özellikle Osmanlı müzik kültürünün zengin bir yazılı müzik arşivine sahip olduğu bilinmektedir. Nitekim, sanat müziği repertuarının önemli bir miktarının, 19. yüzyıl başındaki icadından 20. yüzyıla uzanan süreçte Hampartsum notası ile notaya alındığı görülmektedir. Hampartsum defterleri incelendiğinde ise genellikle bir müzik eserinin farklı versiyonlarını içerdikleri fark

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edilen diğeri bir gerçektir. Bu farklı versiyonlar için çoğu zaman bir açıklama yer almazken, bazı varyantların kişisel (tavır) üslup özelliklerine göre farklı besteci veya icracılara atfedildiği, bazıların ise kronolojik bir şekilde 'eski-yeni' nitelemesiyle anıldığı görülmüştür. Buna ek olarak, bazı durumlarda notasyon, kâtip veya sonraki bir el tarafından düzeltilmiş veya mevcut versiyonun niteliği hakkında üzerlerine notlar düşülmüştür. Öğretmeni tekrar ve taklit etmenin büyük önem taşıdığı sözlü bir gelenek (meşk sistemi) içinde yetişen müzisyenlerin, müziğin yazılı aktarımı sırasında bu tür değerlendirmelerde bulunmuş olmaları, sözlü geleneğin uygulamalarından bağımsız düşünülmemeyeceği gibi altta yatan müzikal konseptler hakkında da önemli bilgiler vermektedir. Bu çalışma, arşivlerdeki Hampartsum defterlerinden seçilen çeşitli örnekler ışığında, bir müzik eserinin farklı versiyonlarının işaret ettiği anlamları kültürel paradigmalara paralel olarak ele almayı amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Müzik Yazmaları, Hampartsum Notası, Meşk, Osmanlı Müziği, Versiyon.

## Introduction

The transfer of music out of its transience and its sonic dimension into writing already represents an act of archiving. In relation to perception with the sense of hearing, music becomes tangible in a different way in its materialization as musical text and also repeatedly accessible over longer periods of time. The interdependence of music and writing is particularly pronounced in Western art music and has essentially contributed to its development, as Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht states:

Theory (ratio) is constitutive for occidental music, especially for that which particularly characterizes it: the artificial polyphony and its history. Nobody will doubt this (and it has nothing to do with Eurocentrism). And so, too, musical notation is a specifically Western phenomenon. It is in turn - hand in hand with theory - the *conditio sine qua non* for composition. Innovations in composing require new signs, and each new sign opens up new compositional possibilities. Theory, notation and composition form a triadic unity that characterizes Western music. Needless to emphasize that this unity, permeated by ratio, not only establishes the historicity of Western music, but also releases its aesthetic autonomy and does not limit the emotional moment, but on the contrary: makes it possible (Eggebrecht, 1998, p. 76).<sup>2</sup>

Notation, i.e. musical writing, is thus a basic prerequisite for the historicity of music. However, it is not tenable that musical notation is a “specifically Western phenomenon” (Haug, 2019). It is well known that Ottoman musical culture in particular can draw on a relatively rich archive of written music. One should mention here individual undertakings of harnessing various forms of notation to record the musical repertoire. The apparent first introduction of a Western form of notation (written from right to left) in the Ottoman Empire was by Alî Ufukî in the 17th century. This was followed at the beginning of the 18th century by Nâyî Osman Dede (1652–1729) and Dimitrie Cantemir [Kantemiroğlu] (1673–1723) with alphabetic notation systems based on the Arabic alphabet. In the further course of the 18th century, the notations of Mustafâ Kevserî (d. 1770) and somewhat later those of Abdülbâkî Nâsır Dede (1765–1821) were introduced. In addition, with the manuscripts in post-Byzantine notation, e. g. Petros Peloponnesios (1740–1778), and the 19th century prints, there is a certain tradition of notational recording of Ottoman music in the Greek Orthodox cultural sphere.<sup>3</sup> It was not until the invention of Hampartsum notation in the early

<sup>2</sup> Translations from German as well as Turkish into English have been made by the authors.

<sup>3</sup> For a classification of the notational techniques cited and their relationship to the process of modernization in Turkey, see (Jäger, 1996; Ergur & Doğrusöz, 2015).

19th century that a method asserted itself that gained a certain interconfessional reach and was not only used by individuals.<sup>4</sup> Thus, in addition to cross-epoch studies, relatively synchronous comparisons of different manuscripts are possible today. The use of Hampartsum notation into the 20th century also allows a close tracing of the historical development not only of the notation system itself, but also of the changes in the notated repertoire.

The relationship between writing and musical practice, however, may be different from that of Western art music. What is already true for the latter is therefore even more true for a musical culture in which composing is not necessarily bound to a form of textuality:

In the culture of musical notation, textuality is also constantly connected with orality or, in a broader sense, with non-scriptural traditions, processes and activities. Part of the orality, or non-writtenness, is the prior and surrounding musical knowledge that plays a decisive role in every reading, understanding, and implementation of musical notation. The instructions and instructional traditions that mediate between notation and sounding - e.g. in music lessons - take place orally. In the non-written realm remain the already mentioned musical self-evidences, which are transmitted beyond notation. Orality, non-writtenness, e.g. taste claims, performance experiences, undocumented thinking, can be decisive for the variability of the written tradition: the versions of a work (Eggebrecht, 1998, p. 76).

It is precisely this variability of the written tradition that one encounters when examining the corpus of Ottoman music in Hampartsum notation. Unlike Eggebrecht's description of Western music, the introduction of Hampartsum notation did not go hand in hand with the composing of music, but reacted and interacted with an orally transmitted repertoire in a musical culture where orality is the authoritative mode for musical activity. However, what is not written down cannot be subjected to analysis. The rich fund of music manuscripts, on the other hand, makes it possible to draw conclusions about cultural paradigms on the basis of the manner of written transmission:

The archive [...], on the other hand, contains the sequences of a culture as well as its possible paradigms. Every single text becomes readable in comparison with a stock of equivalent possibilities. [...] A paradigm is thus an equivalence structure in the archive, i.e. in the corpus of texts, which one searches for comparable passages. The collection of these equivalence passages designates as a kind of cultural topic the possibilities of what was or would have been sayable in a culture instead of what was found in the manifest text (Baßler, 2020, p. 34).

A comparison of the accessible manuscripts in Hampartsum notation with regard to the identification of such equivalence structures may then shed light on how the variability of the written tradition comes about, what basic conceptual assumptions it presupposes, and what factors influence it.

In addition to the Hampartsum manuscripts; the *güfte mecmuas* ('lyrics anthologies'), the most convenient musicological sources of the pre-notational period, are also noteworthy in this respect.<sup>5</sup> Besides the lyrics, *güfte mecmuas* also provide information about the *makâm*, *usûl* and composer of a musical piece. It is also seen that the same composition is sometimes assigned to different *makâms*, *usûls* or composers in those collections. This is an expected situation that such differences may occur as a result of, for example, a poem being composed by different people in different geographies. However, Uslu (2020) mentions in his study that there are examples in which a composition in the same *makâm* and *usûl*, sometimes in different or in the same

<sup>4</sup> For a comprehensive cultural history of Hampartsum notation and the repertoire recorded in it, see (Olley, 2017a).

