

## Çarpma as Pedagogy: Transmitting a Turkish–Iraqi Oud Ornament into Malaysian Gambus Instructional Practice (2005–2025)

Raja Zulkarnain Raja Mohd Yusof<sup>1\*</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>City University Malaysia, Menara City U, No. 8, Jalan 51A/223, 46100 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia  
Email: [raja.zulkarnain@city.edu.my](mailto:raja.zulkarnain@city.edu.my)

### CORRESPONDING AUTHOR (\*):

Raja Zulkarnain Raja Mohd  
Yusof  
([raja.zulkarnain@city.edu.my](mailto:raja.zulkarnain@city.edu.my))

### KEYWORDS:

Çarpma  
Oud Pedagogy  
Gambus Pedagogy  
Turkish Makam Ornamentation  
Musical Transmission

### CITATION:

Raja Zulkarnain, R. M. Y. (2026). Çarpma as Pedagogy: Transmitting a Turkish–Iraqi Oud Ornament into Malaysian Gambus Instructional Practice (2005–2025). *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)*, 11(2), e003824. <https://doi.org/10.47405/mjssh.v11i2.3824>

### ABSTRACT

This article examines the pedagogical transmission of *çarpma*, a characteristic articulatory technique in Turkish *oud* performance practice, and its introduction into Malaysian *gambus* pedagogy between 2005 and 2025. In Turkish *makam*-based music, *çarpma* functions as a rapid articulatory device that activates neighboring pitches without fully re-articulating each note, shaping melodic flow, rhythmic nuance, and modal expression. While central to Turkish conservatory pedagogy, this technique was not evident within documented Malaysian *gambus* instructional practice during the early 2000s, based on the author's autoethnographic observations following his return from *oud* studies in London in 2002. Drawing on ethnomusicological pedagogy, historical lineage analysis, and practice-based documentation, the study traces a transmission pathway from Turkish *oud* traditions through Iraqi institutional contexts associated with Şerif Muhiddin Targan, Munir Bashir, and Naseer Shamma, to *Beit al-Oud* in Cairo, where the author formally encountered a pedagogically codified realization of *çarpma* in 2005. This realization employs paired right-hand pick attacks on the principal pitch, each followed by a left-hand hammer articulation to the upper neighboring pitch, forming repeated articulatory units during descending *maqām* motion. The article documents the systematic introduction of this technique into Malaysian *gambus* instruction at ASWARA, UiTM, UPSI, and IIUM through studio teaching, technical exercises, and *taqsīm*-based application. Methodologically, the study integrates autoethnographic reflection, pedagogical analysis, and comparative performance observation to examine how this paired *çarpma* articulation reshaped articulation norms, improvisational vocabulary, and aural perception of *maqām* among Malaysian students. The findings demonstrate that the author's systematic introduction of *çarpma* into Malaysian *gambus* instructional practice from 2005 onward marked a pedagogical shift, whereby a previously undocumented articulatory technique became a mechanism for mediating embodied musical knowledge and stylistic awareness within localized *gambus* practice.

**Contribution/Originality:** This study contributes to the existing literature on maqām-based pedagogy by documenting the first systematic institutional transmission of *çarpma* into Malaysian gambus instruction. The paper's primary contribution is demonstrating how a micro-articulatory technique functions as a pedagogical mechanism, reshaping articulation norms, phrasing strategies, and modal perception within localized higher education contexts.

## 1. Introduction

In Turkish *makam*-based *oud* performance, instrumental technique functions not merely as mechanical execution but as a carrier of stylistic knowledge, modal perception, and embodied musical cognition. Techniques are learned, internalized, and transmitted not only through repertoire but through repeated engagement with specific articulatory logics that shape how melodic motion is perceived and produced. Among these techniques, *çarpma* occupies a central position within Turkish conservatory pedagogy, shaping articulation, phrasing, and the micro-rhythmic character of melodic motion (Torun, 2002; Marcus, 1993). Rather than operating as an isolated ornament, *çarpma* contributes to the internal logic of melodic continuity, particularly in scalar movement and improvisational contexts such as *taqsīm*. Turkish pedagogical literature and performance practice consistently treat *çarpma* as a foundational articulatory device through which *makam* character, expressive nuance, and directional phrasing are rendered audible.

Despite the centrality of ornamentation in Middle Eastern art music traditions, scholarly discussions of instrumental ornamentation have often focused on descriptive taxonomy, stylistic aesthetics, or repertoire analysis, with comparatively limited attention paid to ornamentation as a pedagogical mechanism. In many cases, ornaments are treated as surface embellishments added after structural mastery, rather than as articulatory processes through which musical understanding itself is cultivated. This tendency is particularly evident in pedagogical discourse, where the transmission of technique is frequently subsumed under broader discussions of style without detailed examination of how specific micro-techniques function within teaching and learning environments. As a result, the role of ornamentation in shaping embodied musical knowledge, motor habit formation, and modal perception remains underexplored in both ethnomusicological and music education literature.

This gap is especially pronounced in studies addressing the localization of Middle Eastern plucked-string traditions outside their primary cultural contexts. While several scholars have examined the historical diffusion of the *oud* and its regional variants, fewer studies have documented how specific articulatory techniques are transmitted, adapted, and institutionalized within new pedagogical environments. In Southeast Asia, and particularly in Malaysia, scholarly attention has focused largely on historical origins, organology, and repertoire, with limited examination of technique as a site of pedagogical transformation. Consequently, the introduction of specific *oud*-derived articulatory practices into Malaysian *gambus* instruction has not been systematically documented, despite their potential impact on performance practice and musical perception.

Against this backdrop, the Malaysian *gambus* presents a compelling case for examining technique transmission as a pedagogical process. Despite its shared lineage with the *oud*,

*gambus* instruction in Malaysia developed within a distinct educational and cultural environment, shaped by local performance conventions, institutional priorities, and limited access to formal Middle Eastern pedagogical lineages during the late twentieth century. Based on the author's autoethnographic engagement with *gambus* and *oud* communities following his return from formal *oud* studies in London in 2002, including sustained teaching, learning, and observation across multiple Malaysian institutions, *çarpma* was not evident within documented *gambus* instructional practice during the early 2000s. At that time, *gambus* pedagogy emphasized repertoire replication, rhythmic accompaniment, and continuous right-hand articulation, with comparatively little focus on micro-ornamental left-hand techniques. This observation has been articulated in the author's earlier autoethnographic scholarship on the reintroduction and institutionalization of *oud*-based pedagogy in Malaysia (Raja Zulkarnain, 2025a).

