

Konservatoryum Conservatorium

Submitted 15.03.2025
Revision Requested 15.05.2025
Last Revision Received 16.05.2025
Accepted 23.05.2025
Published Online 27.05.2025

Research Article

 Open Access

Arabic Music Conference 1932 Committees “Committee of Makams, Rhythm, and Composition”



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Abstract

The 1932 Cairo conference was a significant event that comprised seven committees, particularly the Committee of Makams, Rhythm, and Composition. This committee is of paramount importance as it underscores two fundamental elements of music: scales and rhythms. In Arabic and oriental music, these scales are termed makams, highlighting the committee's vital role in exploring the intricate makams and rhythms central to the conference discussions.

The scientific research associated with this committee aimed to investigate the notations, musical symbols, names, and forms of the makams presented. The committee scrutinized the submitted reports and made decisions that enhanced the collective understanding of these musical elements. The outcomes of their deliberations were documented and subsequently published in the 1932 conference book.

It is imperative to approach the analysis of these committee minutes and reports with rigor and scholarly integrity. By accurately presenting these insights, we fulfil the scientific responsibility to preserve the legacy and depth of the discussions essential in shaping our understanding of Arabic music during this time.

Keywords

1932 conference · Committee of Makams-Rhythm and Composition · Committee minutes and reports

Author Note

This paper re-evaluates some of the data obtained for the PhD thesis of the first author.



“Citation: Mohamed, M. M., Çolakoğlu Sarı, G. & Baysal, O. (2025). Arabic music conference 1932 committees “Committee of makams, rhythm, and composition”. *Konservatoryum–Conservatorium*, 12(1), 110-128. <https://doi.org/10.26650/CONS2025-1658504>

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Arabic Music Conference 1932 Committees "Committee of Makams, Rhythm, and Composition"

The 1932 Arabic Music Conference, held in Cairo under the patronage of King Fuad I, represents a pivotal moment in the history of Arabic music. It marked the first significant attempt to systematize, standardize and modernize Arabic musical traditions while facing tensions between local practices and Western theoretical frameworks. At a time when Egypt was undergoing rapid sociocultural and political transformation, the conference emerged as a key platform for negotiating the future of Arabic music. The event brought together musicologists, musicians, educators, critics, and composers from Arab, Turkish, and European backgrounds, as well as ensembles from North Africa and the Middle East, to thoroughly examine Arabic music's structure and aesthetics. The program was divided into daily committee meetings and performances, focusing on technical musical issues. A significant outcome of the conference was preserving 150 gramophone records and archiving a diverse collection of Arabic music and singing styles.¹ One of the primary objectives of the 1932 conference was to unify Arabic music and preserve its identity. Egypt's scientific and cultural renaissance in the early nineteenth century played a pivotal role in this endeavor, signifying a substantial shift in artistic musical thought.

The terminology for makams and rhythms varied across different countries; the inaugural conference achieved its aims by harmonizing the makams and rhythms employed across Arab countries, grounding them in Egyptian scientific and theoretical principles. This initiative also played a significant role in standardizing lyrical and instrumental forms of Arabic music. Interestingly, some musical forms were known by different names even though they referred to the exact composition².

Scholars have examined the 1932 conference from various perspectives, emphasizing its cultural and political significance. According to Racy (1991), the event highlighted tensions between modernization, the influence of Western musical frameworks, and the desire to preserve traditional values. This dual aim- reviving and modernizing Arabic music- was central to the conference's discussions. Interestingly, as Ögüt (2012. pp. 38-39) explains, Egyptian scholars from the organizing committee were the primary advocates of "Westernization," while many professional musicians and European ethnomusicologists emphasized the importance of tradition and preservation. Ögüt also contextualizes the conference within Egypt's leading role in the Arab world and its broader efforts toward cultural modernization. Consequently, much of the reform process was shaped by Western musical practices.

One of the most notable moments of the conference, which reflected this tension between tradition and modernization, involved the Lebanese musician Wadih Sabra, who introduced a modified piano capable of playing Arabic makams. However, Abd Wahab and Umm Kulthum, after testing it with their singing, found the instrument unsuitable, disappointing Sabra (Sahab, 1994. p. 10). This incident highlighted a more significant issue: the Egyptian participants' reliance on their ears rather than theoretical frameworks when analyzing makams (Yekta, 1934. pp. 19-20). As Yekta mentioned in his memoirs (1934), such issues remained central: Should the fate of makams be decided by theoreticians or by creative artists with a practical connection to the music? Should the future of Arabic music rely on precise instruments measuring vibrations or on the intuitive judgment of experienced artists? Such debates, along with disagreements over the structure of the Arabic makam, sparked significant controversy within the conference and beyond. However, despite

¹This collection includes *Mowashahat*, praise songs for the Prophet, and folk songs from Egypt, Iraq, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, Tunisia, Morocco, and Turkey (Sahab, 1994. p. 9).

²In Lyrical forms, the Nuba in the Arabian Maghreb is essentially equivalent to the Mowashah form.



these disputes, there was unanimous agreement that the 1932 Arabic Music Conference was one of the most critical events in the modern era (Sahab, 1994. p. 10).

Among the seven committees formed during the conference, the Committee of Makams, Rhythm, and Composition played a central role in developing a systematic approach to Arabic music. Its task was to examine and codify the core musical elements of makams and rhythms, creating a coherent framework to standardize them across various regions, including Egypt, Syria, and Iraq (Katz, 2015). European scholars such as d'Erlanger and Sachs significantly influenced the committee's work, often applying Western methodologies to analysing and classifying Arabic music (Thomas, 2007). The conference thus reflected not only the cultural aspirations of the Arab world but also the geopolitical dynamics of the time, as Arab nations sought to assert cultural independence amidst colonial influences (Llano, 2023).

Scholarly analysis has also focused on the technical aspects discussed at the conference, particularly musical intervals and rhythms. Ghrab (2005), for example, explores the complexities of reconciling Eastern and Western approaches to music theory. Danielson (1994) provides a detailed historical account of the conference's organizational structure and the contributions of key figures, such as Baron d'Erlanger and Ali Darwish, to the committee's work.

This article explores the 1932 Arabic Music Conference, focusing on the minutes and resolutions from the Committee on Makams, Rhythm, and Composition. By focusing on selected sessions documented in the official conference book, the study seeks to uncover how the committee's work contributed to the codification, standardization, and transmission of Arabic musical knowledge in the early twentieth century, thus, highlighting the conference's role in shaping Arabic music theory and practice while emphasizing the importance of the often-overlooked conference book as a crucial historical document. The study indicates that language barriers may have restricted access for Western scholars and observes that advancements in Arabic music notation can complicate interpretation. Furthermore, it suggests that investigating Turkish makam music could provide valuable insights into older notation systems, thus helping to bridge gaps in our understanding of Arabic music's history. By examining the relationships between these musical traditions, the article aims to foster a deeper appreciation for the complexities and richness of Arabic music's history and evolution. Through this analysis, the enduring significance of the 1932 conference remains a constant presence within the field of musicology.

