



Conventions in Form and Layout: Evidence from the Practice of Compiling Lyrics *

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Abstract

This research note seeks to highlight the distinctive features of manuscript compilations of Ottoman song lyrics (*güfte mecmû'aları*). These compilations served multiple functions: as literary archives, tools for musical performance, and important sources for both music and poetry. This study argues that their practical use encouraged the emergence of standard elements in page layout, even prior to the widespread adoption of printing technologies. Such conventions facilitated the circulation of poetry through musical performance and supported the transmission of repertoire. The analysis identifies recurring patterns in page design, including two-column layouts with diagonally arranged poems, color-coded performance indicators, and *maḳâm* indexes. These elements appear consistently across both professionally copied and amateur manuscripts.

Keywords

Lyric compilations, Ottoman music, Ottoman anthologies.

Güfte Derlemelerinde Sayfa Düzeni Kalıplarına Dair Kanıtlar

Özet

Bu araştırma notu, el yazması Osmanlı güfte mecmû'alarının özelliklerine dikkat çekmeyi amaçlar. Bu mecmû'alar, edebi arşiv olmanın yanı sıra özellikle on dokuzuncu yüzyılda Hamparsum notasının yaygınlaşmasından önce müzik aktarımındaki birincil kaynak olma görevini üstlenmişlerdir. Araştırma notu, güfte mecmû'alarının özellikle müziğin icrası sırasındaki kullanımları sebebiyle sayfa tasarımlarında beliren sabit unsurları kullanma eğilimi olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Bu eğilim, şiirin müzik yoluyla dolaşımını kolaylaştırmış ve repertuar aktarımını desteklemiştir. Araştırma notundaki analiz, sayfa tasarımında tekrarlayan kalıpları tespit etmektedir: iki sütunlu ve açılı şiir yerleşimi, farklı renk mürekkeple belirtilmiş performans göstergeleri, makam fihristleri gibi unsurlar hem profesyonel kâtipler tarafından istinsah edilen hem de amatör yazmalarda tutarlı bir şekilde görülmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler

Güfte Mecmuaları, Osmanlı Müziği, Mecmua derleme gelenekleri.

أنماط تنظيم الصفحة وتنسيقها في مجاميع الكفته: شواهد وتقاليد

الموجز

تسعى هذه المذكرة البحثية إلى تسليط الضوء على خصائص مجاميع كلمات الأغاني (مجاميع الكُفْتَه - güfte mecmū'aları) العثمانية المخطوطة. فهذه المجاميع قد اضطلعت بمهمة المصدر الأوّلي في نقل الموسيقى لا سيما قبل انتشار تدوين هامبارسوم في القرن التاسع عشر. وتفترض هذه المذكرة البحثية أن مجاميع الكُفْتَه تميل إلى استخدام عناصر ثابتة في تصميم صفحاتها، (Page layout) نتيجة لاستخدامها أثناء الأداء الموسيقي بوجه خاص حيث سهل هذا التوجه تداول الشعر عبر الموسيقى ودعم نقل الريبرتوار الغنائي (Repertoire). يحدد التحليل الوارد في هذه المذكرة أنماطاً متكررة في تصميم الصفحات، مثل توزيع الأشعار في عمودين مع تنسيق مائل، ومؤشرات الأداء المرمزة بالألوان، وفهارس المقامات. تظهر هذه العناصر بشكل متسق في كل من المخطوطات التي نسخها الوراقون المهنيون أو في المجاميع التي دونها الهواة.

الكلمات المفتاحية

مجاميع الكفته، الموسيقى العثمانية، المختارات العثمانية.

Introduction

This research note focuses on manuscript compilations of Ottoman lyrics (*güfte mecmû'aları*) from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹ This period witnessed the greatest proliferation of such compilations, as well as the development of their distinctive formal features. The compilations examined in this study contain poems set to music that are often regarded as “non-religious” and are stylistically rooted in the classical Ottoman poetic tradition.²

The aims of creating lyrics compilations differed from those of poetry collections (*mecmû'a-i eş'ar*). These collections functioned as “one-volume libraries.”³ They served as resources for musical training and learning. Additionally, they were primary tools for the transmission of music. Through their paratextual elements, compilations functioned as communication systems through which musicians and music enthusiasts interacted in the process of musical transmission.

