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János Sipos

**Is it possible to use the makam conception in analyzing and classifying vocal monophonic folk music material?**

I feel it a privilege to be invited in your beautiful country, which I had visited several times before, doing also field work and collecting many hundreds of folksongs. I also published a book on the Azeri Folksongs in English and in Azerbaijan language as well.<sup>i</sup>

My Azerbaijan expeditions were a part of a large comparative ethnomusicology project beginning with Béla Bartók's Anatolian research in 1936, continued by László Vikár and Gábor Bereczky Hungarian ethnomusicologist-linguist pair in the Volga-Kama region between 1957-1978, and from 1987 till our days continued by myself among Turkish, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Karachay, Turkmen, Mongolian and North-American Indian people.

Being a researcher of rural folk music, the makam system is somehow outside of my main interest, though this artistic phenomenon has several stronger or weaker connections to the folk music. This fact gave me the idea to investigate if it is possible to use the makam conception in analyzing and classifying vocal monophonic folk music material?

Makams were originally folk songs, which were lately typified, and this way they became teachable and learnable.<sup>ii</sup> Gradually they separated from the older styles of the nomadic and rural music,<sup>iii</sup> but preserved an important characteristic of it music: they vary a few basic musical components according to some more or less defined rules.

Folk music lives in variants, in the variations of relatively few basic musical forms. One important task of the ethnomusicologists might be to find these basic forms by analyzing and classifying the material. And he is tempted to find out the rules too, which direct the variation of these forms and generate melodies accepted by a community as valid and authentic. In this general level it works similarly to the makam system.

Also we may ask with reason: is it possible to use the technique of describing and defining makams to define the central melodies of a given folk music and also grouping melodies belonging to these central melodies, that is to classify a folk song material?

As an example, let us start with the popular ascending-descending *Hüseynî* makam of the Türk Sanat Musikisi (TSM = Turkish Art Music).<sup>iv</sup> This makam shares several common characteristics with some important Turkish folk song types.<sup>v</sup>

Let us enumerate the general characteristics of this makam, and try to find out if we can use them in classifying Turkish folk songs. Meanwhile we keep our eyes on the similarities and differences between the TSM and Türk Halk Müziği (THM = Turkish Folk Music) as well.

**Scales and microtones.** In general we might say that the microtone system of the TSM is much more elaborated than that of the THM; though in some performances the intonation of some pitches does not correspond to the theoretical regulation of the TSM as well. <sup>vi</sup>

The basic difference between the Hüseynî makam of the THM and the TSM is as follows: while in TSM the intonation of the microtones are vital for the makam, a performer of a folk Hüseynî melody does not sing or play the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> degree of the scale on an exact pitch, rather we experience a quite great freedom in intonation - a greater tolerance-level in pitch. <sup>vii</sup> Consequently we may put Turkish folk songs moving on different (but „brother”) scales into the same music group, if their other characteristics are similar. For example while classifying Turkish folk songs we may put Hüseynî (with F) and Bayatî (with F#) melodies into the same melody class.

Hüseynî of TSM	Dügâh	Segâh (b1)	Çargâh	Nevâ	Hüseynî	Acem/Eviç <sup>viii</sup>	Gerdaniye	Muhayyer
Hüseynî of THM	A	B <sup>2</sup> / B <sup>3</sup>	C	D	E	F# <sup>4</sup> /F	G	A'
absolute sol-fa	la	si bemol (2/3 koma)	do	re	mi	fa diyez (4 koma)	sol	la

*The scale of the Hüseynî makam of the THM*

**Melodic direction.**<sup>ix</sup> We can use *melodic direction* as the main principle in the classification of the Turkish folk songs. For example the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> sections of the *ascending* (T-D-T) Uşşak melodies of the THM moves low, while their 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> sections are higher. This kind of melodic movement separates these melodies from the descending majority of the Turkish folk songs, and at the same time this structural similarity knit them together. <sup>x</sup> (ex.1)

Example 1. An Uşşak-like Bektashi melody

**Seyir.** A detailed yet generalized exposition of the melody progression of a given makam is called *seyir* (path). These expositions actually serve only as mnemonic for the experts, though the modern notated *seyir* is an invaluable source for characterizing a makam.<sup>xi</sup>

Let us see a description of the Hüseynî makam of TSM. The makam starts around E (dominant).<sup>xii</sup> The essence of its *çeşni* (flavor, taste) is that it uses E abundantly and persistently, and makes a melody stop (*duruş*) on it. Then it might go up to B' or even D' and descends to E again. From here it descends further to the finalis (A), using now F# instead of F.<sup>xiii</sup> The Çargâh (C) and Segâh (B) sounds are important melody stops (*asma karar*).