Methodologically, the study is based on a qualitative content analysis of the minutes and reports published in the 1932 conference book, which is utilized here as a primary reference source for the first time to showcase selected sections of scientific content discussed during the conference. Before the 1932 conference, there was a notable scarcity of scientific references that accurately depicted Arabic music in Egypt, particularly regarding the makams and rhythms used in notation, even in the century preceding the conference. This study gives particular attention to three committee sessions chosen based on their engagement with three interrelated areas: the classification of makams by tonal centers, the standardization of rhythms across geographic zones, and the documentation of instrumental and lyrical forms. Comparative analysis is employed to evaluate the differences between the theoretical models proposed by the Institute of Oriental Music and those presented by European scholars, with cross-references to contemporary Arabic and Turkish music traditions³.

The following sections will present an in-depth analysis of the committee's examinations, the classification systems proposed for makams, and the debates over rhythm and notation. Finally, the study will

³The limitations inherent in dealing with historically framed terminologies, transcription systems, and culturally embedded assumptions about modality and rhythm should also be acknowledged.

reflect on the conference's broader impact and explore how its outcomes continue to influence Arabic music theory today.

Historical Perspective

The Ottoman Empire's presence in Egypt from 1517 to 1914 had a profound influence on the landscape of Arabic music. During this period, most scientific references and sources were directed to Istanbul, with subsequent reports and resources flowing back to the Arab world (Ali, 2009. p. 120). This historical context highlights one reason for the scarcity of documented scientific references regarding Arabic music in Egypt and across the Arab world.

Foundational Turkish music texts vital for understanding ancient Arabic makams include Saifuddin Urmawi's *Kitap Edwar*. Ali (2009) notes that this book, initially taken from Cairo to Istanbul, has unfortunately not been recognized or included in the curricula of the Higher Institute of Arabic. This situation underscores the disconnect between Arabic music and its scientific foundations during the approximately 400 years of Ottoman rule, which persisted until the early 20th century.

At the close of the 18th century, during Napoleon Bonaparte's invasion of Egypt, he commanded a formidable army alongside a distinguished group of France's leading scientists. Their objective was to research and excavate the region's rich cultural heritage, and their findings were assembled into a comprehensive multi-part work titled *The Description of Egypt*. One prominent chapter in this historical account is "Music and Singing among Modern Egyptians." It emphasizes the efforts of a dedicated team of musicologists led by the esteemed Guillaume-André Villoteau, who produced a comprehensive and unparalleled report on the musical practices of Egyptians in the late eighteenth century.

Villoteau's report offers valuable insights into the early challenges the French faced in understanding Arabic music. They initially struggled due to the absence of written musical notation for the Arabic makams. However, after spending an extended period with the Egyptians, they gradually adapted to this unfamiliar musical terrain (Villoteau, 1810. pp. 171-172). French scholars initiated the practice of notating music influenced by the musicians of the late eighteenth century, marking the first recorded instance of written music from that era. The Egyptian musicians were quite astonished by the scholars' ability to interpret these notations (Villoteau, 1810. pp. 173-175).

In the mid-18th century, Khedive Ismail envisioned Egypt as a vibrant extension of Europe. To realize this dream, he commissioned the first opera house in Egypt and the Arab world. This landmark venue showcased⁴ operas and ballets performed by European troupes, catering to the foreign audience in Egypt at the time.

Abdul Hamouli, the renowned Egyptian composer and singer, played a crucial role in fostering cultural exchange between Egypt and Turkey during the late 19th century. With the Khedive's support, he travelled to Istanbul multiple times, accompanied by a group of talented musicians, and immersed himself in the rich landscape of Turkish music (Hāfız, 1984. pp. 51-55). Establishing the opera house in Egypt marked a new chapter in this cultural dialogue, facilitating dynamic interactions between diverse musical traditions. This period witnessed the arrival of Turkish musical groups and ensembles in Egypt, encouraging collaboration and mutual appreciation. Significant Turkish instrumental forms, such as the *Samai* and *Longa*, were integrated into the Egyptian musical repertoire. These influences enriched the local music scene and inspired 20th-century Egyptian composers to create innovative works that blended these distinct styles. Ultimately, this cross-cultural exchange contributed significantly to the evolution of Egyptian music as we know it today (Hāfız, 1984. pp. 56-60).

⁴Military bands also entertained viewers with Egyptian melodies through their renditions of anthems and marches.



The Committee of Makams, Rhythm, and Composition (Some Sessions)

This committee played a central role in shaping the scientific and systematic study of Arabic music during the 1932 Arabic Music Conference. The committee unanimously elected Rauf Yekta chairman and appointed Safar Ali, the technical representative of the Institute of Oriental Music, as secretary. It conducted nineteen sessions to deliberate on various reports submitted by conference members and external contributors (Arabic 1933. p. 133).

The Scientific Content of the Committee of Makams, Rhythm, and Composition

The committee's primary focus was on classifying and codifying the core elements of Arabic music: makams and rhythms. During its sessions, the committee accepted a report by Baron d'Erlanger and Ali Darwish, which presented a comprehensive list of 95 Eastern makams organized by their primary tones, as well as a collection of 101 Oriental rhythms developed collaboratively. These contributions were vital because they sought to standardize musical elements across different regions and traditions within the Arab world.

Baron d'Erlanger also contributed to the committee's understanding of regional musical practices by submitting reports on Moroccan-Andalusian music and the Andalusian *Nuba* traditions of Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. In parallel, Ali Darwish presented a list of 30 rhythms specific to Syria, mainly from Aleppo, while Sami Shawwa provided insights into the makams practiced in Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula. These reports provided a diverse geographic perspective on the commonalities and variations in Arabic music, contributing to the committee's broader aim of developing a unified theoretical framework.

The committee's interest in practical applications of rhythm and composition extended to a unique invention by Abdul Hamid Effendi, who designed a device capable of producing 30 different Arabic and Turkish rhythms. Recognizing its potential as an educational tool, the committee recommended modifications to the device to improve its effectiveness in teaching rhythm (Arabic 1933. p. 134).

Table 1

Committee of Makams, Rhythm, and Composition Details

SESSION	TOPIC	CHAIRMAN & SECRETARY	MEMBERS	DATE & TIME
Sixth Session	Makams Primary Note	Rauf Yekta & Safar Ali	Ali Darwish, Daoud Hosni, Darwish Hariri, Hassan Memluk, Jamil Owais, Kamel Khula'i, Masoud Jamil and Sami Shawwa.	Saturday, March 19, 1932. At 9 o'clock in the morning.
Eighth Session	Rhythms Used in Egypt & Presented Makams on Dukah by Darwish and d'Erlanger	Rauf Yekta & Safar Ali	Ali Darwish, Daoud Hosni, Hassan Memluk, Jamil Owais, Kamil Khula'i, Masoud Jamil and Sami Shawwa.	Monday, March 21, 1932. At 9 o'clock in the morning.
Thirteenth Session	Makams, Lyrical & Instrumental Forms Presented by Egypt	Rauf Yekta & Safar Ali	Ali Darwish, Daoud Hosni, Darwish Hariri, Jamil Owais, Kamil Khula'i, Hassan Mamluk, Masoud Jamil and Sami Shawwa.	Wednesday, March 23, 1932. At 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

As observed, the Committee of Makams, Rhythm, and Composition engaged in a wide-ranging series of discussions throughout nineteen sessions, addressing the core elements of Arabic music. In this section, we have selected three key sessions to focus on due to their significance in shaping the committee's work on systematizing and classifying makams, rhythms, and lyrical forms. These sessions are:

- Sixth Session: Focused on the classification of makams by their primary notes.
- Eighth Session: Discussed the rhythms used in Egypt and presented makams based on Dukah as introduced by Ali Darwish and Baron d'Erlanger.
- Thirteenth Session: Addressed makams, lyrical, and instrumental forms as practiced in Egypt.