Historically, the transmission of Turkish-derived *oud* techniques into the Arab world has been mediated through institutional and pedagogical lineages rather than through direct stylistic imitation. A key figure in this process was Şerif Muhiddin Targan, whose leadership in Baghdad during the early twentieth century contributed to the formalization of a high-virtuosity *oud* pedagogy within Iraqi conservatory settings (Racy, 2003). Trained within Ottoman-Turkish musical culture, Targan introduced a systematic technical approach that emphasized articulation clarity, extended technical range, and soloistic development. This pedagogical environment later shaped prominent Iraqi *oud* masters such as Munir Bashir, whose approach to articulation and improvisation influenced subsequent generations of *oud* musicians and contributed to the international recognition of the Iraqi *oud* school (Marcus, 1993). The lineage continued through Naseer Shamma, a student of Bashir and the founder of Beit al-Oud in Cairo, which emerged in the late 1990s as a major institutional center for the systematic teaching of *oud* technique and pedagogy, as observed during the author's formal study there in 2005.

It was within this institutional context that the author formally encountered a pedagogically codified realization of *çarpma* during studies at *Beit al-Oud* in 2005. Unlike informal or stylistic demonstrations, *çarpma* was presented as part of an integrated articulatory system emphasizing right-hand economy, left-hand precision, and directional *maqām* movement. This encounter marked a turning point in the author's pedagogical approach, leading to the deliberate and systematic introduction of *çarpma* into Malaysian *gambus* instructional practice from 2005 onward. Through sustained teaching at ASWARA, UiTM, UPSI, and IIUM, the technique was embedded within technique classes, improvisation workshops, and *taqsīm*-based instruction, gradually reshaping students' articulatory habits and musical perception.

This article examines the pedagogical transmission of *çarpma* from Turkish and Iraqi *oud* traditions into Malaysian *gambus* instructional practice between 2005 and 2025. Rather than presenting a purely historical or technical account, the study adopts a practice-based ethnomusicological approach to document how a specific articulatory technique was taught, adapted, and localized within higher education settings. By focusing on a paired articulatory realization encountered by the author at *Beit al-Oud* and subsequently implemented in Malaysia, the study argues that *çarpma* functioned not merely as an ornament, but as a pedagogical mechanism through which embodied musical knowledge, stylistic awareness, and modal perception were cultivated. In doing so, the article contributes to broader discussions on technique transmission, pedagogical agency, and the evolving identity of the *gambus* within Malaysian music education and beyond.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Çarpma in Turkish Oud Pedagogy and Makam Performance

Within Turkish *makam* music, instrumental ornamentation functions as an integral component of melodic articulation rather than as surface embellishment. Among the various ornamental devices employed on the *oud*, *çarpma* occupies a particularly central role in shaping phrasing, articulation density, and the perceptual continuity of melodic motion. Turkish pedagogical discourse treats *çarpma* not as an optional expressive flourish but as a foundational articulatory mechanism through which *makam* character is rendered audible, especially in scalar passages and improvisational contexts (Torun, 2002).

In conservatory-based *oud* pedagogy, *çarpma* is commonly described as a rapid left-hand articulation that activates a neighboring pitch without requiring a corresponding right-hand re-articulation of each note. This principle aligns with broader Turkish performance aesthetics, where melodic value is often derived from the relationship between adjacent tones rather than from isolated note attacks. Pedagogical sources distinguish *çarpma* from legato techniques borrowed from Western string instruments by emphasizing its ornamental function and its dependence on precise timing, touch, and contextual placement within *makam* progression (Torun, 2002). As such, *çarpma* contributes to the micro-rhythmic elasticity and speech-like quality that characterize Turkish melodic expression.

Contemporary Turkish *oud* pedagogy, as reflected in method literature and master-performer instruction, presents *çarpma* in multiple realizational forms rather than as a single fixed execution. These include single hammer articulations, rapid repeated articulations, and compound articulations integrated into scalar descent. In masterclass contexts associated with performers such as Mehmet Bitmez and Yurdal Tokcan, *çarpma* is frequently demonstrated as a fast hammer-based articulation embedded within melodic motion, emphasizing left-hand agility and control while maintaining right-hand economy. Such approaches underscore the pedagogical emphasis on articulation logic rather than ornamental display, reinforcing the idea that *çarpma* serves structural and perceptual functions within *makam* performance.

Methodological treatments of the *oud* within Turkish pedagogy further support this understanding. Widely used instructional texts, including those by Mutlu Torun, incorporate *çarpma* as a recurring articulatory principle across exercises and repertoire studies. In these contexts, *çarpma* is presented as a means of cultivating phrasing continuity, articulation sensitivity, and modal awareness rather than as an isolated technical skill. The repeated inclusion of *çarpma* within technical studies reflects its pedagogical status as a core mechanism through which students internalize the expressive grammar of Turkish *makam* music (Torun, 2002).

Taken together, Turkish pedagogical and performance practices position *çarpma* as an articulatory logic embedded within melodic movement, improvisational practice, and modal perception. This understanding provides a critical foundation for examining how *çarpma* was later transmitted beyond its original cultural and institutional contexts. By recognizing *çarpma* as a pedagogical mechanism rather than a decorative ornament, the present study situates its subsequent introduction into Malaysian *gambus* instructional practice as a meaningful transfer of embodied musical knowledge rather

than a superficial stylistic borrowing, as documented in the author's earlier autoethnographic and historical studies of *oud* and *gambus* pedagogy in Malaysia (Raja Zulkarnain, 2025a; Raja Zulkarnain, 2025b; Raja Zulkarnain, 2026).

## 2.2. Institutional Transmission from Turkish and Iraqi Oud Traditions to Beit al-Oud

The circulation of Turkish-derived *oud* techniques into Arab musical contexts did not occur through informal stylistic diffusion alone, but was significantly shaped by early twentieth-century institutional reforms and pedagogical leadership. A pivotal figure in this process was Şerif Muhiddin Targan, whose appointment to a senior teaching and administrative role in Baghdad during the 1930s marked a turning point in the formalization of *oud* pedagogy in Iraq (Wright, 2012). Trained within Ottoman-Turkish musical culture and renowned for his virtuosic and technically systematic approach to the *oud*, Targan introduced a conservatory-oriented model that emphasized precision of articulation, extended technical range, and soloistic development. While specific techniques such as *çarpma* were not always codified explicitly within curricular documents, the broader articulatory and technical framework associated with Turkish *oud* performance became embedded within Iraqi institutional training through his leadership (Marcus, 1993).