This research note advances a central argument: the practical use of manuscripts encouraged a pre-print tendency toward the adoption of conventional elements in page layout.⁴ Such standard elements facilitated the circulation of poetry through music and supported the transmission of repertoire.

¹ This research utilizes manuscripts from the Corpus Musicae Ottomanicae project. Ottoman poetry and music encompass a vast geographical and cultural landscape characterized by multilingual and multi-script traditions. Given the necessary limitations of any research endeavor, this study focuses exclusively on manuscripts containing Turkish poems in Arabic script. See: <https://www.uni-muenster.de/CMO-Edition/>

² There are also compilations that contain lyrics with religious content. However, they differ in terms of content, poetic structure, and page layout. As stated above, this research note focuses only on compilations that contain non-religious poems.

³ Michael Friedrich and Cosima Schwarke, “Introduction – Manuscripts as Evolving Entities,” in *One-Volume Libraries: Composite and Multiple-Text Manuscripts*, ed. Michael Friedrich and Cosima Schwarke (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2016), 1-26; Gerhard Endress, “‘One-Volume Libraries’ and the Traditions of Learning in Medieval Arabic Islamic Culture,” in *One-Volume Libraries: Composite and Multiple-Text Manuscripts*, ed. Michael Friedrich and Cosima Schwarke (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2016), 171-206.

⁴ In the context of Arabic lyrics compilations, Carl Davila also suggests that “compilations’ functions shape their forms and content, placing them alongside but distinct from a poetic *dîwān*.” See: Carl Dávila, “The Social Life of Musical Manuscripts in Eighteenth-Century Morocco: The Case of *Kunnāsh al-Hā'ik*,” in *Social Codicology*, (Leiden: Brill, 2024), 103.

The following analysis identifies standard, fixed elements observed in these manuscripts and presents preliminary findings from the investigation. The study is divided into two main sections. The first provides contextual background on lyrics compilations, situating them within Ottoman manuscript culture. It also describes the importance of poetry gatherings (*meclis*, pl. *mecâlis*) for literature and music and considers possible selection criteria for the poems. The second section presents the main argument of this research note, namely the use of standard elements present in the compilations.

I. Crafting Processes of Compilations

Ottoman compilations of lyrics constitute a distinct category within the Ottoman manuscript tradition. These compilations served as literary archives, musical performance tools, and cultural artifacts. A significant observation regarding the production of these manuscripts centers on two essential concepts in Ottoman culture: poetry and *meclis*.

Sources indicate that lyrics in Ottoman literary and musical culture were not defined as a subgenre of poetry. In fact, poems set to music were not classified under any specific term. Most notably, the word “lyrics” (*güfte*) itself (in the sense of a musical term) is remarkably absent from Ottoman primary sources before the twentieth century. For instance, ‘Âşık Çelebi (d. 1572), a prominent sixteenth-century biographical dictionary writer, occasionally noted when poems were set to music in his renowned biographical work, yet never employed the term *güfte*.⁵ Similarly, Şeyhülislam Es‘ad Efendi (d. 1753), who compiled a biographical dictionary specifically dedicated to musicians, also failed to use the term. Instead, some biographical dictionaries, as in the case of ‘Âşık Çelebi, designated these musical texts simply as poems or poetry.⁶ This brings us to a key concept in Ottoman culture: *meclis*.⁷

⁵ Ersu Pekin, “‘Âşık Çelebi’nin Musannifleri, Hanendeleri, Sazendeleri,” in *Bir Allame-i Cihan Stefanos Yerasimos (1942-2005)*, ed. Edhem Eldem (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2012), 505-579.

⁶ Cem Behar, *Şeyhülislam’ın Müziği: 18. Yüzyılda Osmanlı-Türk Musikisi ve Şeyhülislam Es‘ad Efendi’nin Atrabü’l-Âsâr’ı* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2017).