These sessions encapsulate the committee's efforts to systematically analyze and codify the diverse musical practices across the Arab world, drawing attention to regional variations and shared traditions. The following Table 1 provides key details of the committee's sessions, as recorded in the 1932 conference book:

Classification of Makams according to their Primary Tones (Sixth Session)

During the committee's sixth session, the classification of makams became a focal point. The committee compiled a list of the 52 makams utilized in Egypt and analyzed them by their primary tones. Table 2 presents the committee's arrangement of the makams according to the primary tone.

Table 2

Makams on Primary Tone (Arabic 1933. p. 140).

Makams on Yekah	<i>Yekah, Farhafza, Shat Arban.</i>
Makams on Huseyini Ashiran	<i>Huseyini Ashiran.</i>
Makams on Ajem Ashiran	<i>Ajem Ashiran, Shewk Afza, Tarz Gedid.</i>
Makams on Irak	<i>Iraq, Rahtul-Arwah, Dalkash Huran, Farhnek, Beste Nigar, Awig.</i>
Makams on Rast	<i>Rast, Suzinak “without Zirkula”, Mahur, Hijazkar, Sazkar, Shorek, Nihawend, Kurdili Hijazkar, Newaeser, Nikriz, Besendide, Tarz Newin, Rehawi, Nihawend Kebir, Zangula, Egyptian Kerdin, and Nihawend Murassa “Famous with Sumble Nihawend, Delenshin.</i>
Makams on Dukah	<i>Beyati, Saba, Egyptian Ushak, Karjyar, Hijaz, Isfahan, Huseyini, Muhayyer Ajam, Taher, Ardbar, Shehinaz, Saba Buselik, Kurdi, and Huseyini Kalgharar.</i>
Makams on Sekah	<i>Sikah, Huzzam, Mustear, Maya</i>
Makams on Geharkah	<i>Geharkah</i>

The committee also examined a selection of makams submitted by Baron d'Erlanger, which were co-authored by Ali Darwish (Table 3).

Table 3

Baron d'Erlanger Makams Primary Tones (Arabic 1933. p. 141).

Makams on Yekah	<i>Yekah, Shat-Arban, Farhafza, Sultani Yekah</i>
Makams on Ashiran Huseyini	<i>Huseyini-Ashiran, Beyati, Buselik, Suzdal, Shewk Tarab</i>
Makams on Ashiran Ajem	<i>Ajem Ashiran, Shewk Afza, Shewk Ouur</i>
Makams on Irak	<i>Iraq, Rahtul-Arwah, Farhnek, Besta-Isfahan, Dalkash-Huran, Awig, Beste-Nigar, Awig-Ara, Rawnak-Nama</i>
Makams on Rast	<i>Rast, Suzdilara, Suzinek, Rehawi, Mahur, Zewil, Hayyan, Neyrez-Rast, Besendide, Delenshin, Sazkar</i>

Following this, the makams were broken down into their constituent *Jens*—the smaller melodic units within makams. A comparative analysis was then conducted, comparing the Egyptian makams to those used

in Syria (Aleppo), Marrakesh, Iraq, and the Arabian Peninsula. It was noted that all makams in Egypt were also present in Syria, except *Ushak*, which is referred to as *Huseyini Buselik* in Egypt.

Rhythms Used in Egypt & Presented Makams on *Dukah* by d’Erlanger and Darwish (Eight Session)

During this session, Sami Shawwa presented and compared a series of makams to a previous presentation. One of the key discussions centered on the fifth question about makams, which was addressed as follows: A composer is not required to start with a specific tone, but should consider the makam’s dominant tone. It’s important to note that the dominant tone is not always the fifth (la quinte) in the context of makams in oriental music. For example, a composer working with the makam *Muhayyer* is not obligated to begin with the tone traditionally associated with confusion but can select any adjacent tone that fits the composition.

The consensus among the committee members was that the artistic structures of these makams do not limit the composer’s creativity. As a result, it is neither necessary nor possible to modify the rules of makam, as these rules are inherently tied to what is essential for the creation and performance of makams. Nevertheless, the original tonal foundation of each makam should be respected.

Rhythm was also a significant area of study. The committee reviewed a report from the Institute of Oriental Music that documented 20 rhythms used in Egypt, each paired with corresponding melodic models (Table 4). Additionally, 30 melodic models from Aleppo were examined and approved, further reinforcing the committee’s goal of cross-regional standardization (Arabic 1933. p. 135).

Table 4

The rhythms used in Egypt (Arabic 1933. p. 144).

The Twenty Fourth	<i>Muhager</i>
<i>Chenber</i>	<i>Murabba</i>
<i>Worshan</i>	<i>Medawer</i>
The sixteenth	<i>Masmudi</i>
<i>Muhager Masder</i>	<i>Newkhat Hindi</i>
<i>Raheg</i>	<i>Semai Derig</i>
<i>Fakhhet</i>	<i>Zurufat</i>
<i>Awfer</i>	<i>Semai Sakil</i>
<i>Mukhames</i>	<i>Aksak</i>
<i>Newakhhet</i>	<i>Semai Sereband</i>

Ali Darwish then presented the committee with a notebook containing thirty-three papers listing the remaining makams, which he had compiled with Baron d’Erlanger. The committee examined these makams using *Dukah* as the primary tone. They are listed: *Kargirar*, *Ushak Turki*, *Zefertin & Beyati Rakemti*, “Baba” *Tahir*, *Isfahan*, *Kerden*, *Beyati Sultani*, and *Ardbar*.

Makams, Lyrical & Instrumental Forms Presented by Egypt (Thirteenth Session)

When discussing composition, the committee reviewed and approved a comprehensive report on instrumental and lyrical compositions used in Egypt, with a particular focus on their relationship with rhythm. Ali Garm’s submission supplemented this report, detailing the various composition practices in Egypt. Both reports were consolidated during the committee’s thirteenth session.

During this session, a discussion arose concerning a list of the makams used in Egypt and their specific tonal dimensions, as outlined by Emil Arian. The committee reviewed a document detailing the makams' dimensions in millimeters, commissioned by the Institute's Preparatory Committee.

After thorough deliberation, the committee members accepted the division proposed by the Committee of Scale despite the objections of Rauf Yekta and Masoud Jamil, who expressed disagreement with the proposed division. They did not support the acceptance of this division, even though the Committee of Scale had approved *Diwan's* moderate interpretation.

Furthermore, the conference secretariat requested that the committee review a report submitted by Ibrahim Khalil Anis, which discussed Abdul Hamid's development of a device for creating Egyptian and Turkish rhythms. In addition, the committee examined various lyrical and instrumental compositions used in Egypt, highlighting their unique characteristics and their relationship to rhythms.