However in contrast to this description above, the concrete melodic progression of the Hüseynî makam in the TSM can be very different. In ex. 2 I show two Hüseynî melodies with quite dissimilar melodic progression.

Example 2. Two Hüseyinî makams with dissimilar melodic lines a) Signal - example 19.2, b) Hüseyinî

The melodic progression of the Hüseyinî makam described above is popular in THM as well. However, in THM the exact intonation of the pitches has less importance, and if we want to bring similar melodies close to each other, we have to specify the melodic line more precisely. To do so we will give greater importance to the melody stops.

**Melody stops** are tonal centers, and when the melody stops on one of these, a sense of comparative rest is imparted. As we have already mentioned, there are several melodies in THM which are descending on the Hüseyinî scale, and are obeying to the general rules of the Hüseyinî makam of TSM. In these melodies some melody stops play important role. The first section of these melodies end on E, the second one on C, and the third one usually on C, but sometime on B or A. We have seen melody stops in the description of the Hüseyinî makam of the TSM as well. The main difference is that while in the Hüseyinî makam of the TSM the C and B melody stops do not always play an important role, these stops are determinant element of the melodic line of the „folk” Hüseyinî makam. (ex.3a)

Melody stops	Hüseyinî	„folk” Hüseyinî
Entry (giriş) <sup>xiv</sup>	E	E
Dominant (güçlü) <sup>xv</sup>	E	E
Temporary stops (muvakkat kalışlar) <sup>xvi</sup>	(C, B <sup>1</sup> )	C, B <sup>2</sup>
Finalis or tonic (karar)	A	A

Example 3a Melody stops of the Hüseyinî makam in THM and in TSM

Other differences between Hüseynî and Folk Hüseynî are that the structure of the Hüseynî makam of the TSM might be much more complex, and the ambitus may expand beyond the fundamental one-octave compass scale.

	<i>Hüseynî of TSM</i>	<i>Folk Hüseynî</i>
Structure	might be complex	2 or 4 sections <sup>xvii</sup>
Ambitus	may extend beyond the one-octave scale <sup>xviii</sup>	maximum one octave (except bozlak)
Compound makam	Exists	None
Transposition	Exists	None
Leading tone	Frequent	Rare
Suspended cad.	Frequent	Rare
Embellishment	long and elaborated melismas on several syllables	Simpler melismas if any (except bozlak)

*Example 3b Melody stops of the Hüseynî makam i THM and in TSM*

Now let us define the folk Hüseynî melody group (or folk makam) as one of the important melody class of the THM. (ex. 3c)

Scale	A - b <sup>2</sup> B - C - D - E - (# <sup>4</sup> )F - G
Melodic direction	<i>ascending-descending</i> and there is a twin Muhayyer-like <i>descending</i> melody group
	<i>Seyir and melody stops</i>
1 <sup>st</sup> section	Makes its entry around E (dominant), uses E abundantly and persistently and makes a melody stop ( <i>duruş</i> ) on it.
2 <sup>nd</sup> section	From E it descends to C (second temporary stop)
3 <sup>rd</sup> section	Is similar to the second section but may end on C, B or A (third temporary stop)
4 <sup>th</sup> section	Descends to the finalis A ( <i>karar</i> )

*Example 3c The definition of the “folk” Hüseynî makam*

Other important feature of these melodies is the conjunct melodic progression.<sup>xix</sup> In example 4 we see some representatives of this folk song group.

<i>ambitus</i>	<i>7-syllabic</i>	<i>8-syllabic</i>	<i>11-syllabic</i>
<i>Smaller</i>	№ 82 (giusto)	№83 (parlando)	№96 (parlando)
<i>Larger</i>	№80 (giusto)	№90 (parlando)	№101 (parlando)



$\bullet = 108$

Yağ - mu - run se - si - ne bak,  
 Aş - ka da - vet e - di - yor,  
 Ca - ma vu - ran her dam - la,  
 Be - ni ha - rap e - di - yor.