⁷ The *meclis* was not a concept unique to Ottoman culture; other cultures also regarded it as a meeting point for poetry and music. See: Hilary Kilpatrick, *Making the Great Book of Songs: Compilation and the Author’s Craft in Abū l-Faraj al-Işbahānī’s Kitāb al-Aghānī* (London:

In Ottoman culture, *meclis* (pl. *mecâlis*) functioned as social poetry gatherings similar to literary salons.⁸ It is well documented that members of intellectual circles generally gathered at these meetings. The exchange of ideas encompassed a wide range of disciplines, including literature, science, and others. While these gatherings undoubtedly contributed to intellectual development and diversity, their main purpose was entertainment. For this reason, they were the primary venues for Ottoman musical performances. Ottoman music was not concert music in the modern sense;⁹ it was not publicly accessible and was predominantly composed and performed in intimate circles. The social structure of *meclis* gatherings challenges modern categorical distinctions between artistic roles. The titles of participants—poet, musician, or singer—may not correspond to contemporary professional classifications. A musician might function as a poet, and a poet could possess extensive musical knowledge. Crucially, these designations did not constitute professional titles in the modern sense.¹⁰

Other aspects that came into play when poems were set to music include the dissemination and memorization of poetry. Music served as an exceptionally effective medium for spreading poetry and enhancing the poet's reputation. Once given a musical setting, a poem gained fresh life and transcended the written page to reach a wider audience. Musical compositions also facilitated the memorization of poems and supported their circulation among audiences. As a result, poetry and music were not only created and enjoyed in similar contexts but also significantly influenced one another in terms of growth and dissemination.

Routledge, 2003). Samer M. Ali, *Arabic Literary Salons in the Islamic Middle Ages: Poetry, Public Performance, and the Presentation of the Past* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010), 24-124.

⁸ W. G. Andrews, *Poetry's Voice, Society's Song: Ottoman Lyric Poetry* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985), 62-88.

⁹ Ersu Pekin, "Fem-i Muhsin ya da Yaratıcı İcracı," *Türk Sosyoloji Dergisi* 37, no. 2 (2017): 325.

¹⁰ Onur Öner, "A Collective Biography Study of Musicians: Patterns, Networks and Music as a 'Profession' in the Late Ottoman Era and the Early Republican Years in İstanbul" (PhD diss., İstanbul Şehir University, 2019); Ogün Peçenek, "Klâsik Türk Edebiyatı Şairlerinin Gerçek Meslekleri ve Bu Mesleklerin Şiirlerine Yansıması" (15. ve 16. Yüzyıl) (master's thesis, Süleyman Demirel University, 2019).

Compilations of lyrics specifically included poems that had already been set to music. However, Ottoman sources, particularly those predating the twentieth century, provide limited documentation regarding compilation processes or selection criteria. Several fundamental questions remain partially unresolved, including how the selection process functioned, what criteria governed the selection of lyrics, and what methodology informed the compilation process.

Despite its origins outside the Ottoman context, İřfahānī's (d. 967) renowned work *al-Aġānī*, which focuses on songs, singers, and composers from the Umayyad and Abbasid periods, provides valuable insights.¹¹ His work achieved considerable popularity in Ottoman intellectual circles, as evidenced by the hundreds of manuscript copies surviving in Turkish libraries today.¹² The book's analytical methods regarding song creation and poem selection most likely influenced Ottoman composers' and compilers' techniques.

Additionally, sources and anecdotes published in early twentieth-century Istanbul¹³ indicate three principal categories of poems likely to be selected for musical setting and subsequent compilation. First, through their reception and circulation in *meclis* contexts, poems that were popular during poetry gatherings attracted the attention of composers. Second, poems with strong semantic influence on composers were selected, demonstrating that emotional or intellectual resonance played a crucial role in the selection process. Third, technically well-crafted poetry that was free from metrical errors was favored. Composers also occasionally created their own lyrics for musical works. With their traditional components, such as meter and literary devices, these works continued to be part of Ottoman literature. This practice further highlights the flexible boundaries between poetic and musical creation in Ottoman creative culture.