This pedagogical environment profoundly shaped a generation of Iraqi *oud* musicians, most notably Munir Bashir, whose playing and teaching later came to define the Iraqi *oud* school internationally. Bashir's approach to articulation, phrasing, and improvisation reflects a synthesis of Iraqi modal sensibility with the technical rigor associated with Turkish-derived pedagogy (Wright, 2012). Although Bashir's performance style is often discussed in terms of emotional depth and expressive freedom, it is underpinned by a disciplined articulatory vocabulary that aligns with the conservatory-based emphasis introduced during Targan's tenure. Within this context, techniques related to rapid articulation, neighbor-note activation, and left-hand control, including variants conceptually aligned with *çarpma*, became normalized within Iraqi *oud* performance practice (Marcus, 1993).

The transmission of this pedagogical lineage continued through Naseer Shamma, a student of Munir Bashir and a central figure in the contemporary institutionalization of *oud* education in the Arab world. Through the establishment of *Beit al-Oud* in Cairo in the late 1990s, Shamma contributed to the consolidation of a structured, conservatory-oriented model of *oud* instruction that integrated Iraqi expressive aesthetics with systematic technical training. As observed during the author's formal study at *Beit al-Oud* in 2005, this model emphasized articulatory control, tonal balance, and repeatable technical exercises designed for institutional teaching. *Beit al-Oud* adopted a structured instructional model that combined Iraqi *oud* aesthetics with systematic technical training, drawing implicitly on earlier Turkish and Iraqi pedagogical principles. Within this environment, articulatory techniques such as *çarpma* were not merely demonstrated informally, but were organized into repeatable exercises, technical patterns, and improvisational applications suitable for institutional teaching (Raja Zulkarnain, 2025a).

It was within this pedagogical context that the author formally encountered a codified realization of *çarpma* during studies at *Beit al-Oud* in 2005. Rather than being presented as an isolated ornament, *çarpma* was taught as part of an integrated articulatory system emphasizing right-hand economy, left-hand precision, and directional *maqām* movement.

This institutional framing played a crucial role in enabling the technique's subsequent transmission beyond its original cultural settings. By situating *çarpma* within a lineage of conservatory-oriented pedagogy spanning Turkish, Iraqi, and Egyptian institutions, this study establishes the historical and instructional foundation for examining its later introduction into Malaysian *gambus* instructional practice (Raja Zulkarnain, 2025a; Raja Zulkarnain, 2026).

### 2.3. Çarpma as Ornament versus Articulatory Logic

Within both Turkish and Arab musical discourse, *çarpma* is often described using the language of ornamentation. Such descriptions, however, risk obscuring the deeper articulatory logic that underpins the technique. While ornamentation is commonly understood as a surface-level embellishment applied to a principal melodic structure, *çarpma* in Turkish oud pedagogy functions as an internal mechanism that shapes how melodic motion itself is articulated, perceived, and embodied. This distinction is particularly significant in pedagogical contexts, where the framing of a technique as either ornamental or structural directly influences how it is taught, practiced, and internalized by students.

In Turkish conservatory traditions, *çarpma* is rarely treated as an optional decorative gesture. Instead, it is embedded within scalar movement, phrase transitions, and improvisational flow, particularly in descending melodic motion. The technique typically involves the activation of a neighboring pitch through left-hand articulation without corresponding re-articulation by the right hand. This approach prioritizes continuity of sound, rhythmic elasticity, and economy of movement, aligning with broader Turkish aesthetic values that privilege melodic relationality over isolated pitch events. In this sense, *çarpma* functions less as an added ornament and more as an articulatory connector that binds adjacent tones into coherent melodic units.

The pedagogical implications of this distinction are substantial. When *çarpma* is framed as ornamentation, it is often introduced late in instruction, after students have achieved basic technical competence. When framed as articulatory logic, however, *çarpma* becomes integral to early technique training, shaping fundamental habits of right-hand economy and left-hand coordination. Turkish oud pedagogy tends to favor the latter approach, incorporating *çarpma* into scale exercises, etudes, and improvisational practice from relatively early stages of study. This pedagogical positioning reinforces the technique's role in cultivating embodied awareness of makam directionality and tonal gravity.

In Iraqi oud performance practice, articulatory approaches conceptually aligned with *çarpma* are often integrated into a broader aesthetic emphasizing tonal depth, expressive weight, and sustained melodic tension. While Iraqi pedagogy does not always label these articulations explicitly as *çarpma*, the use of rapid neighbor-note activation, controlled left-hand articulation, and selective right-hand attack reflects a shared underlying logic. In this context, articulatory density serves expressive rather than purely ornamental ends, contributing to the perceived emotional gravity associated with the Iraqi oud school. This convergence of Turkish-derived technique and Iraqi expressive priorities underscores the adaptability of *çarpma* as an articulatory principle rather than a fixed stylistic marker.

The distinction between ornamentation and articulatory logic becomes particularly relevant when examining pedagogical transmission across cultural contexts. Techniques framed primarily as ornaments are more likely to be imitated superficially or applied inconsistently, whereas techniques understood as structural articulatory mechanisms are more readily integrated into foundational training. In the case of *çarpma*, its successful transmission depends on recognizing its role in shaping melodic continuity, motor coordination, and aural perception rather than treating it as an optional expressive flourish.

By foregrounding *çarpma* as articulatory logic rather than ornament, this study adopts a pedagogical lens that prioritizes function over nomenclature. This perspective provides the conceptual foundation for understanding how a specific realization of *çarpma*, encountered by the author within an institutional pedagogical setting, could be meaningfully transmitted into Malaysian gambus instruction. Rather than importing an external stylistic feature, the pedagogical process involved introducing a new way of organizing articulation, phrasing, and melodic movement within an existing musical tradition. This framing sets the stage for the technical discussion and pedagogical outcomes examined in the subsequent sections of the article.

#### 2.4. Iraqi Adaptations and Articulatory Density

While *çarpma* is most explicitly theorized and labeled within Turkish oud pedagogy, articulatory approaches conceptually aligned with its logic are also evident within Iraqi oud performance practice. Rather than adopting Turkish techniques wholesale, Iraqi musicians selectively integrated articulatory principles into a distinct aesthetic framework characterized by tonal depth, sustained phrasing, and expressive gravity. This adaptation reflects broader Iraqi musical values, in which articulation serves expressive continuity rather than ornamental display.

Within the Iraqi oud school, articulation is closely tied to timbral control and emotional pacing. Performers frequently employ selective right-hand attack combined with controlled left-hand activation of neighboring tones, producing a sense of density without excessive surface ornamentation. Although such articulations are not always explicitly labeled as *çarpma* within Iraqi discourse, their functional role is comparable: they activate adjacent pitches to enrich melodic motion while preserving continuity of tone. In this sense, Iraqi adaptations emphasize the *effect* of articulation rather than its nominal classification, aligning technique with expressive intent rather than taxonomic precision.