These findings, as outlined in the report submitted by the institute's artistic technical committee, were duly approved and categorized as follows:

Types of Lyrical Composition: *Mowashah*, singing with the word *Ye Leyl*, *Mewal*, *Dawr*, *Kasida*, *Monologue-Dialogue*, *Trilogy*, *Neshid*, *Composed novel*, *Taktouka*, *Tark Zekir*, *Tark Mewlid*, *Wedding songs*, *religious hymns*, *Pilgrim's songs*, *Dancing compositions*, and *Folk songs*.

Types of Instrumental Composition: *Dolap*, *Bashro*, *Semai*, *Tahmile*, *Introduction or Opening*, *Polka*, *Longa*, *Marchers*, *Waltz*, *Descriptive pieces*, and all the types of *Taksim* (Arabic 1933. p. 152-153).

Makam Analysis & Comparison

In the Committee of Makams, Rhythm, and Composition, the Institute of Oriental Music showcased examples of the makams utilized in Egypt. The presentation commenced with the *Yekah* makam, the first makam featured in the conference book, as illustrated in the following



Figure 1Arabic Music Conference 1932 Book *Yekah Makam*

المقامات التي تستقر على درجة اليكاه
Maqamates ayant comme tonique la note Yagah

مقام يگاه
Maqam Yagah

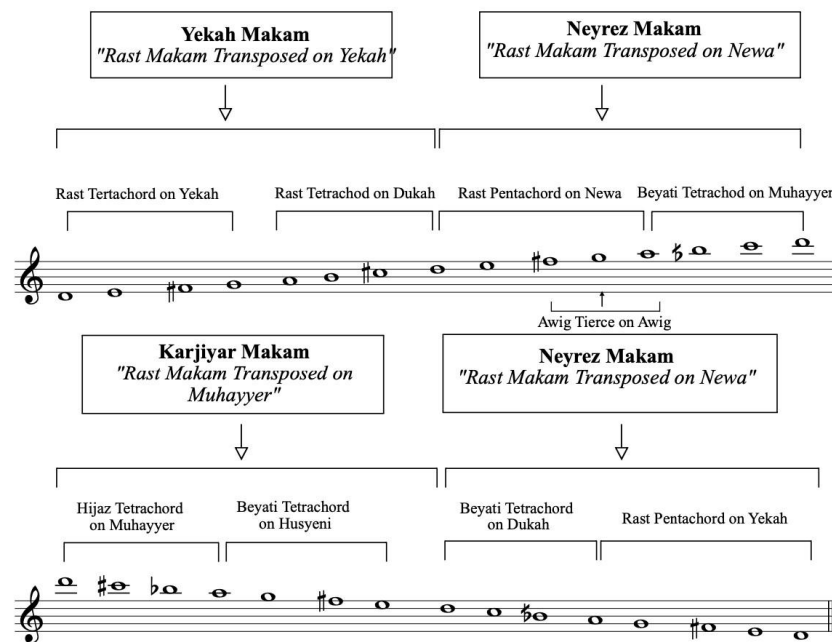
جنس راست (ذو) الاربع على اليكاه	جنس راست (ذو) الاربع على الدوكاه	جنس راست (ذو الخمس) على النوا	جنس ياتي (ذو) الاربع على الهجر
Genre Rast Zul arbaa (quarte) sur le Yagah	Genre Rast Zul arbaa (quarte) sur le Dougah	Genre Rast Zul khams (quinte) sur le Nawa	Genre Bayati Zul arbaa (quarte) sur le Mohayar

أوج (ذو الثلاث) على الأوج
Awge Zoussalace
(tierce) sur le Awge

جنس حماز (ذو) الاربع على الهجر	جنس ياتي (ذو) الاربع على الحسيني	جنس ياتي (ذو) الاربع على الدوكاه	جنس راست (ذو الخمس) على اليكاه
Genre Hidjaz Zul arbaa (quarte) sur le Mohayar	Genre Bayati Zul arbaa (quarte) sur le Husseiney	Genre Bayati Zul arbaa (quarte) sur le Dougah	Genre Rast Zul khams (quinte) sur le Yagah

١٩٩٩ م -

Source: Arabic, 1933. p. 196m

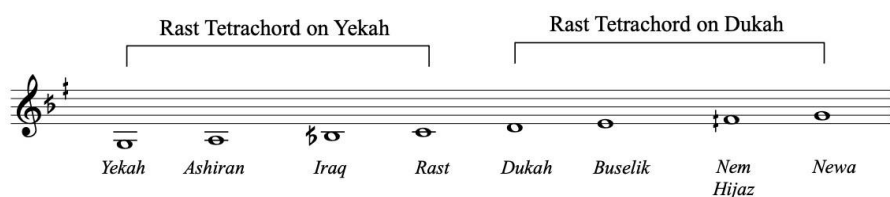
Figure 2Arabic Music Conference 1932 Book *Yekah Makam*

In the 1932 conference, the makam *Yekah* was showcased in ascending and descending octaves. As shown in Figure 2, the first octave presents makam *Yekah* on *Yekah*, effectively transposing makam *Rast* onto the *Yekah* note. This makam consists of two *Jens* tetrachords: the first is *Rast* on *Yekah*, while the second is *Rast* on *Dukah*.

The second octave also features two *Jens*: A *Rast* pentachord on *Nawa* and a *Beyati* tetrachord on *Muhayyer*. As shown in Figure 2, this distinctive combination is now recognized as makam *Neyrez* in Arabic music, transposed to *Nawa*.

In the descending section of makam *Yekah*, the first *Jens* comprises a *Hijaz* tetrachord on *Muhayyer*, followed by a *Beyati* tetrachord on *Huseyni*. This arrangement has now become known as makam *Karjiyar*. It culminates with the initial *Jens* *Beyati* tetrachord on *Dukah*, followed by a *Rast* pentachord on *Yekah*. This combination is now referred to as makam *Neyrez*, transposed on *Yekah*.

When comparing the makam *Yekah* as presented at the 1932 conference, several differences in its current representation within Arabic music were observed. These changes include variations in the makam's primary note, the symbols used, and the octaves. However, the overall structure remains similar, reflecting the makam *Rast* transposed onto *Yekah*'s note.

Figure 3Current Arabic Music Makam *Yekah*

Source: Hashad, 2015. p. 30

The makam *Yekah*, illustrated in Figure 3 and presented by the Higher Institute of Arabic Music, comprises two genders: *Rast* tetrachord on *Yekah* and *Rast* tetrachord on *Dukah*.

In terms of notation, Figure 2 indicates that during the 1932 conference, the Arabic music notation system still represented the *Rast* note on the G tone, similar to the Turkish music notation system today. The makams featured in the conference book were notated with the understanding that G corresponds to the *Rast* note. However, in contemporary Arabic music, as shown in Figure 3, the *Rast* note is now represented on the C tone.

In the 1932 sample of the makam *Yekah*, the term *Jens* appears to be used for both tetrachords and pentachords. In contrast, contemporary Arabic music distinguishes between these, using *Jens* for tetrachords and *Akid* for pentachords. Currently, only *Akid Newaeser* and a single *Nesba* “Tierce” *Sikah* are referred to in makam *Sikah* (Hashad, 2015. p. 35-48).