¹¹ George Dimitri Sawa, *Musical and Socio-Cultural Anecdotes from Kitāb al-Aġhānī al-Kabīr*, (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

¹² See: Yeni Cami Collection 926, Fatih Collection 3669, Hamidiye Collection 1045, Hekimoġlu Ali Pařa Collection 594, Atıf Efendi Collection 2000, İzmirlı İsmail Hakkı Collection 3044, Feyzullah Efendi Collection 1561, Veliyüddin Efendi Collection V2582, Rařid Efendi Collection 598, Reisülküttab Collection 749, Sultan III. Ahmed Collection 2362, Feyzullah Efendi Collection 1566, Nuruosmaniye Collection 3657, Raġıp Pařa Collection 1070. All collections are available in the Database of Manuscripts. See: portal.yek.gov.tr.

¹³ Türkan Alvan, M. Hakan Alvan, *Saz ve Söz Meclisi* (Istanbul: řüle, 2019), 417-434.

In addition to these general observations, the manuscript compilation belonging to the composer Hâfız Post (d. 1694), discovered by Ensar Karagöz, holds considerable importance.¹⁴ Despite being a single example, this text allows us to construct possible frameworks that guided the choice of poems and their conversion into lyrics. According to Karagöz, this manuscript stands apart from Hâfız Post's earlier compilations, which primarily include lyrics; it is more likely a personal compilation. It includes poems by Turkish and Persian poets and reflects Hâfız Post's reading of *mesnevis* and *tezkires*.¹⁵

It is reasonable to assume that composers engaged in preparatory work before recording pieces in their own compilations. The case of Hâfız Post's compilation suggests a three-stage compositional method. During the collection phase, the composer read extensively from *dīvāns*, *mesnevis*, and *tezkires*, recording poems of interest in a personal manuscript of mixed content. During the curation phase, the composer selected poems from his or her personal "verse repository" using the criteria mentioned above: their popularity in poetry gatherings, their semantic influence on the composer, and the technical precision of their meter and structure. During the compilation phase, selected poems set to music were grouped into formal lyrics compilations with conventional page layouts and elements.

II. Conventional Elements of Compilations

Most surviving lyrics compilations date to the nineteenth century, with only a limited number of examples from the eighteenth century.¹⁶ As stated above, this research note contends that these manuscripts display a tendency toward the use of set elements in page design—a pattern that predates the widespread adoption of printing technology. This raises an important methodological question: can we meaningfully discuss uniformity within manuscript culture?

¹⁴ Ensar Karagöz, "Bestekâr Hâfız Post'un Bilinmeyen Bir Mecmuası," *Journal of Turkology* 28, no. 1 (Haziran 2018): 21-44.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 22-23a.

¹⁶ Harun Korkmaz, "Türk Musiki Tarihinin Kaynağı Olarak Güfte Mecmuaları" (PhD diss., İstanbul Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2021), 48.

The term “standard features” or “uniformity,” as applied here, does not imply the fixed mechanical regularity characteristic of printed books. Rather, it refers to recurring patterns in page layout that appear consistently across lyrics compilations. Such patterns characterize not only manuscripts copied by professional scribes but also amateur personal collections. In other words, these standard features are present in most *güfte* compilations (although it is possible to encounter manuscripts that deviate from these standards, albeit in small numbers).

Lyrics compilations are typically medium-sized manuscripts. Manuscripts in the *cöng*¹⁷ format are also quite common. When both formats are examined, one feature stands out as appearing in almost every example: pages are divided into two columns, with poems arranged at an angle (see Fig. 1). The pages are ruled, and decorative elements occasionally appear. This two-column system is sometimes observed in poetry compilations as well, but it apparently never achieved the same level of popularity as in lyrics compilations.¹⁸ This page layout is largely identical in both “ordered” and “disordered” compilations. This subsection will first address the features of ordered compilations and then those of disordered compilations.