7 syllables, smaller ambitus

$\bullet = 120$

Ga - ra - bağ - lın er - miş gü - ne - ye,  
 Can ve - ri - yor, dö - ne dö - ne ye - ye,  
 A - na - sı yok, ba - cı - sı yok,  
 Ge - lin ağ - lar dö - ne dö - ne,

8 syllables, smaller ambitus

$\bullet = 112$

Se - ne - min giy - di - ği i - pek - li sa - rı,  
 Öl - me - den yü - zü - nü - yü gör - sem ba - cı a,  
 Bo - zük de - ğir - me - nin gı - rık şır - ga - bı,  
 Su - yu gel - di, çağ - la - ma - ya baş - la - dı.

11 syllables, smaller ambitus

$\bullet = 112$

A - man da sa - rı sa - man,  
 Bu za - man - lar ne za - man,  
 El - ler dü - ğün e - di - yor,  
 Bi - zım dü - ğün ne za - man.

7 syllables, larger ambitus

$\bullet = 114$

Har - man - ca - nın ga - ya - la - rı,  
 Çan - dı - rı - yor - ma - ya - la - rı,  
 Beg mi de - din, ol - du be - gim,  
 Ga - ra gu - şun so - ya - la - rı.

8 syllables, larger ambitus

$\bullet = 120$

Ti - ren ge - lir de - niz ga - lır a gız saç - la - rı - na,  
 Be - nim ya - rım da ıa za - - - lum ta, as - la - nı - yım,  
 Saçla - rım da ö - rüm e - rün - de gelmez - sen ay,  
 Da - ban - ca - sı da san - dık - - - lar - da pas - la - nır.

11 syllables, larger ambitus

Example 4. Examples of the Folk Hüseyinî melody group of the THM with different section length and ambitus

In the THM there can be found very similar melodic movements on different scales as well. In ex. 5 I show a melody moving on Hüseynî scale and its major-like (Çargâh) variant.

<p><i>Folksong</i></p> <p>♩ = 152</p> <p>Te - kir - dağ' - dan yün al - dım, da, Ka - zak ö - re - yim di - ye, Te - kir - dağ' - li bir yar sev - dım Her gün gö - re - yim di - ye, Ah - ah - ah - ah - ah ol - sun da, Es - ki ya - rim yok ol - sun. Ye - ni - ler - den bir yar sev - dım, O - nun öm - rü bol ol - sun.</p>	<p><i>Folksong</i></p> <p>♩ = 88</p> <p>E - kin ek - tim çöl - le - re - de, Yol bul - ma - dım er - le - re, Kü - çük yaş - ta bir yar sev - dım, Ver - men o - nu el - le - re, Çit, çit, çit, çit, çe - de - ne - ne, Sar - be - de - ni, be - de - ne, Dün - ya do - lu yar ol - sa da, A - la - ca - ğım bir ta - ne.</p>
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Example 5. Similar seyir on different scales a) THM Hüseynî melody (Bektasi 368) and its b) Major-like (Çargâh) variant (Bektasi 391)

Similar melodies can also be found in the folk music of some other Turkic people and in that of the Hungarians.<sup>xx</sup> There are a few species in Azerbaijan folk music as well, as we see in ex.6.

Moderato *Song*

Qa - la - nın di - bin - de,  
hây, qır - ğı ses - le - nir, yar,  
Qo - yu - nun al - tın - da  
qu - zu bes - le - nir, yar.

Example 6. A similar Azerbaijan melody (Sipos 2004: № 293)

**Summary.** TSM and THM represent quite different musical world, so it is no wonder that their makam definitions differs as well. The essence of the difference is that the role of the microtones will be less important in THM as in TSM. We can say that in THM the scales are less important in grouping similar melodies, while the role of the melody stops and the melodic progression is more prominent. As we have seen with some modifications the makam conception may be used in classifying THM.

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## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> Sipos (2004, 2006)

<sup>ii</sup> See Also Brockhouse-Riemann Music Lexicon G-N, p. 473. Lachmann and Idelsohn derive the makam practice from the pre-Islamic era, when (and after) the urban Arab culture gave the melodies of the different local tribal tunes distinctive names. Arabic art music practice has taken over Persian, Bedouin urban and rural melodies under their names. Many makam refer to geographic areas, for example Hijaz, Iraq, Ispahan, Acem or Nahavand. The Greeks also called certain melody styles by ethnic names: Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Aeolian, etc. Szabolcsi (1957)

<sup>iii</sup> With the western expansion of the Islam they move away from the Persian ideas, although partly used the terminology and teaching methods.