The pedagogical lineage associated with Munir Bashir exemplifies this approach. Bashir's performance style, often described in terms of introspection and expressive restraint, relies on a disciplined articulatory vocabulary that balances clarity and density. Neighbor-note activation, selective articulation, and left-hand control are deployed sparingly but purposefully, contributing to long-span phrasing and tonal gravity. These characteristics suggest an implicit alignment with *çarpma*'s articulatory logic, even when the technique is not foregrounded as a discrete ornament.

This articulatory ethos was subsequently transmitted through institutional and pedagogical channels, most notably through the work of Naseer Shamma, a student of Bashir and a central figure in the contemporary codification of oud pedagogy. Shamma's pedagogical approach emphasizes control, balance, and expressive responsibility, integrating articulatory techniques into structured exercises and improvisational

frameworks. Within this model, articulation is not treated as decorative excess but as a means of regulating melodic flow and emotional pacing. Techniques that activate neighboring pitches through left-hand articulation are thus embedded within broader pedagogical goals rather than isolated as ornamental gestures.

The institutional environment of *Beit al-Oud* in Cairo reflects this Iraqi adaptation of articulatory logic. While drawing on Turkish-derived technical principles, Beit al-Oud pedagogy frames articulation within an Iraqi-informed aesthetic that prioritizes depth, restraint, and expressive coherence. Students are encouraged to minimize unnecessary right-hand attack, cultivate left-hand precision, and attend closely to the directional movement of maqām. In this context, articulatory techniques conceptually aligned with *çarpma* are reorganized into repeatable pedagogical units that support both technical development and expressive intent.

This Iraqi-inflected pedagogical framing is particularly relevant for understanding the author's encounter with *çarpma* at Beit al-Oud in 2005. Rather than encountering the technique as a rapid ornamental flourish characteristic of Turkish virtuosity, the author was introduced to a realization that emphasized paired articulation, controlled repetition, and descending maqām logic. This approach reflects an Iraqi adaptation of articulatory density, in which repetition and neighbor-note activation serve to stabilize melodic motion and reinforce modal perception rather than to increase surface complexity.

To clarify these cross-contextual differences, [Table 1](#) presents a comparative overview of *çarpma* realizations across selected pedagogical environments. The table highlights how the technique is framed differently in Turkish conservatory training, Iraqi oud practice, Beit al-Oud institutional pedagogy, and post-2005 Malaysian gambus instruction. Rather than functioning as a uniform ornament across traditions, *çarpma* appears as a flexible articulatory principle whose pedagogical emphasis shifts from structural articulation to expressive continuity and, in the Malaysian context, to a codified paired pedagogical mechanism.

Table 1: Comparative overview of *çarpma* realizations across pedagogical contexts.

Context	Terminology	Articulatory Emphasis	Pedagogical Framing
<b>Turkish conservatory</b>	<i>Çarpma</i>	Single hammer, right-hand economy	Structural articulation
<b>Iraqi oud school</b>	Not always labeled	Articulatory density, tonal weight	Expressive continuity
<b><i>Beit al-Oud (Cairo)</i></b>	<i>Çarpma</i> (codified)	Controlled repetition, descent logic	Systematic technique
<b>Malaysian gambus (post-2005)</b>	<i>Çarpma</i> (introduced)	Paired pick-hammer units	Pedagogical mechanism

Note: This table summarizes pedagogical framings of *çarpma* across selected instructional contexts based on documented literature, institutional practices, and the author's pedagogical experience. The comparison highlights differences in articulatory emphasis and teaching logic rather than asserting stylistic hierarchy or exhaustive coverage of all performance traditions.

### 3. Method

This study adopts a practice-based ethnomusicological methodology that integrates autoethnographic reflection, pedagogical documentation, and comparative performance

observation. Rather than treating *çarpma* as an abstract technical phenomenon, the research examines its transmission as an embodied practice enacted through studio teaching, institutional instruction, and improvisational application. The methodological design reflects the dual positionality of the author as both practitioner and educator, acknowledging that the introduction of *çarpma* into Malaysian gambus instruction was not an observational event but a deliberate pedagogical intervention carried out over two decades, consistent with practice-based research approaches in music studies (Barz & Cooley, 2008).

### 3.1. Autoethnographic Framework and Research Positionality

Autoethnography forms the methodological core of this study, allowing the author's lived experience as an *oud* and *gambus* practitioner to function as primary empirical material. The author's engagement with *çarpma* spans three interconnected phases: pre-institutional exposure through private *oud* study and observation prior to 2005, formal pedagogical acquisition during studies at *Beit al-Oud* in Cairo in 2005, and systematic instructional transmission within Malaysian higher education institutions from 2005 to 2025. This temporal layering enables a longitudinal perspective on how technique is learned, recontextualized, and localized within new cultural and educational environments.

The autoethnographic approach employed here aligns with ethnomusicological scholarship that recognizes embodied musical knowledge as a valid site of inquiry, particularly in studies of instrumental pedagogy and technique transmission (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011; Barz & Cooley, 2008). Rather than claiming universal absence or exclusivity, the author's observations are scoped to documented instructional contexts encountered through sustained teaching, curriculum development, and student supervision. This positional clarity ensures that claims regarding the introduction of *çarpma* are grounded in verifiable pedagogical practice rather than anecdotal assertion, building on the author's earlier autoethnographic documentation of *oud* pedagogy in Malaysia (Raja Zulkarnain, 2025a).