The template below (Fig. 1) illustrates an ordered compilation. Ordered compilations usually have a double frame enclosing the text on the page and are most likely manuscripts copied by expert scribes.¹⁹

¹⁷ In the context of Ottoman manuscript culture, the term “*cöng*” is used for manuscripts that are taller in height than they are wide and that are opened lengthwise.

¹⁸ Some examples of manuscripts in a two-column format: TR-Iak Bel_Yz_K. 916; TR-Iak Bel_Yz_O.37,43, 584; D-Bsbha Ms. or. quart. Fol. 3370; Bibliothèque nationale de France, Suppl.Turc, 599; TR-Iüne NEKTY 3466; 3533; 3649, 5644.

¹⁹ As Alden observes regarding Loire Chansonniers, while there was considerable variation in decorative style, Ottoman scribes worked with a shared understanding of how musical elements should be organized and developed conventional practices that facilitated the multiple functions of the manuscripts. See: Jane Alden, *Songs, Scribes, and Society: The History and Reception of the Loire Valley Chansonniers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 168.

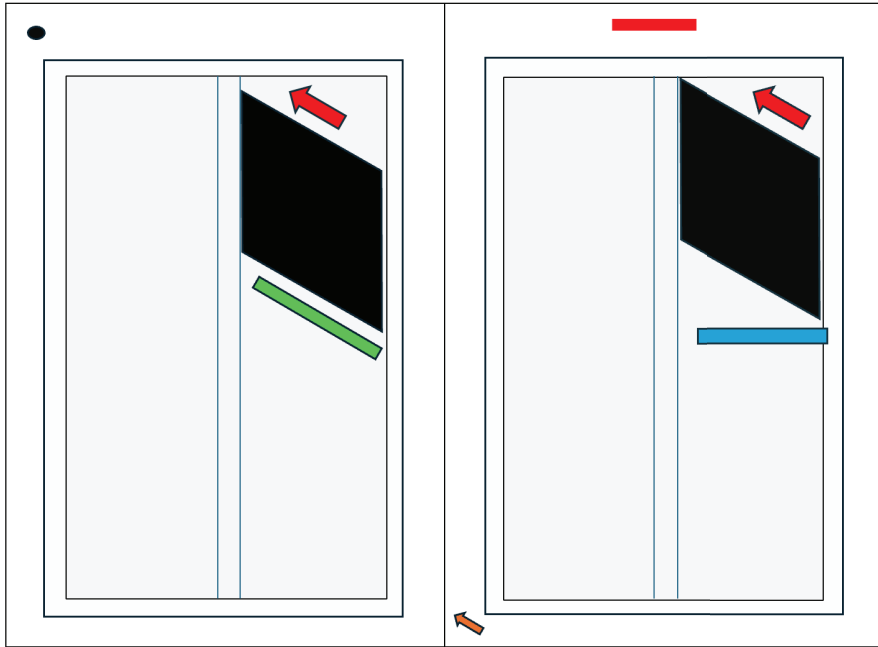


Fig. 1: Conventional page layouts frequently encountered in “ordered” compilations of lyrics.

The page number (black dot in Fig. 1), typically located at the top of the folio, helped users navigate the manuscript. This numbering method was essential for referencing specific sections and pieces during performance while preserving the compilation’s organizational integrity.

The chapter title (red bar in Fig. 1) includes the *maḳām*²⁰ indication, which is an indispensable feature for performance. This will be explained in more detail in the following section. Works composed in the same *maḳām* are placed under a single heading so that they can be located easily during performances.

²⁰ The musical term *maḳām* in the Ottoman context was explained as follows:” (Ar. maḳām: “place”) used since the fifteenth century for “melodic mode,” including both scale and codified melodic progression.” See: Feldman, *Music of the Ottoman Court*, 497.

The title of the poem or piece (red arrows in Fig. 1) indicates the *uřūl*²¹ in which the poem was composed, along with the composer (and, rarely, the poet). This information is written in red ink.