<sup>5</sup> If, of course, the books including many music pieces written by a few pioneering musicians such as Ali Ufkî (d. ca. 1675), Nâyî Osmân Dede (1652–1729) and Kantemiroğlu (1673–1723) are excluded.

notebook, is attributed to two different composers, and suggests that this may be the result of an error caused by the person who wrote down the lyrics attributing the work to whom s/he learned the music from, through *meşk* (pp. 142–146). Uslu supports this argument with an example, the attribution of a composition by Âmâ Kadrî [Kadrî Çelebi] (d. 1650) to Itrî (d. ca. 1712) instead. This shows that a composition might had been attributed to another composer over time, through the authority acquired by the role s/he overtook in transmitting. Jäger (2016) exemplifies a similar situation with a composition notated in the manuscript NE211<sup>6</sup>, found in *Nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi* at Istanbul University, where Hampartsum notation is a means of transmission: *Irak elçi peşrevi* (pp. 39–41). What is remarkable about this score is that its fourth *hâne* is attributed to Tanburî İsak (d. after 1807). Already unknown in the 1700s and composed for the Mehterhâne, a version of this composition, which is quite different in terms of *makâm* and form, was transcribed by Kantemiroğlu (1673–1723) more than a century earlier, again without the fourth *hâne*. What is interesting, as Jäger points out, is that Tanburî İsak was probably treated as the composer based on his role in transmission.

### ***Meşk* System, The Concept of “Style” and Reflections on the Manuscripts**

Jäger (2016) also states that a new awareness began in the mid-19th century: the awareness of a personal style that distinguishes the individual composers (p. 41). As an example to this, he draws attention to two instrumental pieces from a Hampartsum notebook being kept in *Dil ve Tarih–Coğrafya Fakültesi* (‘Faculty of Languages and History–Geography’) at Ankara University.<sup>7</sup> These are two different interpretations of a peşrev composed by Tanburî Nu’ mân Ağa (d. ca. 1834). The owners of these two consecutively notated interpretations (or styles), Nakşi Dede (d. 1854) and Neyzen Sâlim Bey (d. 1885), are mentioned in the headings of the scores. Accordingly, the one transmitting the musical piece apart from the composer, gained also a great importance. This is because notation has probably made it easier for one to access different versions in different manuscripts without the necessity of being accepted into the selective-permeable world of the *meşk* system. This suggests that the access to a diversity of versions may have increased awareness of the concept of personal style. It is very likely that this awareness increased in parallel with the widespread use of notation, and it is not beyond the realm of possibility that the different composer attributions in the *güfte mecmuas* may be related to the authority created by personal style. Before the 19th century, the scarcity of sources providing musical notation prevents us from making a reliable claim on this subject, but an examination of the theory books shows that there were many changes in *makâm*s and *usûl*s. Therefore, a composition may have changed due to more than one factor over a long period of centuries.

On the other hand, in the *meşk* tradition, students are loyal to what they have learned from their teachers. This is because transmission takes place through the student's imitation and repetition of the teacher, and in this context, what is transmitted is both the style of the teacher and the musical corpus in his memory. Therefore, for the student, both a good memory that allows him to memorize many compositions and loyalty to adopt the style of the teacher are important. According to Ülgener (as cited in Ayas, 2015), “going out of the ancient manner and seeking new and different methods is nothing but an empty labor and invention” (p. 84). In other words, what the teacher taught represents what is ancient and correct, and going beyond it is frowned upon. Haug (2018) also notes that in the long history of *meşk*, the ideal is loyalty to the teacher and the

<sup>6</sup> RISM: TR-Iüne 211-9.

<sup>7</sup> See (TR-Am Müteferrik 335, pp. 88–89).

figure he embodies, not an abstract version of “correctness” close to the “original” (p. 84). *Meşk* literally means the writing sample that a calligrapher (“hattat”) gives to his student as a homework, and the musical world borrowed this term from the world of calligraphy (Behar, 1998, p. 13). Accordingly, the student would try to copy the writing sample given by his teacher over and over again until he gained his teacher's appreciation and approval, hence, the importance of imitating the teacher is obvious. On the other hand, a student in the field of music may have more than one teacher. Ayas (2015) states that there is no requirement for a student to take lessons from a single teacher, and although it is considered correct and legitimate to learn different genres of the repertoire from different teachers, it is also frowned upon to consider one teacher superior to the other and to show disrespect (p. 81).

Looking at Hampartsum manuscripts, it is noticeable that there are strong connections between at least some of the notebooks. The findings presented by Pelen (2022, pp. 2–7) reveal an exchange of musical compositions between manuscripts NE214<sup>8</sup>, NE211 and OA355<sup>9</sup>, and point to the existence of a substantial copying practice.<sup>10</sup> In some cases, even scribal errors were transferred. These findings suggest that the practice of *meşk*, the educational process based on the imitation and repetition of the teacher by the student, may have been reflected in the notebooks. Olley (2017a) states that many collections were compiled over a considerable period of time, and include additions by several hands, indicating that they were passed on between different generations of musicians who were probably in a teacher-student relationship (p. 215). It also seems likely that the very similar handwriting in some Hampartsum notebooks is related to this. Accordingly, although at first glance they appear to have been written by the same scribe, it is possible that they may indicate a similarity stemming from a teacher-student relationship. Some of the Hampartsum notebooks in the *Nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi* at Istanbul University are known as the Râşid Efendi collection, and since the handwriting is very similar in most of them, this may lead researchers to attribute them, perhaps misleadingly, to the same scribe (Figure 1).<sup>11</sup>

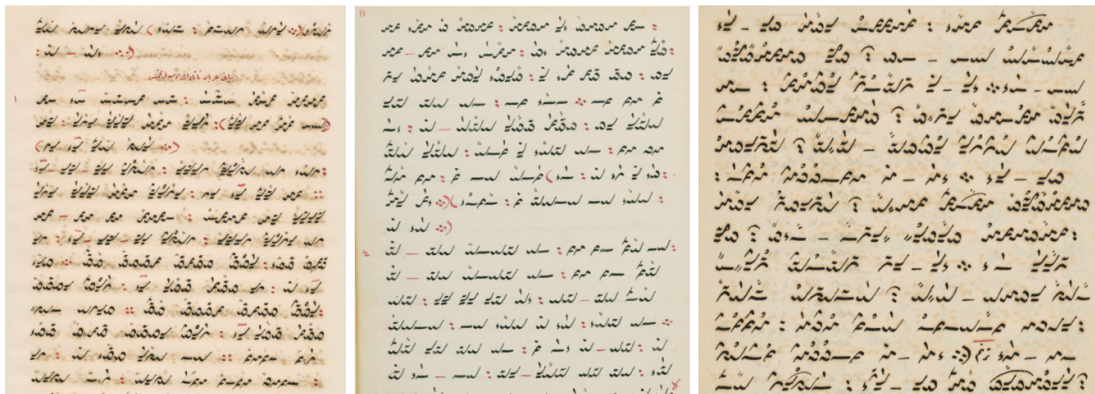


Figure 1: Excerpts from TR-lüne 205-3, p. 19; TR-lüne 207-5, p. 11 and TR-lüne 208-6, p. 1.