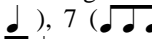

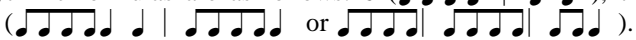
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- <sup>iv</sup> The earliest works of the TSM are indistinguishable from Arabic model, but with the unfolding of the Ottoman history gradually develops an art music distinctly of Turkish nature. (Signal 2004: 6). Its first description in European languages is Rauf Yekta (1921) in the Lavignac Encyclopedia.
- <sup>v</sup> *Hüseynî* can be considered the ascending-descending version of Muhayyer with the same scale, finalis and dominant. The main difference is that Muhayyer makes its entry on the upper tonic while *Hüseynî* around the dominant. Uşşak and Bayatı makams are very closely related to the *Hüseynî*–Muhayyer pair and these four makam should be considered as belonging to the same „family”. The main distinction between the first pair and the second pair of makam (aside the melodic directions) is the sixth degree, Acem (f-natural) in the former and Eviç (=F sharp) in the latter. What is more the pitch Eviç appears only in the first part of the progression of *Hüseynî* and Muhayyer, and the f# is flatted one comma during a cadence on E.
- <sup>vi</sup> Signal (2004: 38)
- <sup>vii</sup> Food for thought, for example that the Arabs intonated the Segâh and Sabâ much lower than it is usual in Turkey (Signal 2004:44). In contrast, the Turkish ezan (call to prayer) sounds often with "Arabic intonation". Interestingly, in the case of the Turkish nightclub-style performances of the Hicaz makam C# is lower and Bb is higher than in the classical music, but similarly to the folk music. The transcribers of the THM melodies use the signs b<sup>2</sup> and #<sup>4</sup> for the 2nd and 6th degrees of the folk *Hüseynî* scale, referring to the modifications downward by 2 commas or upward by 4 commas. However this is more of a consensus as an exact mirror of the reality.
- <sup>viii</sup> Uşşak–Bayatı: Acem (F), *Hüseynî*–Muhayyer: Eviç (F#)
- <sup>ix</sup> *Ascending-descending* (Dominant-Dominant-Tonic, e.g. *Hüseynî*), *descending* (upper Tonic- Dominant-Tonic, e.g. Muhayyer) or *ascending* (Tonic-Dominant-Tonic, e.g. Uşşak).
- <sup>x</sup> In THM it is easy to separate the *ascending-descending* *Hüseynî* (D-D-T) melodies from the *descending* Muhayyer (T'-D-T) ones, though sometimes we may find descending variants of ascending-descending melodies ad well. In the case of the *Hüseynî* and Muhayyer the same are the scale, the Dominant (E) and the Tonic (A) but different is the melodic direction.
- <sup>xi</sup> See the thirty example of Rauf Yekta: La musique turque, In. *Encyclopédie de la musique et dictionnaire du conservatoire, Vol. V*, Fondateur Albert Lavignac. Directeur Lionel de la Laurencie, Paris (1921: 2997-3010)
- <sup>xii</sup> Muhayyer makam can be considered a descending version of *Hüseynî*, starting around A' instead of E.
- <sup>xiii</sup> Today in Turkey almost all classical composition of the Türk Sanat Musikisi are performed from written notation. On one hand, the universality of notation has greatly broadened the repertoire; on the other, precious qualities of the old oral tradition have almost disappeared, especially the concept of the melodic line (Signal 2004:3). Besides a notated seyir is only a concrete form of a rich tradition and a composer may compose quite different melodic progressions (seyir) under the same makam name (Signal 2004: ex.25-27).
- <sup>xiv</sup> The tonal centre around which the first musical phrase revolves.
- <sup>xv</sup> The main tonal centre midway between the entry tone and the finalis. Most often a fifth or a fourth above the tonic.

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<sup>xvi</sup> Many of the unique qualities of the makam are found in the characteristic temporary stops in its progression. These are vivid details without which the progression would lose its individuality.

<sup>xvii</sup> Rarely also refrains may be inserted.

<sup>xviii</sup> The direction of the extension is related to the melody direction: descending makams usually extend the scale below the tonic.

<sup>xix</sup> It means that the most frequent intervals are prime, second and rarely the third. Larger intervals can be observed only at the beginning and at the end of the sections, or can be heard between the last tone of a sections and the first tone of the next one. The syllabic number of the sections might be 6, 7, 8, or 11, and the most characteristic rhythmic formulas are as follows: 6 (  ), 7 (  ), 8 (  ) and 11 (  ).

<sup>xx</sup> Sipos (2000)