The *maķām* and *uřūl* indications naturally held essential importance, particularly for musical performance. As noted above, within *meclis* culture, audiences were in close contact with musicians and could presumably request specific pieces. At these gatherings, works were likely recognized by their composers' names and *maķāms* (such as *Bestenigār* by Dede),²² Therefore, titles were crucial for musicians to locate desired works in the manuscript during performance. This explains why works consistently contain titles and why these were written in red ink.

Lyrics (black angle in Fig. 1) appear as the largest visual elements on the folios. The angled placement of the poems is a distinctive feature of these manuscripts. As mentioned previously, the poems are written in two columns and positioned on the page at an angle. This layout serves several purposes in the manuscript's functional design. The diagonal positioning provides a clear visual distinction from other elements on the page, separating the primary poetic material from titles and *terennūm* sections (vocalized musical phrases). This orientation aided quick recognition during performance, allowing musicians to locate and navigate between textual components at live *meclis* gatherings. In addition to its practical utility, the angled arrangement adds aesthetic appeal to the page layout, resulting in a dynamic visual composition that enhances the manuscript's overall appearance. Furthermore, this diagonal orientation maximized space on the folio, allowing scribes to include longer verses while maintaining legibility and the two-column structure. These compilations also

²¹ The musical term *uřūl* in the Ottoman context was explained as follows: "(Ar. *uřūl*) "rule"; rhythmic cycle. *Usuls* can be short, medium, or long." See: Feldman, *Music of the Ottoman Court*, 499.

²² Reynolds pointed out this aspect as follows: "Likewise the *Kitāb al Aghānī* and other medieval source are filled with accounts of musical performances in which the caliph or other patron, when pleased with a particular song, immediately asks who composed it. The singer is expected to know this information and, as with the recitation of poetry, a misattribution could at times spark discussion, criticism and even a significant loss of prestige." See: Dwight Reynolds, "Lost Virgins Found: The Arabic Songbook Genre and an Early North African Exemplar," *Quaderni di Studi Arabi*, Nuova Serie, vol. 7, Arabic Literature and Music (2012): 80.

include works in the *beste* form²³, with poetry composed of two couplets; these are also visually distinguishable.

The textual format of the poems provides information about both their content and musical form. Lyrics for religious and non-religious music appear in different formats, and the structure of the text offers clues about musical form.

Terennüm sections (green and blue bars in Fig. 1) are vocalized musical phrases accompanying the poem and appear in almost all compilations.²⁴ The green and blue coloring in the diagram illustrates how these elements were frequently distinguished through different ink colors, distinctive layouts, and visual separation from the main poetic text. These visual contrasts aided the quick identification of textual components during performance. Sometimes *terennüms* are written parallel to the text, while at other times they are written parallel to the page. In cases where *terennüms* are written parallel to the text, they are either written in red ink or separated from the main text by additional spacing.

Catchwords (orange arrow in Fig. 1) appear more frequently in orderly compilations. Catchwords were employed as a technique for organizing manuscripts and typically appeared in the bottom corner of the folio, indicating the first word of the following page.²⁵ This aided binding, navigation, folio sequencing, and verification of textual continuity.

In contrast to orderly compilations, disordered compilations of lyrics typically resemble notebooks rather than books. It is clear that these were not copied by professional scribes. Poems may be written in more than two columns. Multiple handwriting styles can sometimes be encountered, indicating that

²³ The musical term *beste* in the Ottoman context was explained as follows: “beste (Pers. basta) composition; development of the quasi-folkloric *murabba* in early 17th-century Ottoman vocal music; after the later seventeenth century, it became the dominant vocal form of the Ottoman *fasıl*.” See: Feldman, *Music of the Ottoman Court*, 495.

²⁴ In the Ottoman context, the musical term *terennüm* is explained as follows: “(Ar. taran-num) text of a musical line with either non-verbal syllables or conventional words and exclamations.” See: Feldman, *Music of the Ottoman Court*, 499.