Behar (1998; as cited in Ayas, 2015), speaking about the method of *meşk* in the 1950s, states that the music scores to be studied were in the hands of the students and therefore it was essential to photocopy the sheets and study from those copies, rather than the student memorizing the work by imitating the teacher (p. 151; p. 88). This practice started in the mid-20th century and differs from the Ottoman *meşk* tradition in this respect. However, considering the reasons mentioned

<sup>8</sup> RISM: TR-lüne 214-12.

<sup>9</sup> RISM: TR-Iboa TRT.MD.d. 355.

<sup>10</sup> See [https://corpus-musicae-ottomanicae.de/servlets/MCRFileNodeServlet/cmo\\_derivate\\_00001066/CMO1-I-11b\\_Commentary.pdf](https://corpus-musicae-ottomanicae.de/servlets/MCRFileNodeServlet/cmo_derivate_00001066/CMO1-I-11b_Commentary.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> Also see (Olley, 2017a, p. 210).



above, the Hampartsum notebooks in the archives suggest that this practice may have started earlier. In view of all this, the question arises: In a tradition where imitation and repetition are so important, how and why could different versions of a musical composition have been created?

## Personal Style

The training process had to be long in order for students to memorize a certain repertoire at a level that could be passed on to future generations, and it was only after such a long training process that a student could become a “teacher (or master)” and begin to produce his own compositions and improve his performance with the accumulated knowledge provided by this training (Beşiroğlu, 1997; as cited in Gerçek, 2008, p. 155). Accordingly, when a musician who imitates his master reaches a level and competence where he establishes his own authority, it is possible for him to reveal his own style. Of course, although it is more plausible that there may be a bidirectional cause-and-effect relationship between personal style and authority, another important factor that ensures authority is the number of memorized musical pieces. Aslan (2007) states that this situation is also present in the *âşık* tradition because master *âşık*s boast of knowing many masterly idioms and *âşık* stories, in other words, of “keeping many in memory” and consider this as an indicator of mastery (p. 251). As in the example given earlier, the fact that the Hampartsum notebooks contain copies of musical pieces from different notebooks indicates that written material began to play a role in parallel to memory as a factor in establishing authority. Gerçek (2008) also states that two things in particular are acquired from the master during *meşk*: Memorizing the composition and interpreting it (p. 152). The concept of style, which the word “interpretation” refers to, is to perform a work with an expression appropriate to its lyrics, taking into account the characteristics of the *makâm* in which it was composed, and adding one's own aesthetic understanding while respecting the composer's aesthetic understanding without disturbing the *usûl* and form (Tura, 1988, pp. 83–84; as cited in Gerçek, 2008, p. 152). Ayas (2015) also discusses the issue through Sadettin Kaynak (1895–1961) and his student Alaeddin Yavaşca (1926–2021) and states that the precedent to be taken as a model for a personal style is the teacher and that seeking a new without precedent is contrary to tradition (p. 87). The main purpose of a personal style that is to be created within the specified limits is, at least according to what has been discussed, not to seek a new one, but to make an existing composition better and more finalized. Yavaşca himself defines a performer with a style as “a person who can put all the hidden subtleties of a composition in the best way and with a unique expression” (Zeybek, 2013, p. 6). Erol Deran has also pointed out that not every composition can be performed in accordance with a performer's unique style since the composition is the determinative (Zeybek, 2013, p. 7). Nevertheless, no evidence has been found to refute that it constitutes a subjective judgment as to whether a new interpretation based on personal style conforms to the original or the composer's wishes.

Some of the Hampartsum notebooks in the archives contain additions and corrections on the scores of many of the musical pieces. Whether those interventions were made by the scribe or someone else is a difficult question for researchers to answer, but the meanings they may indicate are important in terms of their relation to the practices of the *meşk* tradition. In the case of NE211, which bears the seal of “Mehmed Râşid”, it appears that some of the musical pieces with various additions were transferred to manuscript NE207.<sup>12</sup> The evidence for this conclusion can be found on the pages of NE211. The annotation “Kayd şüd” (“registration completed”) added

<sup>12</sup> For the seal, see (TR-İlne 211- 9, p. 83). It is not clear who Mehmed Râşid was, hence, Mehmed Râşid and Raşid Efendi (Neyzen Râşid Efendi) possibly are not the same person.

next to the headings of many musical pieces indicates that a piece was transferred to another source, and the linear markings separating the note groups in certain places in a score, indicate a calculation made in order for the transfer to take place in an orderly manner.

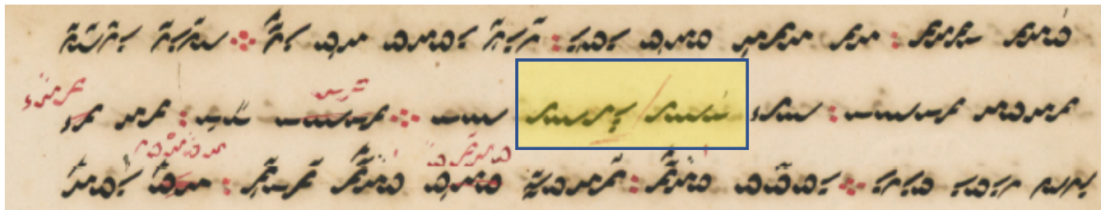
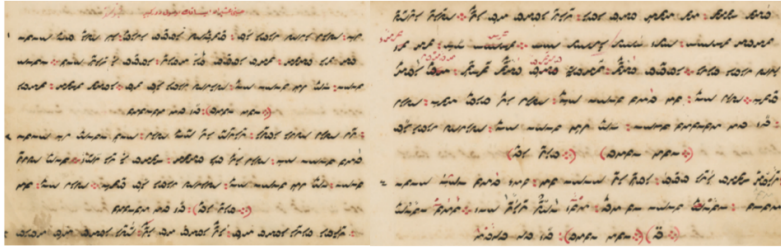


Figure 2: TR-İlüne 211-9, pp. 53-4.

When the manuscripts in the archives were analyzed, it was found that these markings in the piece titled “Hüseynî ‘aşîrân İsâkıñ üşüli devr-i kebîr” correspond to the page breaks of the same piece in NE207<sup>13</sup>, as seen in figures 2 & 3.

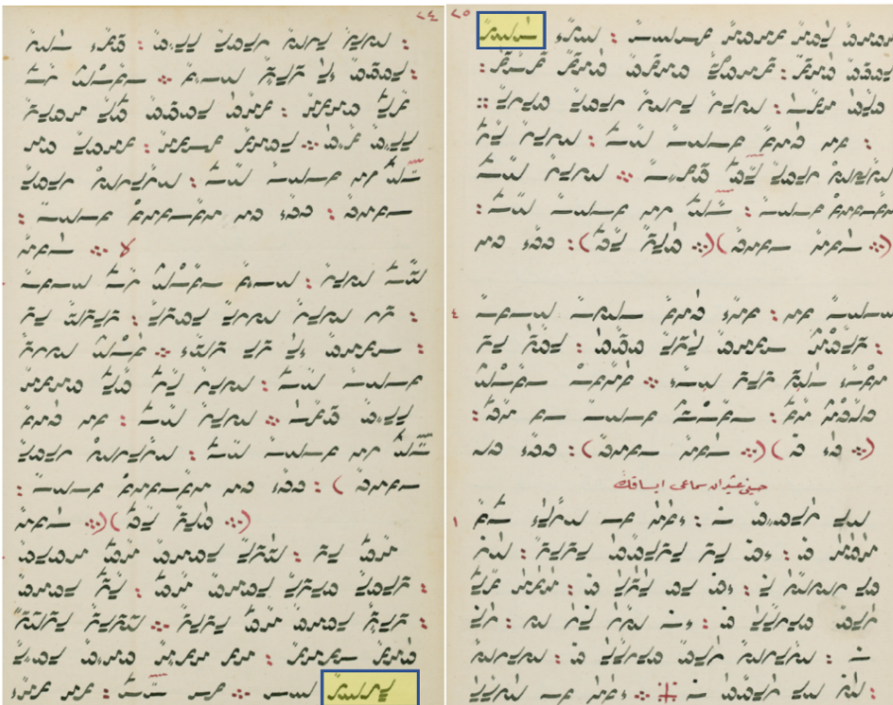


Figure 3: TR-İlüne 207-5, pp. 24-5.