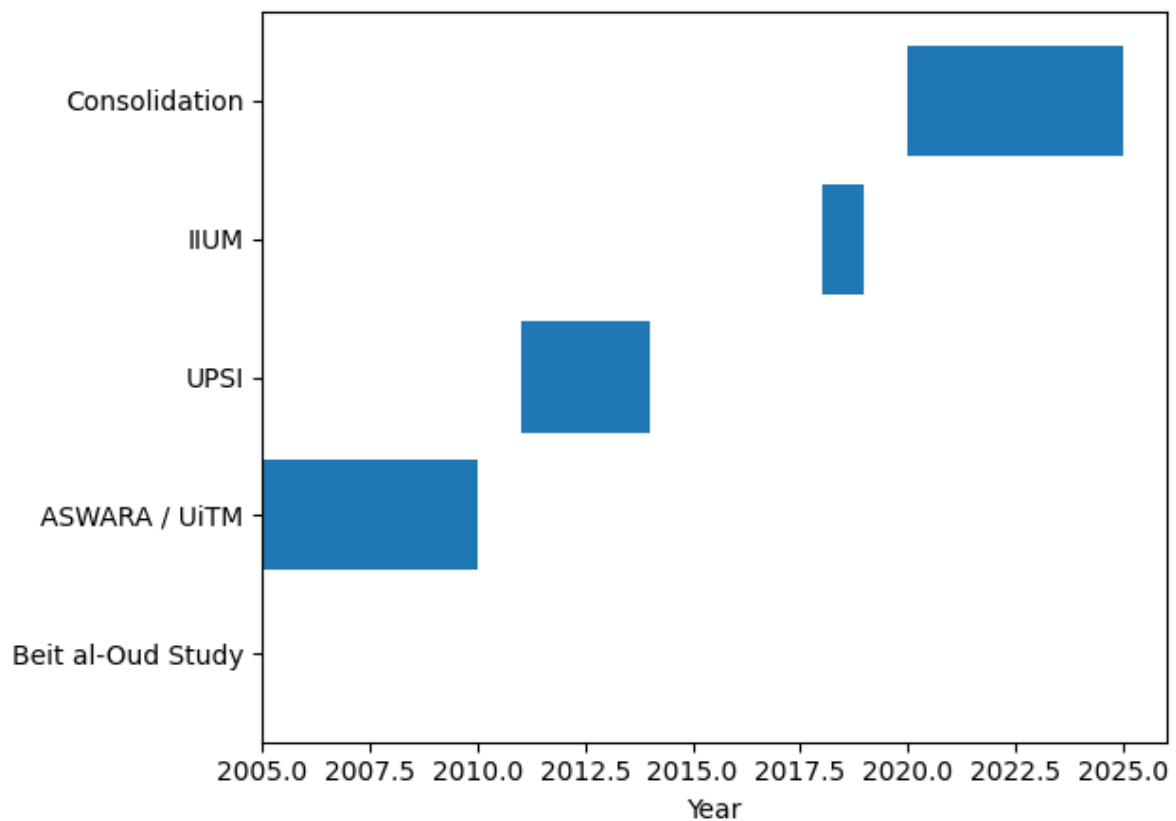
### 3.2. Pedagogical Sites and Instructional Contexts

The empirical scope of this study is bounded by the author's instructional practice across four Malaysian higher education institutions: ASWARA, UiTM, UPSI, and IIUM. These institutions represent diverse pedagogical environments, ranging from conservatory-style performance training to music education and interdisciplinary arts programs. Together, they provide a representative cross-section of formal gambus instruction within Malaysian higher education, as previously documented in the author's institutional pedagogy research (Raja Zulkarnain, 2025a).

Within these settings, *çarpma* was introduced deliberately as part of technique classes, improvisation workshops, and *taqsim*-based instruction. The technique was not taught as an isolated ornament but embedded within broader discussions of articulation, phrasing, and *maqam* directionality. Instructional materials included technical drills, descending scalar patterns, and guided improvisation exercises designed to cultivate left-hand articulation control and right-hand economy. Over time, these materials were refined in response to student feedback, performance outcomes, and institutional learning objectives.

To contextualize the longitudinal scope of this transmission, [Chart 1](#) illustrates the timeline of *çarpma* pedagogical implementation from the author's formal study at Beit al-Oud in 2005 through its sustained integration across Malaysian higher education institutions up to 2025. The chart highlights key phases of acquisition, instructional dissemination, and consolidation, demonstrating how the technique evolved from personal pedagogical encounter to institutionalized practice within gambus education.

Chart 1: Timeline of *çarpma* pedagogical transmission in Malaysian gambus instruction (2005–2025)



The chart summarizes the author's longitudinal engagement with the transmission of *çarpma* from formal study at *Beit al-Oud* in Cairo through sustained instructional implementation across Malaysian higher education institutions, culminating in a consolidation phase reflecting pedagogical stabilization and retention.

### 3.2. Pedagogical Documentation and Analytical Procedures

Data for this study were drawn from multiple forms of pedagogical documentation accumulated between 2005 and 2025. These include lesson plans, technical exercise sheets, rehearsal notes, and informal performance recordings used for instructional assessment. Particular attention was given to documenting the paired *çarpma* articulation pattern discussed in [Figure 1](#), in which repeated right-hand pick attacks on the principal pitch are followed by left-hand hammer articulations to the upper neighboring pitch during descending maqām motion.

Analytically, the study employs comparative performance observation to examine changes in student articulation before and after exposure to *çarpma*. Rather than relying on quantitative measurement alone, analysis focused on qualitative indicators such as articulation clarity, phrase continuity, rhythmic density, and modal awareness

during *taqsim* performance. These indicators were evaluated through iterative listening, instructor feedback, and reflective comparison across student cohorts. This approach aligns with practice-based research traditions that privilege musical outcome and perceptual change over purely numerical metrics (Nelson, 2013).

### 3.3. Ethical Considerations and Methodological Limitations

Ethical considerations in this study were addressed through the use of anonymized pedagogical materials and the avoidance of identifiable student data. As the research is grounded primarily in instructional practice rather than formal experimentation, no intrusive data collection methods were employed. Students were informed of the pedagogical purpose of technique demonstrations and recordings used for reflective analysis.

Methodologically, the study does not claim exhaustive coverage of all gambus practices in Malaysia, nor does it assert that *çarpma* was entirely absent from informal or undocumented contexts prior to 2005. Instead, its claims are intentionally limited to documented instructional settings encountered through the author's sustained pedagogical engagement. This scoped approach prioritizes depth of analysis and longitudinal insight over breadth, offering a focused account of how a specific articulatory technique was transmitted, adapted, and institutionalized within Malaysian gambus education (Raja Zulkarnain, 2025a; Raja Zulkarnain, 2026).

## 4. Findings and Pedagogical Outcomes

This section presents the findings derived from longitudinal pedagogical observation, instructional documentation, and comparative performance analysis conducted between 2005 and 2025. Rather than reporting statistical outcomes, the findings focus on observable changes in articulation, phrasing, improvisational behavior, and modal perception among Malaysian gambus students following the systematic introduction of *çarpma* into instructional practice.

### 4.1. Technical Realization of Paired *Çarpma* Articulation

The realization of *çarpma* introduced into Malaysian *gambus* instructional practice in this study differs in important ways from generalized descriptions of the technique in both Turkish and Arab contexts. Rather than adopting a single hammer articulation or a freely improvised ornamental gesture, the author implemented a paired articulatory configuration designed specifically for pedagogical clarity, motor coordination, and modal perception. This realization was first encountered during formal studies at *Beit al-Oud* in Cairo in 2005 and subsequently refined through sustained teaching within Malaysian higher education institutions.