²⁵ Catchwords are commonly used in manuscripts. In the Ottoman context, the original term is *reddade*. See: Berat Açıl, “Yazmadaki Kayıtları Sınıflamak: Eylem Temelli Kuyudat Tasnifi,” *Yazmabilim* 1/1 (Eylül 2025): 34, 35.

these compilations resulted from cumulative activity, passing from hand to hand rather than being produced by a single compiler. For this reason, page numbers are either absent or added later. Catchwords are often present, but pages are not ruled. Despite these differences, poems are arranged on the page in the same manner as in orderly compilations. Performance elements such as titles and *terennüm* are usually written in red ink.

Another key organizing feature in both orderly and disordered lyrics compilations is the *maḳām* index (*fihrist*), typically located at the beginning of the manuscript.²⁶ This index is usually titled “*maḳāmāt*,” “*fihrist*,” “*fihrist-i maḳāmāt*,” or “*fihrist-i maḳāmāt-ı mūsīkī*,” and functions as a table of contents. The manuscript follows the *maḳām* order indicated in the list, with each *maḳām* serving as a chapter title. These indexes consistently begin with the *maḳām Rāst*, reflecting a rule of *meclis* performance practice.²⁷ Sources suggest that an ideal musical session began with *Rāst* and progressed through various *maḳāms* depending on the general ambiance of the gathering or the excitement level of the participants. The order of *maḳāms* varies from manuscript to manuscript, but their relative positions remain consistent. For instance, *Māhūr* consistently appears toward the beginning, while *Sūzidil* or *Nūhūft* generally appear toward the end.²⁸ *Maḳām* indexes appear in various formats, including simple lists or tables (Fig. 3). Since each *maḳām* on the list also serves as a chapter, page numbers are provided under the respective headings.

²⁶ Indexes were commonly utilized in Ottoman manuscripts. Their significance in lyrics compilations is highlighted by their consistent presence as a well-established feature in nearly every compilation. For additional examples of indexes, see: Yavuz Köse, “Inhaltsverzeichnis/Table of Contents,” *Wunder der erschaffenen Dinge: Osmanische Manuskripte in Hamburger Sammlungen. Wonders of Creation: Ottoman Manuscripts from Hamburg Collections* ed. Yavuz Köse and Janina Karolewski, (Sonderheft manuscript cultures 9: 2018): 95-99; Mustafa Altuğ Yayla, “Yazma Eserlerde Kullanıcı-Dostu Bir Unsur olarak Fihristler: Lâmi’î Çelebi’nin Nefâhatü’l-Üns Tercümesinin Topkapı A. 1422 Nüshası Özelinde Bir Değerlendirme,” *MUTAD*, IX (2), (2022): 550-561.

²⁷ Pekin, “Fem-i Muhsin ya da Yaratıcı İncarcı,” 325.

²⁸ Harun Korkmaz clarifies this classification as follows: The *maḳāms* that are considered to be related to each other are grouped together according to their final pitch (*ḳarār perdesi*) or their melodic progression. He explains the order of the *maḳāms* in the indexes by providing additional examples. See: Korkmaz, “Türk Musiki Tarihinin Kaynağı Olarak Güfte Mecmuaları,” 200-206.

Significantly, some manuscripts contain blank entries in their *maḳām* indexes (as seen in Fig. 3), indicating that the organizational framework was pre-established rather than developing organically during compilation. These intentional gaps imply that compilers organized content methodically, suggesting a consistency in conceptualization and design. Occasionally, *maḳām* indexes are presented in verse form, with *maḳām* names distinguished in red ink and accompanied by page numbers (Fig. 4).²⁹ Some manuscripts feature highly ornamented and beautifully decorated lists. Such decorative elements are quite rare in compilations or anthologies but more common in *dīvāns*. These ornamental features suggest that the visual and literary qualities of certain manuscripts were valued as highly as their musical utility.