When other scores with similar indications are examined, it becomes clear that there was a one-way copying process between the two manuscripts. It is likely that the scribe of NE207 was the one who carried out this process. A clue suggesting that his transfer of the variant resulting from the changes he made on NE211 into a new notebook was an attempt to reflect his own style is found in a manuscript in the Surp Takavor Church in Istanbul. For it is understood that this work is the one mentioned by Olley (2017a) in manuscript ST1<sup>14</sup> with the description “in Raşid Efendi’s way [style]” (p. 217). Therefore, if this alteration and transmission was made by Râşid Efendi, the fact that the note groups belonging to the previous version are crossed out indicates that that variant was falsified by Râşid Efendi and that he was defending the legitimacy of his version. Considering the structure of the *meşk* tradition, it is possible that Râşid Efendi may have made this stylistic new arrangement at a time when he had reached the level of a master. Moreover, this new version appears to have minor melodic changes that do not lead to a difference in terms of *makâm* or *usûl*. As Olley (2017a) states: “emendations in [comparable] sources show that the difference between what were considered correct or incorrect versions of a piece could consist in apparently insignificant details, such as the substitution of one passing two-note phrase for another or the addition of half a beat’s rest.” (pp. 216-217).

To extend the examples of personal style, in another Hampartsum notebook from a later period, written in Armenian-Turkish script, some pitch signs in the score are overlaid with other variants and accompanied by a note: “bu üzērindek’ ılar usdam hanende bōgōsın t’ avurıdır” (“These above, is the performing style of my teacher Hanende Bogos”) (Figure 4).

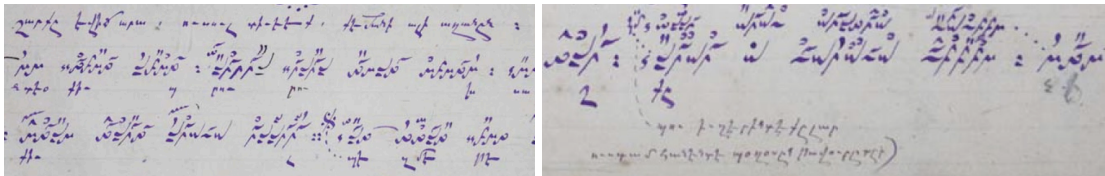


Figure 4: TR-Iboa TRT.MD.d.463, p. 11.

As can be seen, in this notebook, probably dated to the late 19th or early 20th century, this time the note groups are not crossed out or canceled, rather both versions are treated as different but valid variants. The reason(s) behind this attitude of the scribe (or a later hand), who was apparently a student of Boğos Hamamcıyan (1872–1945), is unclear, but what can safely be said is that the available written materials are important sources for understanding the practices of the oral tradition of *meşk*. It appears as if the written fixation of a concrete version of a piece of music in some cases requires justification as far as the origin of what was notated is concerned. Some scribes seem to have been aware that the notated melodies could one day become part of a cultural archive. For with the development of an albeit limited musical written culture, it had to be assumed that others would also read and thus “take into account that one now knows that people at other times and in other regions live differently and take other things for granted” (Baecker, 2012, p. 47). In this sense, the pieces marked with initials as a kind of signature in some of the earliest manuscripts in Hampartsum notation and possible autographs of Hampartsum could also point to this awareness (Olley, 2020, p. 21).



## Classification of Versions as “Old” and “New”

In some of the accessible manuscripts in Hampartsum notation, certain attributes attached by the scribe to the notated compositions reveal an awareness of individual performance styles on the one hand and of a period-bound performance practice on the other (Olley, 2017a, pp. 216-220). The attribution of an individual style gains some relevance primarily from the second half of the 19th century onward, but it is person-bound and thus does not directly refer to a general historical performance practice (Jäger, 2016, p. 41), although it does allow for an approximate temporal delimitation based on biographical composer data. In contrast, additions such as “old” or “new” style or way are not linked to specific performers, but describe a general tendency of an unspecified stylistic epoch. Already some of the presumably earliest manuscripts in Hampartsum notation contain distinctions between the categories of the “old” and the “new.”

In TA110 – like NE203 and OA405 possibly an autograph by Hampartsum Limonciyan (Olley, 2020, p. 21) – below the notation of a peşrev in makâm Hicâzkâr on p. 37 the note “öbir t’efdêrdê dē bu peşrev var lak’ in ö yēni t’ avurdur” (“This peşrev is also found in the other notebook, but that one is in the new style”) can be read.<sup>15</sup> The reverse reference to an “old” style is not found in the manuscript. Thus, the old-new dichotomy in terms of style remains open and not clearly delimited for the time being. However, some titles of compositions included in TA110 contain periodizing additions, including “ēsgî svahan us[u]li rēmēl” (p. 20) and “rast’ at’ ik’, u[suli] zarbēyin” (p. 69). The addition “ēsgî” is likewise given for the title of a peşrev in makâm Acem aşîrân in NE203, p. 2, as well as for the same piece in OA405, p. 33. The questions arise as to which epochal understanding the scribe uses as a basis, whether this historicity is reflected in the notations, and whether defining parameters for the category of a new or old style can be stated.

Looking at the entire contents of TA110, out of a total of 168 notated compositions, 71 are attributed to a named composer, while 95 titles do not include a composer's name, and out of two pieces, one each is assigned to the *Acemler* group and the *Kazançılar*. This roughly corresponds to the general distribution in Hampartsum manuscripts before 1860 and likewise to that in earlier collections such as those of Cantemir and Kevserî (Olley, 2017a, pp. 217 f.). Among the titles with composers, composers active in the second half and transition to the early 19th century are roughly balanced with those of the 17th or first half of the 18th century in terms of variety of names. However, if one takes into account multiple entries, 43<sup>16</sup> compositions are attributed to the former and 25<sup>17</sup> to the latter, which means a noticeable preponderance with respect to the transition from the 18th to the 19th century. In addition to Cantemir himself, other 17th century names from the Cantemir collection are found in TA110, such as Solakzâde (d. 1658) or Zurnazen İbrâhîm Ağa (d. 1715?). Also mentioned in TA110 are Gâzî Giray Hân (1554-1607) and Fârâbî (d. 950). Of the notated compositions without mention of a composer, some can also be found in Cantemir's and Kevserî's collections, in which, on the other hand, a composer is sometimes mentioned.<sup>18</sup> An example of this would be “şük’ü fēza hüsēyini u[suli] düyēk”, pp. 16-17, which Cantemir attributes to Hasan Cân (Kantemiroğlu, 2001, pp. 53 f.).<sup>19</sup> In some cases, therefore, the linkage of a piece to a composer goes back at least about 200 years, whereas other compositions of comparable age have only survived anonymously.