In its most basic form, the paired *çarpma* articulation consists of a repeated two-note unit executed during descending *maqām* motion. Each unit begins with a right-hand pick attack on the principal pitch, immediately followed by a left-hand hammer articulation to the upper neighboring pitch. Crucially, the neighboring pitch is not re-articulated by the plectrum. This pick-hammer sequence is then repeated on the same principal pitch before proceeding to the next lower scale degree. For example, in a descending passage centered on D, the articulatory sequence would be realized as D (pick)-E (hammer), D (pick)-E (hammer), followed by C (pick)-D (hammer), C (pick)-D (hammer), and so forth.

This paired configuration serves several pedagogical functions simultaneously. First, it establishes a clear hierarchical relationship between principal and ornamental pitches, reinforcing tonal stability while allowing controlled activation of neighboring tones. Second, the repetition of the articulatory unit creates rhythmic density without increasing right-hand attack frequency, encouraging economy of motion and reducing mechanical tension. Third, the descending organization of paired units aligns with *maqām* logic, emphasizing tonal gravity and resolution through controlled repetition rather than linear scalar descent.

Compared to generalized Turkish realizations of *çarpma*, which often involve single hammer articulations embedded fluidly within melodic motion, the paired configuration introduces a higher degree of regularity and repetition. This regularity is pedagogically significant, as it allows students to internalize the technique through patterned execution before applying it flexibly in improvisational contexts. At the same time, the realization diverges from purely ornamental usage by assigning *çarpma* a structural role within phrase construction rather than treating it as an expressive accent applied at will.

The influence of Iraqi articulatory aesthetics is evident in the emphasis on weight, control, and expressive restraint within the paired realization. Rather than accelerating articulation for virtuosic display, the repeated pick-hammer units stabilize melodic motion and encourage sustained attention to tonal quality. This approach reflects Iraqi pedagogical priorities associated with tonal depth and expressive pacing, while retaining the Turkish principle of right-hand economy and left-hand precision. In this sense, the paired *çarpma* realization represents a pedagogical synthesis rather than a direct imitation of either national style.

From an instructional standpoint, the paired configuration proved particularly effective for introducing *çarpma* to students unfamiliar with left-hand ornamental articulation. The repetition inherent in the pattern reduced cognitive load by limiting variation, allowing students to focus on coordination, timing, and touch. Over time, the paired units were gradually loosened, enabling students to apply *çarpma* more flexibly within *taqsīm* and repertoire-based improvisation. This staged approach reflects the pedagogical intent of the realization: not to fix *çarpma* into a rigid pattern, but to use structured repetition as a gateway to embodied understanding.

[Figure 1](#) illustrates the paired *çarpma* articulation as implemented in this study, highlighting the relationship between right-hand attack, left-hand hammer articulation, and descending *maqām* motion. By foregrounding the technical mechanics of this realization, the present study establishes a concrete basis for interpreting the pedagogical outcomes discussed in the subsequent sections. The paired *çarpma* articulation thus functions as the technical foundation upon which changes in articulation, phrasing, and modal perception were observed among Malaysian *gambus* students.

Figure 1: Paired *çarpma* articulation in descending *maqām* motion



This schematic illustrates the paired realization of *çarpma* employed in this study. Each articulatory unit consists of a right-hand pick attack (P) on the principal pitch followed by

a left-hand hammer articulation (H) to the upper neighbouring pitch without re-articulation by the plectrum. The unit is repeated before descending to the next pitch level, reinforcing tonal hierarchy, right-hand economy, and modal directionality.

#### 4.2. Articulatory Change and Technique Adoption

Following the introduction of the paired *çarpma* articulation into Malaysian *gambus* instruction, clear patterns of articulatory change emerged across student cohorts over time. These changes were not instantaneous, nor were they uniform across all learners. Rather, adoption occurred gradually through repeated exposure, guided practice, and incremental integration into improvisational contexts. The findings suggest that articulatory transformation was shaped as much by pedagogical framing as by the technical properties of the technique itself.

Prior to exposure to *çarpma*, students' articulatory habits were largely characterized by continuous right-hand picking and limited differentiation between principal and ornamental pitches. Melodic passages were typically executed through linear scalar movement, with emphasis placed on rhythmic consistency and note accuracy rather than articulatory hierarchy. Left-hand activity focused primarily on pitch placement rather than ornamental activation, resulting in phrasing that, while structurally correct, often lacked micro-articulatory variation and tonal depth. These tendencies reflect broader patterns in Malaysian *gambus* pedagogy during the early 2000s, where technique instruction emphasized repertoire replication and ensemble functionality rather than fine-grained articulation.

The introduction of the paired *çarpma* articulation disrupted these habitual patterns by foregrounding the distinction between principal and neighboring pitches. Students were required to rethink the role of the right hand, shifting from continuous attack toward selective articulation supported by left-hand hammer execution. Early stages of adoption were marked by heightened cognitive load, as students negotiated unfamiliar coordination demands and resisted ingrained habits of uniform picking. During this phase, errors commonly included premature right-hand re-articulation of ornamental notes, inconsistent hammer clarity, and rhythmic compression of paired units.

Over time, however, repeated engagement with the paired pattern facilitated measurable changes in articulatory control. Students began to exhibit increased right-hand economy, with fewer redundant pick attacks and greater consistency in left-hand hammer articulation. The repetition inherent in the paired configuration proved pedagogically effective in stabilizing coordination, allowing students to internalize the timing and touch required for clean execution. As coordination improved, the technique gradually shifted from conscious mechanical execution to embodied habit, enabling more fluid integration into melodic contexts.

A notable outcome of technique adoption was the emergence of articulatory hierarchy in student performance. Rather than treating all notes as equal events, students increasingly differentiated between structurally significant pitches and ornamental activations. This shift was particularly evident in descending *maqām* passages, where paired *çarpma* units reinforced tonal gravity and directional motion. The repeated articulation of principal pitches created perceptual anchors, while the hammer-induced neighboring tones enriched melodic texture without destabilizing pitch focus.

Importantly, technique adoption did not result in rigid pattern fixation. As students gained confidence, the paired configuration was gradually loosened, allowing for selective application rather than constant repetition. Advanced students began to adapt the articulatory logic flexibly, incorporating *çarpma* into *taqsîm* passages according to expressive intent rather than mechanical prescription. This transition from fixed pattern to adaptive usage underscores the pedagogical intent behind the paired realization: structured repetition served as a scaffold for embodied understanding, not as an end in itself.