Discussion

When we examine the makams presented by the Institute of Oriental Music and Baron d’Erlanger, it becomes evident that Baron generally offers more makams. Additionally, the methodology employed by Baron closely aligns with traditional Turkish music, particularly in the way the makams are arranged according to their degrees. In contrast, the makams presented by the Music Institute in 1932 aimed to avoid redundancy by not repeating makams under different names, even before the conference. This underscores the significance of the conference, which sought to collect and preserve Arabic music amidst various opinions. As a result, many old oriental makams were excluded. Almost a century later, in the conference book, observe the introduction of certain makams that were not included by the Egyptian Music Institute but were presented by Baron, as will be illustrated in the following examples.

The makams presented by the Institute of Oriental Music in Table 2 range from the *Yekah* note to the *Geharkah* note. In contrast, those previously listed in Table 3 by Baron d’Erlanger and Ali Darwish extend from the *Yekah* note to the *Rast* note. At the same time, the makams corresponding to the *Dukah* are categorized in Committee 8.

Makams associated with *Yekah*

As documented by Egyptian sources in Table 2, Baron d’Erlanger and Darwish expand upon the makams associated with the *Yekah* note. These include the *Sultan Yekah* makam, which belongs to the *Buselik* family of makams (Arabic 1933. p. 188).

In Turkish music, the *Sultanî Yegâh* makam was notably employed by İsmail Dede Efendi during the reign of II. Mahmud appears to be an original creation of Dede. An alternative *Sultanî Yegâh* makam was identified in the mid-16th century, featuring a *Peshrev* and *Semai* composed by *Giray Khan*. However, a key distinction exists between the makams of *Dede* and *Giray* (Kutluğ, 2000. p. 227).

It is noteworthy that *Sultanî Yegâh* does not appear in Abdülbaki Nâsır Dede's work, *Tedkik u Tahkik* (Başer, 2013). This omission may be attributed to the possibility that Dede Efendi had not yet discovered the makam. As shown in Table 5, Arel and Ezgi also suggest that this makam is a transposition of the *Buselik* makam on *Yekah* (Kutluğ, 2000. pp. 447-449).

Table 5

Makam Sultan Yekah

Makams on <i>Yekah</i> Note	<i>Sultan Yekah</i> makam
1932 Conference Book Presented Makam Presented By: Baron d’Erlanger & Ali Darwish	The makam <i>Sultan Yekah</i> , transposition for <i>Buselik</i> makam on <i>Yekah</i>
In Turkish Music <i>Yakup Fikret Kutluğ</i>	<i>Sultanî Yegâh</i> makam is transpose to <i>Buselik</i> makam on <i>Yekah</i>
In Current Arabic Music	<i>Sultan Yekah</i> makam is <i>Nihawend</i> makam transposed on the <i>Yekah</i>

In Arabic music, the makam currently featured in the curriculum at the Arabic Music Institute represents the *Nihawend* makam transposed to the *Yekah* note (Hashad, 2015. p. 33). As shown in Table 5, the *Sultan Yekah* makam is recognized in both Turkish and Arabic music as the *Nihawend/Buselik* makam⁵ transposed on *Yekah*.

Makams associated with *Huseyini Ashiran*

The makams documented on the *Huseyini Ashiran* note by Baron d'Erlanger and Ali Darwish are more numerous than those from the Institute of Oriental Music, as they include the makams *Bayati Ashiran*, *Buselik Ashiran*, *Nehuft*, *Suzdal*, and *Shawk Tarab* (Arabic, 1933. p. 201). One particular makam, *Huseyini Ashiran*, was presented in the 1932 conference proceedings (see Table 2). Introducing some of those makams as follows

Baron d'Erlanger presented the makam *Beyati Ashiran* in the 1932 conference book, as outlined in Table 6 (Arabic, 1933. p. 193).

Table 6

Makam Beyati Ashiran

Makams on <i>Huseyini Ashiran</i>	<i>Beyati Ashiran</i> Makam
1932 Conference Book Presented Makam	<i>Beyati</i> tetrachord on <i>Huseyini Ashiran</i> , <i>Beyati</i> pentachord on <i>Dukah</i> , <i>Beyati</i> tetrachord on <i>Huseyini</i> , <i>Beyati</i> pentachord on <i>Muhayyar</i> .
Presented By: Baron d'Erlanger & Ali Darwish	Downward, <i>Beyati</i> pentachord on <i>Muhayyar</i> , <i>Beyati</i> tetrachord on <i>Huseyini</i> , <i>Buselik</i> pentachord on the <i>Dukah</i> , <i>Beyati</i> tetrachord on <i>Huseyini Ashiran</i>
In Turkish Music Yakup Fikret Kutluğ	<i>Ushak</i> ⁶ on the <i>Dukah</i> , then <i>Ushak</i> scale on the <i>Huseyini Ashiran</i>
In Current Arabic Music	Similar to Makam <i>Huseyini Ashiran</i> in ascension and makam <i>Beyati</i> in descent

In Turkish music, the *Ushak Ashiran* makam is similar to *Beyati Ashiran*; however, according to the previous Table 6, *Ushak Ashiran* is not among the makams utilized in Turkish music (Kutluğ, 2000. pp. 248-249). Although the makam *Beyati Ashiran* is noted in current Arabic music, it is worth mentioning that no makam is presently referred to by this name within Arabic music (Hashad, 2015. pp. 39-40). Ultimately, this similarity contributes to its absence from the makams currently employed in Arabic music.

Baron d'Erlanger introduced the makam *Buselik Ashiran* in the 1932 conference book, as indicated in Table 7. He noted that the character of this makam is defined by displaying *Buselik* in the *Dukah* and *Beyati* in the *Huseyini* (Arabic, 1933. pp. 194-195).

⁵*Nihawend* or *Buselik* makam: The *Buselik Jens* is called *Nihawend* tetrachord on current Arabic music. The *Buselik* makam in current Arabic music is a transpose for *Nihawend Kurdi* makam on *Dukah* (Hashad, 2015. p. 35).

⁶*Ushak* - *Beyati*: No *Ushak Jens* in Arabic music, it's called *Beyati*. Only one makam is called Egyptian *Ushak*, consists of *Nihawend* tetrachord on *Dukah*, and *Beyati* tetrachord on *Huseyini*, from *Nihawend* family (Hashad, 2015. p. 36).



Table 7*Makam Buselik Ashiran*

Makams on <i>Huseyini Ashiran</i>	<i>Buselik Ashiran</i> Makam
1932 Conference Book Presented Makam	Ascending, <i>Beyati</i> tetrachord on <i>Huseyini Ashiran</i> , <i>Buselik</i> tetrachord on the <i>Dukah</i> , <i>Beyati</i> tetrachord on <i>Huseyini</i> , and <i>Beyati</i> pentachord on the <i>Muhayyer</i> .
Presented By: Baron d'Erlanger & Ali Darwish	Descending, <i>Buselik</i> pentachord on <i>Muhayyer</i> , <i>Bayati</i> tetrachord on the <i>Huseyini</i> , <i>Buselik</i> tetrachord on the <i>Dukah</i> , <i>Beyati</i> tetrachord on the <i>Huseyini Ashiran</i> .
In Turkish Music Yakup Fikret Kutluğ	<i>Huseyini</i> pentachord on <i>Huseyini</i> , <i>Buselik</i> pentachord on a <i>Dukah</i> , and <i>Ushak</i> tetrachord on <i>Huseyini Ashiran</i>
In Current Arabic Music	Makam <i>Beyati</i> transposed on <i>Huseyini Ashiran</i> .