<sup>15</sup> An edition of manuscript TA110 is currently being undertaken by Marco Dimitriou as part of the DFG-funded project *Corpus Musicae Ottomanicae - Critical Editions of Near Eastern Music Manuscripts at the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster*.

<sup>16</sup> Of these, 13 compositions alone are attributed to Hampartsum Limonciyan (1768-1839), if the note “k’eat’ibin” (کعتایبین) (“the scribe’s”) is to be identified with Limonciyan (Olley, 2020, p. 21). Another nine compositions are attributed to Tanbûrî İsak (d. after 1807).

<sup>17</sup> Among them, Nâyî Osmân Dede (1652-1729) is the most prominent with five compositions.

<sup>18</sup> Some of the anonymous pieces could additionally have been composed by Hampartsum Limonciyan as well, as seems possible for NE203 (Olley, 2020, p. 36).

<sup>19</sup> A comprehensive comparison of all records in TA110 with earlier occurrences in the collections of Alî Ufukî, Cantemir, and Kevserî is not possible at this time and is beyond the scope of this article.

In the case of the previously mentioned “*ësgi svahan us[u]li rëmël*” (p. 20), the link to a composer gives way in favor of an indefinite time indication (“old”), which, however, implies a knowledge of the origin of the piece that has not been entirely lost. The variant recorded in TA110 corresponds to the piece of the same makâm and usûl in Cantemir's Kitâb (no. 277), where it is also listed without a composer (Figure 5).<sup>20</sup>



Figure 5: First cycle of the Isfahân peşrev in usûl remel (C277 and TA110, p. 20).

Unlike another peşrev in usûl remel, which, notated by the same scribe in NE203, demonstrates a doubling of the rhythmic cycle in relation to Cantemir, so that two cycles in NE203 correspond to one cycle in Cantemir's version (Olley, 2017b, pp. 180 f.), the cycles in the example above are congruent. Thus, the piece, as well as the other peşrev with the addition of “*ësgi*” in makâm Acem aşîrân in NE203 (Olley, 2017b, p. 181), falls into the group that did not undergo rhythmic augmentation in the early 19th century. Although the melody in TA110 is noticeably more ornamented, it is still quite close to Cantemir's version, especially since Cantemir may have been selective in his transcription (Ekinci, 2012, p. 223). A later marginal note next to the original heading explicitly refers to the piece as “*Eski ısfahân*” (Kantemiroğlu, 2001, p. 510), suggesting that the composition is known by this title in oral tradition. Whether this means that the piece is representative and exemplary of an older style and has retained its original structure, or whether it is a coincidence, must be left open here. In any case, the designation “old” here seems to refer at least to Cantemir's time, if not before.

For the peşrev “*rast`at`ik`, u[suli] zarbëyin*” in TA110, p. 69, interestingly, another variant of the piece is available in the same manuscript (“*rasd, zarbëyin dëvir muhammëz*”, p. 64). The scribe probably unwittingly notated this twice, but the first occurrence lacks the addition of “*at`ik`*”. The piece is also documented anonymously in Kevserî (2016, no. 375).<sup>21</sup> A comparison with Kevserî shows that no rhythmic augmentation took place here either (Figure 6). Apparently, however, the scribe of TA110 had difficulties in representing the usûl, since the structure-giving division signs and the marking of the cycles is inconsistent in both examples, and in some cases smaller sections have been omitted.<sup>22</sup>

Structurally, TA110, p. 64 is more in line with the notation in Kevserî, as mülâzime and hâne 2 correspond, whereas on p. 69 (with the addition “*at`ik`*”), hâne 1 contains material from the original mülâzime. The second variant in TA110 is also more melodically elaborate overall and sometimes shows melodic progressions that deviate from the variant notated a few pages earlier. Moreover, it is striking that the variants contained in TA110 show different pitch sets. While the

<sup>20</sup> The numbering given here corresponds to that given in Kantemiroğlu (2001). The transcription is based on the same source, but has been transposed and rhythmically scaled for better comparability. All transcriptions of Hampartsum notation were prepared by the authors. Although there is not always immediate convertibility to modern Turkish notation, an effort has been made to adapt the examples to the AEU system.

<sup>21</sup> The numbering given here corresponds to that given in Kevserî (2016). The transcription is based on the same source, but has been rhythmically scaled for better comparability.

<sup>22</sup> In fig. 2, therefore, a transcription of the subdivisions of the usûl used in TA110 has been omitted to provide a more consistent overall picture.

**Figure 6:** Second and third cycles of the Râst peşrev in usûl darbeyn (K375, TA110, p. 64 and TA110, p. 69).

first variant contains a constant *geveşt*, the second variant contains *ırâk* instead. Likewise, the first variant briefly evokes *makâm Segâh* with the insertion of *kürdî*, which does not occur in this form in the second variant. It is possible, therefore, that the addition of “at ‘ik” does not refer to a specific mode of performance in terms of the extent of melodic elaboration, but rather to a performance of *makâm Râst* that is characterized by certain pitches and originates from an earlier period. In any case, the example illustrates that different variants of a composition can be mastered by one and the same person and can coexist equally.

That the execution of a *makâm* can be considered a stylistic marker is also illustrated by the *peşrev* in *makâm Hicâzkâr* on p. 37 with the remark “*öbir t ‘efdêrdê dê bu peşrêf var lak ‘ in ö yêni t ‘avurdur*”. To be sure, TA110 contains no counterexample of the same piece in the “new” style. But concordances of the piece in later manuscripts in Hampartsum notation, when compared, may shed light on what is meant here by “new” and “old”. The *peşrev* appears, for example, in OA421, pp. 28-29, a manuscript with an Armenian scribe, as well as NE205, p. 127, which belongs to Neyzen Râşid Efendi's collection. OA421 seems to have a special relationship to the Hampartsum autographs, since it contains a list of instrumental pieces independent of the manuscript itself, most of which are contained in the presumed Hampartsum autographs and, moreover, are apparently recorded in the same handwriting as TA110, NE203, and OA405. It is possible that the scribe of OA421 is a student of Hampartsum and that the manuscript could be dated to the second third of the 19th century due to the form of notation used. NE205, on the other hand, can be dated to the last third of the 19th century due to the notation with explicit duration signs.

Compared to TA110, where the usûl is given as berefşân, the concordances record usûl muhammes; a confusion that presumably occurs because of the same time measure of the usûls, which, moreover, are indistinguishable from one another when notated in Hampartsum notation. While the melodic progression of the teslîm is basically the same in all three variants, however, the concordances show a peculiarity not seen in TA110 (Figure 7). Instead of the perdes segâh and dügâh, as they occur in TA110 in the overall course of the piece, bûselik and zengûle appear in both concordances, demonstrating an eminently different understanding of the underlying makâm.



**Figure 7:** Teslîm of the Hicâzkâr peşrev in usûl berefşân/muhammes in comparison (TA110, OA421 and NE205).

A juxtaposition of the pitch sets reveals that the scale of makâm Hicâzkâr, based on TA110, essentially consists of a Râst pentachord on râst in combination with a Hicâz tetrachord on nevâ (Figure 8).