Differences in adoption speed and proficiency were observed across institutional contexts and student backgrounds. Students with prior exposure to oud or other plucked-string traditions tended to assimilate the technique more rapidly, while those rooted exclusively in local gambus practices required longer periods of adjustment. Nevertheless, across all contexts, sustained exposure to *çarpma* resulted in discernible shifts in articulation strategy, suggesting that the technique functioned effectively as a pedagogical intervention rather than a stylistic novelty.

Taken together, the findings indicate that the introduction of paired *çarpma* articulation produced substantive articulatory change within Malaysian gambus instruction. These changes extended beyond technical execution to influence how students conceptualized melodic motion, pitch hierarchy, and expressive control. By reframing ornamentation as an articulatory mechanism embedded within melodic structure, the technique facilitated a reorientation of students' technical and perceptual frameworks, setting the stage for the phrasing and modal developments discussed in the following section.

### 4.3. Impact on Phrasing and Melodic Continuity

Beyond observable changes in articulation mechanics, the adoption of paired *çarpma* articulation produced significant effects on students' phrasing strategies and their perception of melodic continuity. These effects were particularly evident in improvised contexts, where phrasing decisions are not predetermined by notation but emerge through real-time negotiation of articulation, directionality, and tonal emphasis. The findings indicate that *çarpma*, when introduced as an articulatory mechanism rather than a decorative device, functioned as a catalyst for reshaping how students structured melodic flow.

Prior to the introduction of *çarpma*, student phrasing in gambus performance often exhibited a segmented quality. Melodic lines tended to be articulated as sequences of discrete notes or short fragments, with phrase boundaries determined primarily by rhythmic grouping or breath-like pauses rather than by tonal logic. This approach reflected pedagogical emphasis on accuracy and continuity of picking, but it frequently resulted in phrasing that lacked internal momentum and directional coherence. Descending passages, in particular, were often executed as linear scalar runs, offering limited sense of tonal gravity or resolution.

The introduction of paired *çarpma* altered this tendency by encouraging students to conceptualize melodic motion as a series of articulated units rather than isolated pitch events. The repeated pick-hammer configuration established micro-phrases within larger melodic spans, allowing students to experience continuity through controlled repetition rather than uninterrupted linear movement. As a result, phrases became perceptually longer, even when constructed from repeated articulatory units. This

paradoxical effect—greater continuity through repetition—proved central to the pedagogical impact of the technique.

In descending *maqām* contexts, the paired articulation reinforced tonal hierarchy by repeatedly returning attention to the principal pitch before proceeding downward. This anchoring effect enhanced the sense of tonal gravity, enabling students to shape descent as a process of controlled release rather than abrupt motion. Observational analysis of student *taqsīm* performances revealed increased use of sustained phrasing across register transitions, with fewer abrupt breaks and greater consistency in tonal focus. Rather than treating descent as a technical necessity, students began to approach it as an expressive opportunity.

Another significant impact was the emergence of speech-like phrasing characteristics commonly associated with mature oud performance. The alternation between picked and hammered articulations introduced subtle micro-rhythmic elasticity, softening the mechanical regularity of continuous picking. Students began to vary phrase pacing organically, allowing certain pitches to resonate while others functioned as transitional articulations. This shift aligns with Turkish and Iraqi aesthetic principles, where melodic expressivity is closely tied to controlled articulation and temporal flexibility rather than overt rhythmic emphasis.

Importantly, the improvement in melodic continuity was not limited to the specific paired *çarpma* pattern itself. As students internalized the articulatory logic underlying the technique, they began to apply similar principles to other melodic situations. Phrasing choices increasingly reflected awareness of pitch hierarchy, directional flow, and articulatory weight, even in passages where *çarpma* was not explicitly employed. This transfer effect suggests that the technique functioned as a pedagogical gateway to broader phrasing awareness rather than as an isolated technical solution.

The impact on ensemble and accompaniment contexts was also notable. Students who had internalized the articulatory logic of *çarpma* demonstrated improved ability to shape melodic lines within group settings, adjusting phrasing to complement rhythmic and harmonic frameworks. This adaptability reflects enhanced perceptual continuity, allowing performers to maintain melodic coherence even when interacting with other musical elements. Such outcomes highlight the broader pedagogical implications of articulatory training for ensemble sensitivity and musical interaction.

Taken together, these findings indicate that the paired *çarpma* articulation influenced phrasing not merely by adding ornamentation, but by restructuring students' understanding of melodic continuity. By organizing melodic motion into hierarchically articulated units, the technique facilitated longer, more coherent phrases and a heightened sense of expressive direction. This reorientation of phrasing strategy provides a critical link between technical execution and modal perception, setting the stage for the discussion of aural awareness and *maqām* understanding in the following section.

#### **4.4. Development of Modal Awareness and Aural Perception**

A further pedagogical outcome of *çarpma* instruction was the development of heightened modal awareness and aural sensitivity among students. By requiring precise coordination between principal pitches and their neighboring tones, *çarpma* directed students' attention toward relational pitch structures rather than isolated note execution. In

particular, the repeated hammer articulation to upper neighboring pitches encouraged students to perceive melodic motion as a process of tension, emphasis, and release embedded within *maqām* logic.

Over time, students demonstrated increased ability to anticipate structurally significant tones during improvisation, especially in descending passages where tonal gravity plays a central role in *maqām* articulation. This was reflected in more deliberate treatment of cadential points, improved control over melodic pacing, and heightened awareness of micro-intervallic nuance. Rather than relying on habitual scalar descent, students began to shape melodic trajectories with greater intentionality, highlighting modal identity through controlled articulation.

These developments suggest that *çarpma* functioned not only as a physical technique but also as an aural training mechanism. Through repeated embodied engagement, students internalized modal characteristics in ways that extended beyond conscious theoretical knowledge. The technique thus facilitated a convergence of motor learning and perceptual awareness, reinforcing the role of embodied practice in the acquisition of *maqām*-based musical understanding.

#### 4.5. Pedagogical Integration and Institutional Sustainability

From an instructional perspective, *çarpma* proved adaptable across diverse institutional contexts, including conservatory-style performance programs and music education curricula. Its integration into technique classes, ensemble rehearsals, and improvisation workshops allowed the technique to be reinforced through multiple pedagogical channels. Importantly, *çarpma* was not introduced as an isolated skill but embedded within broader discussions of articulation, phrasing, and stylistic interpretation, ensuring coherence with existing curricular objectives.