In Turkish music, the *Buselik Ashiran* makam likely emerged in the early twentieth century alongside notable figures such as Ebu-Bakr Agha and Enfi Hasan Agha. During this period, *Cantemir's Peshrev* was composed in the makam *Buselik Ashiran*, a makam formation as shown in Table 7 (Kutluğ, 2000. pp. 238-239).

Currently, the *Buselik Ashiran* makam does not exist in Arabic music; however, it resembles the *Beyati* makam portrayed in the *Huseyini Ashiran* note (Hashad, 2015. p. 39). In closing, this aligns with the findings from the 1932 conference, which sought to streamline the number of extra makams to unify Arabic music.

Baron d'Erlanger introduced makam *Suzdal* in the 1932 conference book, illustrated in Table 8. He described the essence of makam *Suzdal* as expressing the *Jens* of *Hisar* on the *Dukah* and the *Jens* of *Hijaz* on *Huseyini Ashiran* (Arabic, 1933. pp. 198-199).

Table 8*Makam Suzdal*

Makams on <i>Huseyini Ashiran</i>	<i>Suzdal</i> Makam
1932 Conference Book Presented Makam	Ascending and Descending, <i>Hijaz</i> tetrachord on the <i>Huseyini Ashiran</i> , <i>Hisar</i> pentachord on <i>Dukah</i> , <i>Hijaz</i> tetrachord on <i>Huseyini</i> , <i>Hisar</i> pentachord on on <i>Muhayyer</i> .
Presented By: Baron d'Erlanger & Ali Darwish	
In Turkish Music Yakup Fikret Kutluğ	<i>Hijaz</i> on <i>Huseyini Ashiran</i> , <i>Buselik</i> on <i>Dukah</i> , and <i>Hijaz</i> on <i>Huseyini</i> (Kutluğ, 2000. p. 461-463).
In Current Arabic Music	<i>Hijaz</i> tetrachord on <i>Ashiran</i> , <i>Hijaz</i> tetrachord on <i>Buselik</i>

In contemporary Arabic music, the *Suzdal* makam is categorized within the *Hijaz* makam family, as reflected in Table 8 (Hashad, 2015. p. 44).

It starts with the *Hijaz* flavor in the *Huseyini* fret, then shows the *Buselik* flavor in the *Dukah* fret, and finally decides on the *Hijaz* flavor in the *Huseyini Ashiran* fret.

Makams associated with *Ajem Ashiran*

The Institute of Oriental Music organized the conference discussion of the makams associated with the *Ajem Ashiran* note. Agreements were made on the makams introduced in the conference book, specifically *Ajem Ashiran* and *Shawk-Afza*. However, Egypt introduced makam *Tarz Jedid*, while Baron d'Erlanger presented makam *Shawk Awer*.

As noted in the conference book by the Institute, makam *Tarz Jedid*, as shown in Table 9 (Arabic, 1933. pp. 194-195). In Turkish music, *Tarz Jedid* is categorized under the *Ajem Ashiran* note. This makam is a blend of four other makams, as detailed in Table 9 (Kutluğ, 2000. p. 255).

Table 9*Makam Tarz Jedid*

Makams on <i>Ajem Ashiran</i>	<i>Tarz Jedid</i> Makam
1932 Conference Book Presented Makam	Ascending, <i>Ajem</i> tierce on <i>Ajem Ashiran</i> , <i>Hijaz</i> or <i>Nishabork</i> ⁷ tetrachord on <i>Dukah</i> , <i>Nihawend</i> or <i>Rast</i> on <i>Newa</i> , and <i>Nikriz</i> pentachord on <i>Kerdan</i> .
Presented By: Baron d'Erlanger & Ali Darwish	Descending, <i>Nikriz</i> pentachord on <i>Kerdan</i> . <i>Nihawend</i> tetrachord on <i>Newa</i> , <i>Kurd</i> tetrachord on <i>Dukah</i> , and <i>Ajem</i> tierce on <i>Ajem Ashiran</i>
In Turkish Music Yakup Fikret Kutluğ	<i>Buselik</i> makam on <i>Newa</i> , <i>Rast</i> pentachord on <i>Newa</i> <i>Newaeser</i> scale on <i>Rast</i> . <i>Nigar</i> pentachord on <i>Ajem Ashiran</i>
In Current Arabic Music	<i>Nihawend</i> tetrachord on <i>Rast</i> , then <i>Ajem</i> tetrachord on <i>Newa</i>

In contemporary Arabic music, *Tarz Jedid* is seen as a subdivision of the *Nihawend* makam on the *Rast* note, accompanied by *Jens Ajem* (Hashad, 2015. p. 34).

Baron d'Erlanger introduced makam *Shawk Awer* in the 1932 conference book, also represented in Table 10. He noted that it belongs to the family of *Ajem* makam (Arabic, 1933. pp. 206-207).

In Turkish music, makam *Shawk Awer* is regarded as one of the ancient makams. Some sources trace its origins back to the era of Sultan I. Mahmud. Table 10 elaborates that this makam is classified as a descending makam (Kutluğ, 2000. p.245).

Currently, makam *Shawk Awer* is found in Arabic music as a transposition of makam *Tarz Jedid* on the *Ajem Ashiran* note. Its details are also reflected in Table 10, with this makam further being linked to makam *Nihawend* subdivisions.

Table 10*Makam Shawk Awer*

Makams on <i>Ajem Ashiran</i>	<i>Shawk Awer</i> Makam
1932 Conference Book Presented Makam	Ascending, <i>Ajem</i> tierce on <i>Ajem Ashiran</i> , <i>Buselik</i> pentachord on <i>Dukah</i> , <i>Ajem</i> pentachord on <i>Ajem</i> , <i>Geharkah</i> ⁸ Tetrachord on <i>Jewab Geharkah</i> .
Presented By: Baron d'Erlanger & Ali Darwish	Descending, <i>Geharkah</i> tetrachord on <i>Jewab Geharkah</i> , <i>Ajem</i> pentachord on <i>Ajem</i> , and <i>Buselik</i> pentachord on <i>Geharkah</i> , <i>Ajem</i> pentachord on <i>Ajem Ashiran</i>
In Turkish Music Yakup Fikret Kutluğ	<i>Rast</i> makam on <i>Kerdan</i> , then makam <i>Nihawend</i> on <i>Rast</i> , ending with makam <i>Ajem Ashiran</i> on <i>Ajem Ashiran</i>
In Current Arabic Music	<i>Nihawend</i> tetrachord on <i>Ajem Ashiran</i> , then <i>Ajem</i> ⁹ tetrachord on <i>Geharkah</i>

In conclusion, *Shawk Awer* was later incorporated into Arabic music as part of the *Nihawend* family. It is considered to have been added after the 1932 conference, which suggests that the conference not only advanced the evolution of Arabic music but also led to the later introduction of several makams.