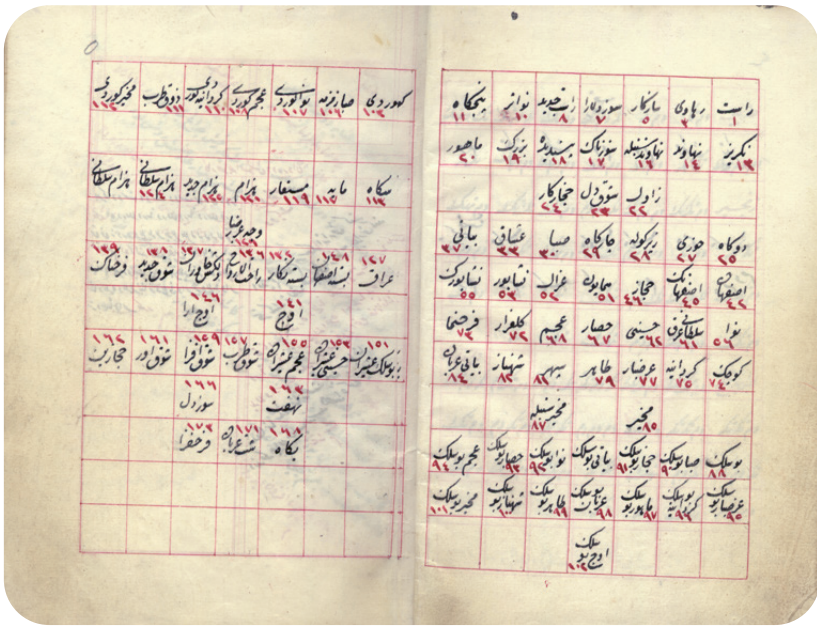


Fig. 2: *Güfte Mecmū'ası*, TR-Am O6 Mil Yz A 1362.

²⁹ The index presented in Fig. 4 was compiled by Hekimbaşı 'Abdül'aziz Efendi (d. 1776) and the poem serving as a *fihrist* written by Sāmī (d. 1734). Erdal Kılıç, "Mecmū'a-yı Letā'if fī Sandukāt al-Ma'ārif (Text and Evaluation)" (PhD diss., Istanbul University, Institute of Social Sciences, 2013), 50.



Fig. 3: Güfte Mecmû'ası, TR-Iüne 3866.

One of the most important features of verse *maḳām* indexes is that the couplet written for each *maḳām* briefly expresses its characteristics. In this respect, verse indexes possess both an explanatory and an instructive quality.

Compilations that contain a verse index exhibit the same page features as regular anthologies. In the example below, the *maḳāms* appear as couplets at the beginning of the relevant section, rather than independently as section titles at the top of the page. The other elements in the example remain unchanged.

Concluding Remarks

Lyrics compilations that reflect the unique characteristics of the Ottoman text compilation tradition have significant potential to contribute to multidisciplinary research, particularly in the fields of literature and music studies. The tendency to use fixed elements in lyrics compilations, as analyzed in this research note, stands out both as a cultural technique and as a creative approach. In this regard, lyrics compilations are not only literary works but also important examples of the processes of compilation and book production. These works play a crucial role in the transmission of both text and music, as well as in fostering interactions across different disciplines. Additionally, the design elements found in manuscript compilations of lyrics influenced later printed anthologies. For instance, the *Hāřim Bey Mecmū'ası*, a well-known printed anthology, also employed *maķām* indexes, and musical elements were indicated separately from the poetry in the page layout.³⁰ This continuity suggests that the standardized visual elements visible in pre-print manuscripts functioned as practical and conventional means of organizing and presenting musical information. Their effectiveness was such that they were retained and adapted as new technologies became available. In other words, the conventions developed in manuscript culture were sufficiently functional to endure the transition to print.

³⁰ Not only the *Hāřim Bey Mecmū'ası* but also other anthologies used a page layout similar to that of manuscripts, see: Gönül Paçacı, *Neřriyat-ı Musiki: Osmanlı Müziđini Okumak* (Istanbul: Vakıfbank Kùltür Yayınları, 2019), 43-155. Cem Behar, *Bestesiz Güfteler - řarkılardan "Klasik"liđe: XIX. Yüzyıl Matbu Güfte Mecmuaları (1852-1905)*, (Istanbul: YKY, 2024), 36-71.

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