

A SEMITONIC APPROACH TO THE ANALYSIS OF MAKAM MELODIES: THE BEGINNING SECTIONS OF MELODIES AS MAKAM INDEXES

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ABSTRACT

The beginning part of *makam* melodies are one of the basic discriminating features of *makams*. The region on the scale where the melody begins seems to be an important feature for discriminating *makams* using especially the same intervallic order or scale. It appears that, to clarify the distinction of such *makams* (which use the same scale) within this context, a semiotics approach can contribute to better understanding of such characteristics. It is proposed here that performing an analytical study based on observation of melody initiation points and based on the concepts defined by C. S. Peirce [1] (1839-1914) can lead to derivation of “makam indexes”. Via this approach, it could be possible to derive some features to capture that characteristic and further use it for computer based analysis of discriminating features of such *makams*.

In my research on *makam* indexes, two different *makam* groups are chosen, which have two different interval configurations. The first one, “Hüseyni Group”, has “C C T (T)”¹ intervals in a fourth or a fifth which consists with an added tone to the fourth. The other is “Hicaz Group” and it has “C T C (T)” intervals. In these groups, the three *makam* or *terkib* (compound *makam*) was chosen for the melodic analysis. These are Nevruz (today’s Neva), Hüseyni and Muhayyer for Hüseyni Group, and Hicaz, Uz-zal and Nühüft for Hicaz Group. The beginning parts of the melodies in these *makams* or *terkibs* are specifically analyzed, since these main groups (Hüseyni and Hicaz groups) have the same scale yet have different melodic progressions in the beginning. Therefore these are the best examples to understand the role of the beginning parts to make distinction of *makam* or *terkib*.

According to Peirce, “semiosis” is the process by which representations of objects function as signs [1]. Semiosis is a process of cooperation between signs, their objects, and their interpretants. Peirce identifies the “index” as a semiotic element and explains that it has real connections with their objects. For example dark clouds are index of

¹ C: Namely mücenneb (mujannab) in Turkish and its meaning “the next fret of the main tone”. As an interval, “C” is a neutral one: it is not a minor or major interval but between them. T is “tanini” in Turkish and it is approximately a Western whole tone.

impending rain or cigarette smoke is an index of smoking. In my approach [2], I use the beginning parts of the melodies as indexes of the *makam* or *terkibs* and I see those useful and functional analytical data. Therefore as the interpreters of *makam* or *terkibs*, we use the beginning parts of melodies as a criterion to make a distinction between the *makam* or *terkibs*, which have the same intervallic order.

Acknowledgments

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1. REFERENCES

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- [2] O. M. Öztürk, “Turkish modernization and makam concept: Some determinations on two musical systems,” in *ICTM World Conference*, St. John’s, Newfoundland, Canada, 2011.