⁷Nishabork, is transpose of *Jens Rast* on the *Dukah* note (Arabic, 1933. p. 202m).

⁸Geharkah: *Jens Geharkah* became *Ajem* tetrachord in current Arabic music.

⁹Ajem: *Jens Ajem*, as *Jens Geharkah* on Baron's presented system.

Makams associated with *Iraq*

The Institute of Oriental Music presented six makams based on the *Iraq* note, while Baron d'Erlanger and Ali Darwish contributed nine makams. The additional makams introduced by Baron include *Beste Isfahan*, *Awij-Ara*, and *Rewnak-Nama*. Introducing some of those makams as follows

Makam *Rewnak-Nama*, as presented by Baron d'Erlanger, is characterized by its ascending and descending features, detailed in Table 11. Baron elaborated that this makam exhibits *Mustear* on the *Sikah* and *Awij-Ara* in *Iraq* (Arabic, 1933. pp. 224-225).

Table 11

Makam Rewnak-Nama

Makams on <i>Iraq</i>	<i>Rewnak-Nama</i> Makam
1932 Conference Book Presented Makam Presented By: Baron d'Erlanger & Ali Darwish	Ascending and Descending, <i>Karar Awij-Ara</i> ¹⁰ tetrachord on <i>Iraq</i> , <i>Mustear</i> pentachord on <i>Sikah</i> , <i>Buselik</i> tetrachord on <i>Newa</i> , <i>Mustear</i> tierce on <i>Jewab Sikah</i> .
In Turkish Music <i>Yakup Fikret Kutluğ</i>	<i>Sikah</i> tetrachord on <i>Awij</i> , <i>Ushak</i> tetrachord on <i>Dukah</i> , and the beginning of makam <i>Iraq</i>
In Current Arabic Music	Similar to makam <i>Mustear</i>

In Turkish music, makam *Rewnak-Nama* is defined by Arel and extends from the makam *Mustear* tetrachord to the *Iraq* note. This consistency is also reflected in Table 11 (Kutluğ, 2000. pp. 275-276). Baron's presentation of makam *Rewnak-Nama* is similarly aligned with makam *Mustear* in contemporary Arabic music, also depicted within the context of the *Iraq* note (Hashad, 2015. p. 49).

In summary, Arabic music has historically been rooted in several makams, one of which is known as makam *Mustear*. The decision to exclude makam *Rewnak-Nama* later in the 1932 conference was motivated by its similarities to others. One of the conference's key objectives was to unify Arabic music makams.

Makams associated with *Rast*

The Institute of Oriental Music identified 18 makams based on the *Rast* note, while Baron d'Erlanger and Ali Darwish presented 19 makams. Notably, Egypt introduced two distinct makams: *Zangola* and *Egyptian Kerdan*. Additionally, Baron presented four makams that differed from those in the Egyptian list: *Suzdilar*, *Zewail*, *Hayyan* and *Neyrez Rast*. Introducing some of those makams as follows

The Institute of Oriental Music included the *Zangola* makam in the conference publication, and its details are in Table 12 (Arabic, 1933. p. 223m).

Table 12

Makam Zangola

Makams on <i>Rast</i>	<i>Zangola</i> Makam
1932 Conference Book Presented Makam Presented By: The Institute of Oriental Music	<i>Hijaz</i> tetrachord on the <i>Rast</i> , <i>Geharkah</i> pentachord on <i>Geharkah</i> , <i>Hijaz</i> pentachord on <i>Kerdan</i> . [*] Sometimes, in ascending, performs a <i>Buselik</i> tetrachord on <i>Muhayyer</i> instead of the <i>Hijaz</i> on <i>Kerdan</i>
In Turkish Music <i>Yakup Fikret Kutluğ</i>	<i>Uzzal</i> pentachord on <i>Dukah</i> , then a <i>Hijaz</i> tetrachord on <i>Huseyini</i>
In Current Arabic Music	<i>Zanjran</i> makam <i>Hijaz</i> tetrachord on <i>Rast</i> , then <i>Ajem</i> tetrachord on <i>Geharkah</i>

¹⁰*Karar Awij-Ara* tetrachord contains, *Iraq*, *Rast*, *Kurd* then *Sikah* notes (Arabic, 1933. p. 224-225).

In Turkish music, the *Zangola* makam is referred to as *Zirkola*, a name introduced by *Arel*, and consistency is noted in the earlier Table 12 (Kutluğ, 2000. p. 185). Currently, the name *Zangola* is not found in Arabic music; however, its composition is similar to the *Zanjran* makam, which is considered part of the *Hijaz* makam family, as detailed in the previous Table 12 (Hashad, 2015. p. 45).

In conclusion, this makam may have undergone a name change at some point in history, as its internal structure remains largely consistent. The previous and current Arabic music presentations agree that *Hijaz* is the primary *Jens*, followed by *Jens Geharkah/Ajem* as the second.

The *Egyptian Kerdan* makam, which was also featured in the 1932 conference publication, is detailed in Table 13 (Arabic, 1933. p. 224m) in ascending and descending format.

Table 13

Makam Egyptian Kerdan

Makams on Rast	Egyptian Kerdan Makam
1932 Conference Book Presented Makam	Rast pentachord on Rast, Rast pentachord on <i>Newa</i> , Rast pentachord on <i>Kerdan</i>
Presented By: The Institute of Oriental Music	
In Turkish Music	Makam <i>Huseyini</i> on <i>Dukah</i> , Rast on <i>Kerdan</i> , and Rast on <i>Newa</i>
In Current Arabic Music	Rast makam

In Turkish music, the *Kerdan* makam corresponds to the *Rast* note and is less associated with the *Dukah*. While this makam is not currently prevalent in Turkish music, it still falls under the broader category of *Rast* makam (Kutluğ, 2000. pp. 353-354).

Currently, there is no makam known as *Egyptian Kerdan* in Arabic music. This makam closely resembles the *Rast* makam in its present form, which is why it has been largely overlooked.

Baron d'Erlanger introduced the makam *Suzdilara* - *Suzdil-Ara*, as detailed in Table 14. The Baron noted that this makam's character is characterized using *Buselik* and *Huseyini*'s notes (Arabic, 1933. pp. 228-229).

Table 14 also outlines the formation of the *Suzdilara* makam in Turkish music. This makam is utilized within the *Mahur* makam, with transition symbols altering the notation (Kutluğ, 2000. pp. 305-306). The makam *Suzdilara*, currently referred to in Arabic music, is presented in Table 14 (Hashad, 2015. p. 28).