**Figure 8:** Pitch sets of the teslîm of the Hicâzkâr peşrev in usûl berefşân/muhammes in comparison (TA110, OA421 and NE205).

In the concordances, instead of the Râst pentachord, a Hicâz pentachord on râst is seen, which corresponds to the modern theoretical understanding of the scale. Theoretical treatises on music do not seem to mention makâm Hicâzkâr until the 19th century, including Hâşim Bey and P. Kêltzanidês (Popescu-Judetz, 2007, p. 102). With regard to the form of the makâm in question, Kêltzanidês (1881, p. 162) is not informative, as bûselik is mentioned, but dügâh or zengûle are not mentioned. Both dügâh and zengûle appear in Hâşim Bey's (2016, pp. 149-150) description, which thus remains ambivalent. Therefore, if the variant in TA110 can stand for the "old" style and the concordances for a "new" style, then "new" in this context denotes an articulation of the makâm to be distinguished. It is also worth mentioning that the peşrev, which is anonymously transmitted in TA110 and OA421, is attributed to "Tatar" in NE205, which may have led Yılmaz Öz-



tuna (2006) to suggest “Gazi Giray” as a possible inventor of the makâm *Hicâzkâr* (p. 350). Tatar, identified with *Gâzî Giray Hân* (1554-1607), thus possibly stands for a composition of enigmatic origin and representative of an older repertoire. If makâm *Hicâzkâr* is indeed of more recent origin, this would be an example for the pseudographia described by Feldman (1990–1991, p. 91).

The three examples have shown that in the historical periodization of the repertoire recorded by him, the scribe of TA110 proceeds in a certain way, like *Cantemir* and subsequent theorists, with respect to a categorization of the modal system with the *kadîm-cedîd* antithesis and sees himself in the succession of predecessors and successors on the threshold (Popescu-Judetz, 2007, pp. 72-4). As might be expected, a classification into “old” and “new” is thus always to be reinterpreted for each generation of musicians. As such, manuscript NE215, entitled “*Nâdide taqımlar ‘atîk*” (“rare ancient pieces”), brings together instrumental pieces by 17th- and 18th-century composers that already seem “ancient” to the late 19th-century scribe.<sup>23</sup> The degree of adaptation of the material to the respective contemporary style seems to be variable to a certain extent, but can manifest itself in a coexistence of different, equally valid variants. TA110, which was apparently consulted by various people after its completion and *Hampartsum's* death, sometimes contains additions by later hands that added alternative melodic lines to the notation (Figure 9).

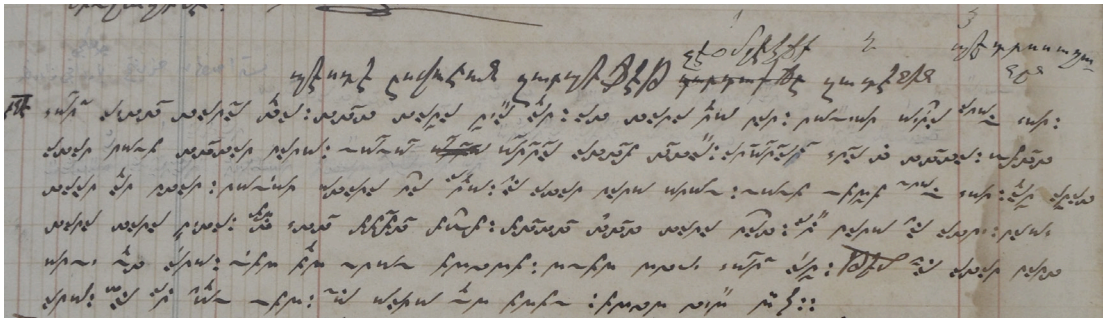


Figure 9: Faint additions by a later hand above the original melodic line in TA110, p. 9.

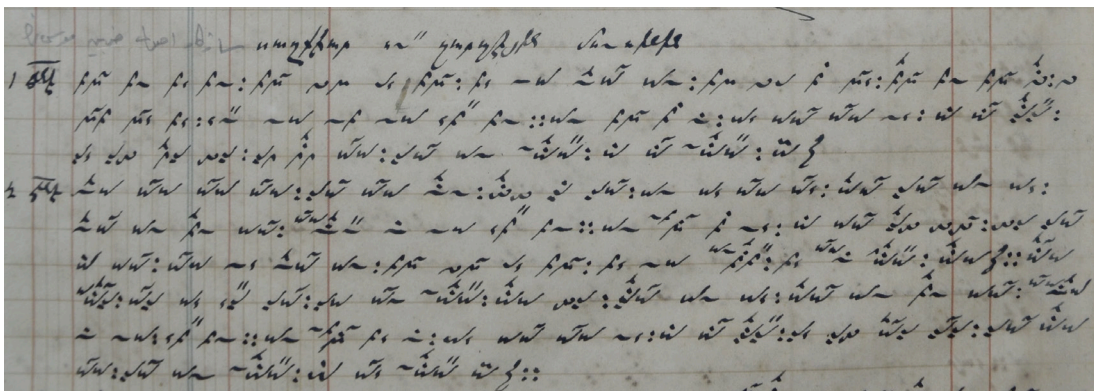
However, these additions should not necessarily be understood as corrections, but rather as a comparison of a new variant with an older documentation of the piece that has an authoritative radiance. It can be concluded that performers of Ottoman instrumental music in the 19th century were not only aware of the mutability of compositions, but that a constant, context-dependent adaptation of musical material on the part of the performer was even desired in the receiving community and represented a decisive factor within musical culture (Jäger, 2016, p. 42). But what are the limits of this juxtaposition and how far does the tolerance of variability extend?

### Classification of Versions as “Correct” or “Incorrect”

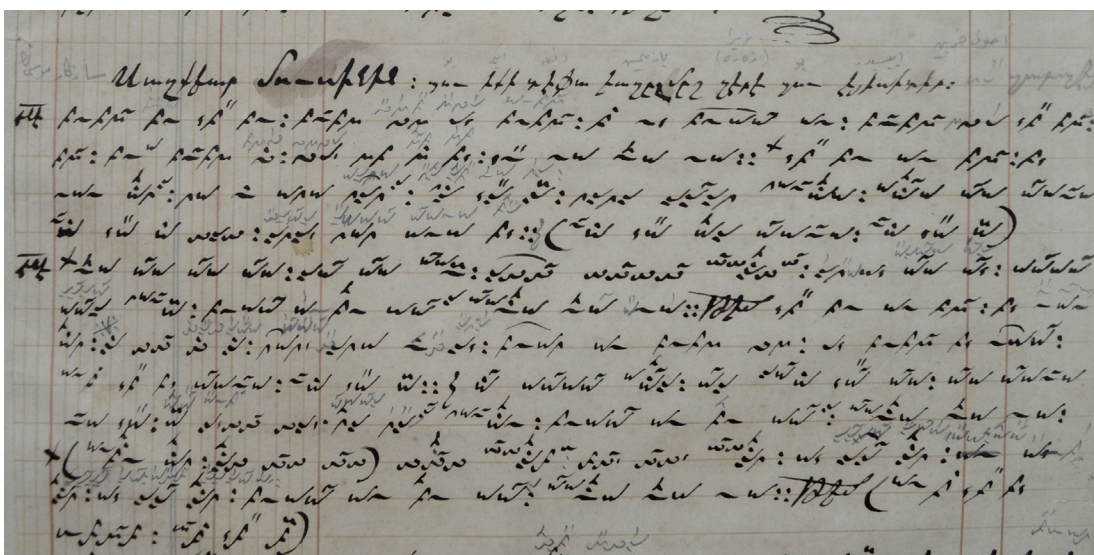
In addition to the examples given above, which imply an equal acceptance of different variants, there is also evidence that the recording of different versions of a piece of music can also be accompanied by evaluations of the type “better” or “correct” or “incorrect” (Olley, 2017a, p. 216). Again, examples can be drawn from TA110 in this regard. On p. 75, the title of the *peşrev* “*Sazk ‘âr musinin*” contains the addition “*bu ik ‘i defâ yazılmış zērē bu ēyisidir*” (“This was written twice because this is the better [version]”), which is also noted in this form in NE203, p. 18 (Olley, 2017a, p. 216). The first recording of the piece in TA110 is found on pp. 37-38. If one compares the two recordings, one not only notices the melodic differences but also the redistribution of the *usûl* divisions as well as additional structural markings such as the labeling of the *teslîm* or the inclu-