The sustained use of *çarpma* across institutions over a twenty-year period indicates a degree of pedagogical sustainability uncommon for newly introduced techniques. Students exposed to the technique during formal instruction were observed to retain and apply it in subsequent performance contexts, suggesting that *çarpma* had become part of their habitual playing vocabulary rather than a temporary instructional device. This continuity supports the argument that the author's systematic introduction of *çarpma* constituted a structural pedagogical shift within Malaysian gambus instruction rather than a short-term stylistic experiment (Raja Zulkarnain, 2025a; Raja Zulkarnain, 2026).

### 5. Summary of Findings

Collectively, the findings demonstrate that the introduction of *çarpma* into Malaysian gambus instructional practice from 2005 onward resulted in substantive changes in articulation strategy, phrasing behavior, and modal perception. Through deliberate and sustained pedagogical intervention, *çarpma* transitioned from an unfamiliar articulatory device to an integrated component of students' expressive and technical repertoire.

These outcomes affirm the central argument of this study: *çarpma* functions not merely as an ornament but as a pedagogical mechanism capable of reshaping embodied musical knowledge and stylistic awareness within localized gambus practice. By tracing its transmission from Turkish and Iraqi oud traditions through institutional pedagogy and

into Malaysian higher education, the study highlights the role of individual pedagogical agency in mediating technique transfer, localization, and musical transformation.

## 6. Conclusion

This study set out to examine how *çarpma*, a central articulatory technique within Turkish oud pedagogy, was transmitted through Turkish–Iraqi institutional lineages and subsequently introduced into Malaysian gambus instructional practice between 2005 and 2025. The findings demonstrate that *çarpma* did not function merely as a decorative ornament when localized in Malaysia, but operated as a pedagogical mechanism that reshaped articulation habits, phrasing strategies, and modal perception among gambus students. Through the author’s systematic instructional intervention across multiple higher education institutions, *çarpma* became integrated into students’ embodied musical practice rather than remaining an external stylistic marker.

From a pedagogical perspective, the adoption of paired *çarpma* articulation altered the balance between right-hand and left-hand technique in Malaysian gambus playing. Prior instructional norms emphasized continuous picking as the primary means of articulation, whereas *çarpma* introduced a differentiated relationship between principal and ornamental pitches. This shift encouraged greater right-hand economy, increased left-hand sensitivity, and a more nuanced approach to melodic continuity. Such outcomes align with Turkish conservatory principles that treat articulation as a structural element of makam expression rather than as an optional expressive device (Torun, 2002; Marcus, 1993). The Malaysian case thus illustrates how a micro-technique can catalyze broader changes in musical perception and execution when embedded within sustained pedagogical practice.

The findings also contribute to ethnomusicological discussions on technique transmission and localization. Rather than viewing transmission as passive stylistic borrowing, this study demonstrates that instrumental techniques are actively recontextualized through institutional teaching, curriculum design, and instructor mediation. The introduction of *çarpma* into Malaysian gambus instruction was not the result of diffuse cultural influence, but of a clearly situated pedagogical lineage extending from Turkish and Iraqi oud traditions through Beit al-Oud in Cairo to Malaysian higher education settings. By foregrounding instructional practice as the site of transmission, the study underscores the role of educators as agents of musical change and knowledge circulation (Barz & Cooley, 2008).

Importantly, this research does not claim exhaustive coverage of gambus practices in Malaysia, nor does it assert that *çarpma* was entirely absent from all informal or undocumented contexts prior to 2005. Instead, its contribution lies in documenting the first sustained and systematic incorporation of *çarpma* within formal gambus instructional settings encountered by the author. This distinction is methodologically significant, as it situates the findings within documented pedagogical environments rather than speculative historical reconstruction. The use of autoethnography as a core methodological approach further reinforces this positioning by grounding analytical claims in longitudinal, practice-based experience (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011).

In conclusion, this study argues that *çarpma* should be understood not only as an ornament within Turkish oud performance, but as a transferable pedagogical mechanism capable of shaping embodied musical knowledge across cultural contexts. The Malaysian

gambus case demonstrates how the deliberate introduction of a micro-articulatory technique can recalibrate instructional priorities, expand improvisational vocabulary, and deepen modal awareness among students. Future research may extend this inquiry by examining how other oud-derived techniques are localized within Southeast Asian traditions, or by exploring comparative pedagogical outcomes across different institutional models. By documenting the transmission of *çarpma* into Malaysian gambus instruction, this article contributes to broader conversations on pedagogy, transmission, and the evolving identities of plucked-string traditions in a globalized musical landscape.

### **Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate**

This study is based on practice-based pedagogical research and autoethnographic documentation. No experimental procedures or identifiable personal data were involved. Instructional observations were conducted within regular teaching contexts in accordance with institutional academic guidelines.

### **Acknowledgement**

This article is grounded in the author's sustained pedagogical practice and institutional teaching experience in Malaysian higher education between 2005 and 2025.

### **Funding**

No external funding was received for this study.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The author declares no conflict of interest.

### **References**

- Barz, G. F., & Cooley, T. J. (2008). *Shadows in the field: New perspectives for fieldwork in ethnomusicology* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press. <https://global.oup.com/>
- Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., & Bochner, A. P. (2011). Autoethnography: An overview. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12(1), Article 10. <https://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589>
- Marcus, S. (1993). *Arab music theory in the modern period*. Cambridge University Press. <https://www.cambridge.org/>
- Nelson, R. (2013). *Practice as research in the arts: Principles, protocols, pedagogies, resistances*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://link.springer.com/>
- Racy, A. J. (2003). *Making music in the Arab world: The culture and artistry of ṭarab*. Cambridge University Press. <https://www.cambridge.org/>
- Raja Zulkarnain, R. M. Y. (2025a). Penginstitusian pedagogi oud di Malaysia: Satu kajian autoetnografi tentang perintisan, repertoire, dan transformasi pendidikan muzik tradisional. *Journal of Creative Arts*, 2(2), 113–147.
- Raja Zulkarnain, R. M. Y. (2025b). The origins of the gambus (ʿūd) in Malaysia: A two-channel hypothesis of Ottoman cultural exchange and Hadrami diaspora. *Malaysian Journal of Music*, 14(1), 41–57. <https://doi.org/10.37134/>

- Raja Zulkarnain, R. M. Y. (2026). The seven-course oud in the Malay world: Documenting its first introduction to Malaysia (2005). *International Journal of the Malay World and Civilisation*, 14(1), 81–95. <https://doi.org/10.17576/jatma-2026-1401-06>
- Torun, M. (2002). *Ud metodu*. Pan Yayıncılık. <https://www.panyayincilik.com/>
- Wright, O. (2012). *Music theory in Mamluk Cairo*. Ashgate. <https://www.routledge.com/>