Table 14

Makam Suzdilara

Makams on Rast	Suzdilara Makam
1932 Conference Book Presented Makam	Ascending, <i>Geharkah</i> tetrachord on Rast or (<i>Buselik</i> on <i>Dukah</i>), <i>Geharkah</i> pentachord on <i>Geharkah</i> or <i>Beyati</i> (<i>Huseyini</i>) on <i>Huseyini</i> , Rast tetrachord on <i>Kerdan</i> , and <i>Geharkah</i> tetrachord on <i>Jewab Geharkah</i> .
Presented By: Baron d'Erlanger & Ali Darwish	Descending, <i>Geharkah</i> tetrachord on the <i>Jewab Geharkah</i> , <i>Geharkah</i> tetrachord on the <i>Kerdan</i> , <i>Geharkah</i> pentachord on <i>Geharkah</i> , <i>Beyati</i> pentachord on <i>Dukah</i> , then Rast tetrachord on Rast.
In Turkish Music	Makams <i>Nigar</i> and <i>Mahur</i> , then the sharp part of makam <i>Huseyini</i>
In Current Arabic Music	Makam <i>Suzdilara</i> Rast tetrachord on Rast, <i>Nihawend</i> tetrachord on <i>Newa</i>

This makam transformed its internal structure at some point in history, despite its name remaining consistent. Both the Baron and contemporary Arabic music presentations concur that it is based on the *Rast*

note, although the Baron ascends differently, while the descent culminates in *Rast* on *Rast*. The *Suzdilar* makam in Arabic music is now classified within the *Rast* makam family.

Conclusion

The 1932 conference addressed pertinent issues that remain relevant today, including the incorporation of Western musical instruments, the structuring of music education, and the classification, documentation, and preservation of Arabic music. These topics continue to influence contemporary discussions within Arabic music scholarship. The challenges faced by scholars and musicians in 1932—balancing heritage with modernity, theory with practice, and notation with oral tradition—remain central concerns in the field today.

Following the conference, Egypt underwent substantial modernization, particularly in its musical writing system, as it transitioned from the *Rast* scale in G to one in C. The impact of foreign recording companies and composers such as Abdel Wahab facilitated a fusion of Western and Oriental elements, fundamentally reshaping Arabic music. As a result, the concepts of makams and rhythms evolved from those outlined in the 1932 conference book.

Many music theorists were also active musicians, which significantly influenced their identities. Another group consists of music enthusiasts who engage with music in various capacities, offering a range of perspectives. Often lacking formal education, artists depend on their auditory skills and memory to recognize makams and oriental rhythms. This reliance on listening indicates artistic development; however, if overlooked, it could impede the progression of the musical tradition. As a result, a conference was organized to theorize Arabic music and establish a cohesive framework for all Arab nations.

The future of Arabic music is being shaped by experienced musicians with roots that date back to the early twentieth century. 1932 Egyptian scholar Mahmoud Hefny organized the inaugural Arabic Music Conference, bringing together scholars and musicians worldwide (Katz, 2015). As a product of the educational renaissance initiated by Muhammad Ali in the eighteenth century, Hefny incorporated advanced European ideas to promote the evolution of Arabic music. His contributions include establishing the Higher Institute of Arabic Music, his written works and the founding of Egypt's first music magazine (Arabic, 1933. pp. 37-38, Sahab, 1994. p. 224).

The intellectual advancements achieved by artists and musicians in Egypt were not solely the result of performance and auditory evaluation but also stemmed from Hefny's vision for advancing Arabic music theory to its current state. Numerous researchers have since conducted scientific studies on Arabic music, establishing themselves as professors and scholars at the Higher Institute of Arabic Music. They represent the foundation on which much of the future of Arabic music will be built.

Numerous musicians who rose to prominence following the conference received their education at the Higher Institute of Arabic Music, where they gained a foundational understanding of modern Arabic music. Despite the progress made in the field, the study of Arabic music remains deeply rooted in ancestral experiences and distinct forms of expression. Notable figures such as Sayed Darwish and Abdel Wahab played pivotal roles in the evolution of this genre.

Sayed Darwish is celebrated as the "people's singer" because his music resonates with all segments of Egyptian society, particularly during the pre-conference era. His iconic songs, such as *Ana el-Masry*¹¹ and *Blady-Blady*—regarded as Egypt's unofficial national anthem—exhibit a rich blend of diverse languages and musical forms. On the other hand, Abdel Wahab serves as a bridge between the pre- and post-conference periods, skillfully transforming the fundamental makam notes in his compositions (Hefny, 1985. pp. 95-110).

¹¹Sayed Darwish died before the conference, so his son sang some of his songs on the conference records. You can hear this on the conference records or through this article doctoral thesis about the Arabic Music Conference.



Abdul Wahab emerged during a pivotal era, serving as a bridge between the pre- and post-conference¹² periods and continued to influence music for many years thereafter. Studying under European professors, he became a prominent musician, thinker, and composer, leaving a lasting mark on the history of Arabic music. Wahab made significant advancements in Arabic music, particularly in harmony, by skillfully blending Western influences with its unique character. His notable works, such as *La mosh Ana el-Abky* and *Ya Misafir Wahdak*, underscore his substantial contributions. This highlights the critical interplay between musical theory and practice in shaping the future of Arabic music, emphasizing the vital connection between musicians and singers in its ongoing evolution (Abdul Samie, 1985. pp. 130-139).

A comparable historical dynamic can be observed in the transformation of Turkish makam music, where the gradual passage from oral transmission to written notation marked not only a technical shift but a broader cultural movement towards modernity (Ergur & Doğrusöz, 2015). Much like the adoption of Ham-parsum and staff notation in the 19th-century Ottoman world, the 1932 Conference sought to rationalize and institutionalize musical knowledge through committee-driven standardization, treating music as a subject to be regulated, archived, and taught through written systems. In both cases, we observe a dialectical tension between lived tradition and modern rationalization, between memory and measurement. By framing the act of classification and notation as an epistemological intervention, the 1932 Conference, like the Turkish case, becomes a lens through which we can examine how cultural authority is negotiated through musical form. Ultimately, both historical moments exemplify how musical knowledge, once rooted in performance and oral transmission, was transformed through written systems and shaped by modern reformist thinking. In a broader historical perspective, such parallelisms reveal that the 1932 Conference was part of a larger regional pattern that echoed similar modernizing efforts in neighboring traditions.

All in all, the 1932 Cairo Arabic Music Conference stands as a cornerstone in the history of Arabic music, offering a systematic approach to studying and preserving its theoretical and practical elements. Among its committees, the Committee of Makams, Rhythm, and Composition played a particularly pivotal role in codifying musical structures, standardizing terminology, and addressing the evolving relationship between tradition and modernization. Figures such as Baron d’Erlanger, Ali Darwish, and Rauf Yekta were instrumental in shaping discussions on the documentation and classification of numerous makams, with the committee’s decisions influencing the trajectory of Arabic music for decades to come (Katz, 2015). The conference’s legacy is preserved in its extensive documentation, which remains a crucial reference for scholars and researchers. By revisiting its records, we gain a deeper understanding of the historical shifts in Arabic music theory and performance, recognizing the 1932 conference as both a culmination of traditions and a catalyst for future developments in Arabic music.



Peer Review	Externally peer-reviewed.
Author Contributions	Conception/Design of Study- M.M.A.M., G.Ç.S., O.B.; Data Collection- M.M.A.M., G.Ç.S., O.B.; Data Analysis/ Interpretation- M.M.A.M., G.Ç.S., O.B.; Drafting Manuscript- M.M.A.M., G.Ç.S., O.B.; Critical Revision of Manuscript- M.M.A.M., G.Ç.S., O.B.; Final Approval and Accountability- G.Ç.S., O.B.; Supervision – G.Ç.S., O.B.
Conflict of Interest	The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.
Grant Support	The authors declared that this study has received no financial support.

¹²Abdul Wahab was in his thirties at the time of the conference.





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