<sup>23</sup> For an edition of the manuscript see (Dimitriou, 2020).

sion of second repeat endings, which partially reorganize the overall arrangement of the piece (Figures 10 & 11).



**Figure 10:** First occurrence of the Sazkâr peşrev in TA110, pp. 37-8, hânes 1-2.



**Figure 11:** Second occurrence of the Sazkâr peşrev in TA110, pp. 75-6, hânes 1-2.

The second variant was perhaps not (only) considered better by the writer because of the different melodic line, but because of the completeness and clearer performance sequence. It is therefore “better” both as a performance variant and as a representation of this variant in the form of musical notation. “Better” does not mean at the same time in reverse that the previous recording must be “wrong” or “incorrect”. The scribe could also have crossed out the “worse” version, as he did, for example, on p. 58, where, after a first attempt to notate the “Acēm nēvruz sēmayi”, he crossed out the hânes 1-2 that had already been written down and began notating the piece from the start below. The two pieces differ from each other so much that the former is definitely marked as erroneous by the crossing out. Furthermore, incompleteness does not seem to be a general exclusion criterion for the entry of a composition into a manuscript. On pp. 41-3, the scribe of TA110 noted six pieces, all of which are incomplete and consist of only one to three hânes, which the scribe noted with the remark “k’usr” (“incomplete”).

In OA535, which belongs to a later period and also is written in Arm.-Turk. script, the entire fourth *hâne* of a *peşrev* (in the *makâm Sûz-ı dilârâ* and *usûl Düyek*) composed by Selîm III (1761–1808) is crossed out and a note is written on it saying “bu yağniş 167. yüzde doğrusuna bak’ bul” (“this is wrong, look at page 167 and find the correct one”). When looking at the page 167, it can be observed that the so called “correct” fourth *hâne* does not differ from the other version in terms of *makâm* and *usûl*, but that there are only slight differences in the melodic line (Figure 12).

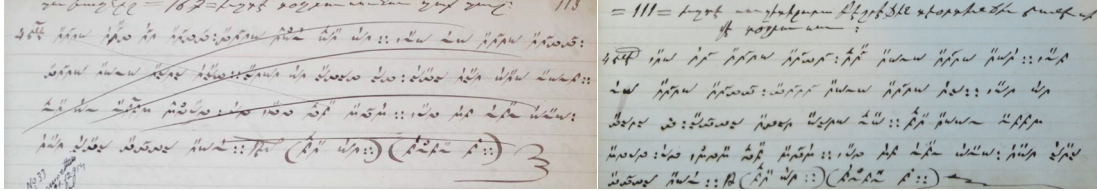


Figure 12: TR-Iboa TRT.MD.d.535, p. 113 & 167.

According to Haug (2018), after the foundation of the Republic in 1923, musicologists such as Rauf Yekta (1871–1935) and Suphi Ezgi (1869–1962) first went through an editorial process and approached the different versions in a “correct-incorrect” manner (p. 83). As a matter of fact, Suphi Ezgi (1933), describing his relationship with Sadettin Arel (1880–1955), mentions that together they repaired nearly 3000 old compositions by examining and analyzing them, and by comparing them with the ones in other manuscripts and transforming them back into their originals (Vol. I, p. 270).<sup>24</sup> From Ezgi's statement, it is understood that the term “repairing” is equated with “transforming back into the original”. Therefore, it is unclear whether the “original” refers to the first version of a composition as it appeared in the composer's hand. If not, the question arises as to “which version is considered “original” because of which reason?”. An example that may shed light on the topic can be found in again a Hampartsum notebook in the Ottoman archive (Figure 13). On the sheet of the piece, which is a *semâî* in the *makâm müsteâr* / *usûl nim yürük* and the composer of which is Dellâlzâde İsmâîl Efendi (1797–1869), the scribe or a later hand annotated that he had this composition corrected to Zekâî Efendi (1825–1897) and that that version is written on another sheet of paper.

Therefore, in this example (figure 13), the composition was corrected by a musician who personally knows its composer. Because, according to Öztuna (2006), Zekâî Dede, who was the most valuable student of İsmâîl Dede Efendi (1778–1846), also met Dellâlzâde İsmâîl Efendi and benefited from him as well (p. 515). It seems likely that being close to the composer in the *meşk* chain provides a kind of authority over the original or version of the work. A story confirming this inference is also quoted by Beşiroğlu (1997, p. 138):

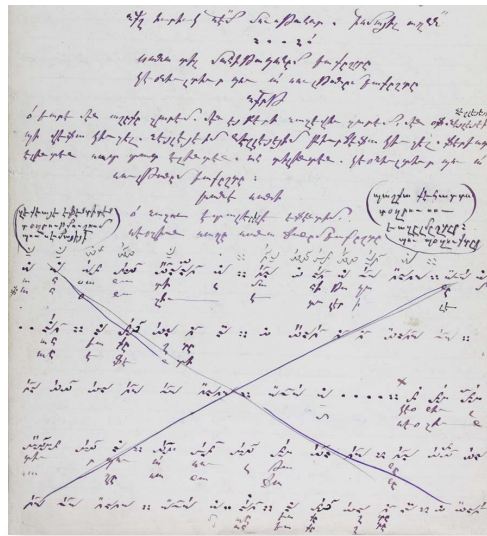
One day, while the 'Yegâh Faslı' was being performed at Darülelhan, Ahmed Irsoy, realizing that the notation of Dellalzâde's composition in the *usûl Zencîr* was wrong, reminded that the *âcem* pitch should be employed in a passage in the *zemin* section and that his father [Zekâî Dede] had warned him about this before. But when Ziya Paşa insisted on the *Evic* pitch, he did not oppose Ziya Paşa any further and preferred to resign.

24 [...] Sadettin beyle (319) senesinde musiki yüzünden dost olmuşduk, ila maşallah devam etmektedir, mısikimizin saz ve söz kısımlarında mevcut bulunan ve pek güçlkle elde edebildiğiniz üç bine karib asânî yüzlerce, binlerce defalar okuyup çaldık; nazari tahlillerini de yaparak amelen olduğu gibi ilmen de tekamül ettik. Bu eserlerin muhtelif nüshalarını karşılaştırıp vaktimiz müsait olduğu kadar onların muhim bir miktarını asıllarına ırca etmek suretiyle onardık. Ve çok iyi bir tesadüf neticesidir ki bu onarma işinde fikirlerimiz hükümlerimiz takriben onda bir nispetinde ihtilafı oldu[...]



Zek'âye efendiden [1825-1897] doğru'muşum bu semaiyi.

('I had this semayi corrected to Zekâî Efendi')



Başk'a k'ehadda doğrusu yazılmışdır. Bu bözuk'dır.

('The correct version of this is written on another sheet. This one is corrupted')

Figure 13: TR-Iboa TRT.MD.d.487, p. 40.

According to Beşiroğlu, this piece was notated in the “Darüelhan Nota Külliyyatı” using the Evic pitch at Ziya Paşa’s insistence, and was performed in a way that was not in accordance with the original by performers who did not learn the piece from its original source but only relied on the notation.<sup>25</sup> Ahmed Irsoy, as a musician chained to Dellalzâde in the transmitting community, was probably motivated to stick loyal to the composer’s version, that is, to the supposed “original”. Beşiroğlu also clearly states that the composer’s version is the correct one, based on what the transmitting community suggests. Nevertheless, it is also possible that Irsoy’s insistence was based on a subjective assessment that “Ziya Paşa’s [Yusuf Ziyâ Paşa (1849–1929)] variant is not in accordance with the composer’s style” rather than a strict conservatism or a stance against the concept of version itself.

Considering that creating an appropriate personal style is not something to be avoided, on the contrary, it is part of the meşk tradition; the possibility that the afore-mentioned names trained in this system were conservatively concerned with remaining loyal to the “original” composition, could also be related to the concern that notation itself would finalize a work. Haug (2021) gives an example from the Western music world of the 16th century to support the fact that a composition born in written form acquires a more unique and finalized character (p. 190). The transmission of the music via notation, of course, did not begin with the Republic, as is evident from the prevalence of Hampartsum notebooks. What is new, however, is that those scores were printed and published, reaching a wider audience and, most importantly, entering the repertoire as a “single” version. In some of the notebooks in the archive, it is noticeable that Refik Fersan (1893–1965) and Halil Can (1905–1973) transcribed musical pieces that usually were not in the repertoire (probably of Istanbul Conservatory) and wrote notes such as “terceme edildi” (“transcribed”), while those that were already in the repertoire were annotated with notes such as “repertuarımızda mevcut olduğundan tercüme edilmedi” (“not transcribed since it is already present in the repertoire”) (Figure 14). Therefore, a possibly more important reason for the “correct-incorrect” assessment is not merely the transformation of the compositions into a written material, but the fact that the versions were being eliminated to be included in a authoritative repertoire and thus began to acquire a singular and final (complete) character.

<sup>25</sup> For a version notated in Hampartsum notation, see (TR-Iboa TRT.MD.d.481, pp. 1-2). This version may be the one transmitted or authenticated by Zekâî Efendi, as the handwriting is similar to that of the manuscript (OA487) presented in the example above.



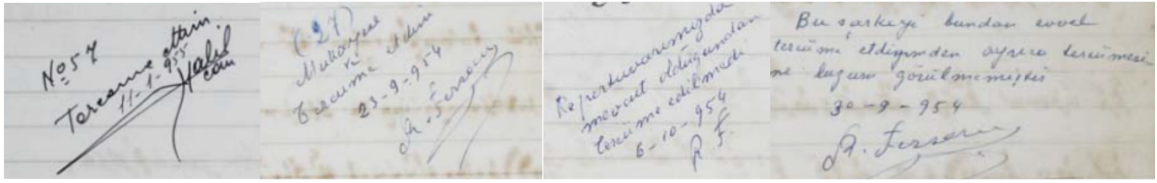


Figure 14: Excerpts from TR-Iboa TRT.MD.d.535.

On the other hand, the modernization process that began with the declaration of Tanzimat (reforms) in the 19th century led to the idea of standardization (with a positivist manner) in music and in the following century, efforts to establish a standard system from the non-standard elements of Turkish music began. On the subject, Dural (2019) argues that:

Although Arel positioned Turkish music in a different place from tamperemant in terms of musical technique, he made this musical tampering in the frame of mental dimension, that is, he standardized it, adapted it to mathematical reason (in some places where the composer's will is emphasized, etc., he adapted the position to the non-calculative reason determined according to this mathematical reason), made it universal, and thus dealt with the modernization process(es) (p. 185).

One of the most popular methods of finding a “standard and measurable correct” was the idea of going back to the origins. Arel's writings on this subject is a good example. In his famous article series such as “Türk Musikisi Kimindir?” (“Who owns Turkish Music?”) or “Sümerliler ve Sümer Musikisi” (“Sumerians and Sumerian Music”), he dealt with the roots of Turkish Music with a folkloric approach and sought to prove the “Turkishness” of this musical culture, which was marginalized against Western music supported by the government and even accused of not being of “Turkish” origin. At a time when Western cultural concepts were also being adopted, the idea of finding the “correct” through such a method is in relation to the perspective that accepts a musical composition as authentic on the condition of being a version as it was produced by its composer. This illustrates that a certain (musical) culture cannot define itself completely on its own, but is always dependent on the presence of the “other” in order to be able to distinguish itself from it. In the case of Ottoman art music, this may be due to increasing pressure from outside due to the influence of new popular music genres, changing aesthetic judgments, or the impression of Western music. For fundamentally, a culture is characterized by the practice of comparison and in this sense is “systematically ambiguous and only secondarily an attempt to get the ambiguities out of the way through unambiguities, identities, and authenticity (Backer, 2012, p. 9).”

## Conclusion

As has been shown, the Hampartsum manuscripts studied provide a picture of the oral transmission of Ottoman art music in the 19th century in a variety of ways. The large corpus of instrumental and vocal pieces combines different versions of a composition, which coexist for the most part without commentary and exemplify different lines of transmission. The extensive practice of copying shows that a master's authority is transmitted into the sphere of writing. Collecting music in this way allows for the facilitation of memorization of a variety of pieces, which is highly regarded in the culture of transmission. Some of the scribes of manuscripts in Hampartsum notation also attest to an interest in fixing specific performance variants, characterized by periodizing aspects or denoting an individual style. The differences that can be observed refer, among other things, to differences in the structure of the makâm, but also to different degrees of melodic elaboration and rhythmic accentuation. The investigation of the personal style has revealed that a constant negotiation about the exact form of a previously notated variant can arise. It is characteristic here in a later step that the assessment of the validity of this or that version depends not only on purely musical parameters but also on the expertise and position as a musician. The manuscripts also testify to a latent change in the conceptual handling of the variability found, which was to increase in the first half of the 20th century.

The manuscripts in Hampartsum notation, understood in their entirety as an archive, then provide a glimpse into the past of a predominantly orally transmitted musical culture with its underlying presuppositions. It is to be expected that the manuscripts in five-line notation, most of which have not been studied so far, will also provide a similar picture. Taken together, from today's perspective, the material can then be comparatively searched for equivalences, not with the aim of reconstructing a musical “urtext” or archetype,

but in order to work out the culture-specific paradigms and thus describe the picture of the global phenomenon of music with its regional and epochal particularities.

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 NE208 [TR-Iüne 208-6]. İstanbul Üniversitesi Nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi. Ms. Y 208-6.  
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