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THE PLACE OF THE CONCEPT OF “MELODIC MOTION” IN THE IDEAS OF MAKAM AND MODE

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Musical terminology can be considered as a useful analytical tool to make various comparisons between different musical theories. It becomes also possible to understand the principal concepts of theories through their own terminologies. Modal theory basically showed a scale-oriented improvement in three separate periods in the history of Western music theory. In the first of these, in particular, the *cantus tradition*, it is seen that some functional terms were used in order to identify melodic motions such as *intonatio*, *tenor*, *modulatio*, *mediatio*, *terminatio*, *finalis* and so on. It is quite clear that these terms, in principle, were used to specify the principal “movement style” of the modal melodies. This “movement style” can be also understood as a typical “behavior”, “manner”, “mode” or “course” of melodies. *Makam* was understood as completely melody-oriented concept almost through the entire history principally in the Ottoman sources (beginning of the 15th century until the late 19th century). The fundamental terms such as *âgâz*, *seyir*, *karar* and *asma karar* were used for describing melodic motions. The referential centralizations in the motion (like beginning, ending, pause) and the melodic behavior/manner shaped around those centers are the essence of the idea of makam. Therefore, melodic motion-oriented terms, always appear to be dominated in makam theory. It is intended here to make a basic comparison between the theories of *makam* and mode in terms of some terminological similarities which are used for describing the world of melody.

Introduction

This paper aims at dealing with the ideas of *makam* and mode with an approach that focuses on the manner of melodic motion and to make, in this context, an introduction to a common conceptual framework between these two information models.

My research on the *makam* understanding of the Ottoman world has shown that the idea of *makam* is directly related to the concept of “principal manner of melodic motion” or “melodic behavior”. It is evident that the need to know, understand and explain get reference from the beginning, proceeding and ending of melody allows the development of the *makam* idea. This epistemological model used to explain the world of melodies in the Ottoman world for four centuries was subjected to a transformation in the theoretical plane through the adoption of the theory specific to the Western harmonic tonality in the early twentieth century. In fact, motion-based theory, in practical sense, though it almost never lost its prevalence among the performers, it has been expanded by being based on the harmonic tonality, no longer in new theoretical education. This transformative process has led to the understanding of *makams* as octave-scales having harmonic functions and formed by the combinations of the fourths and fifths.

It is a fact that, today’s Turkey, the common education of traditional *makams* is still implemented through this transformed theory and adapted epistemology. Certainly, examining the process in detail constitutes a separate research topic itself. But today this is also a fact that, in world, the number of research addressing the issue in the epistemological and cognitive framework with regard to the melodic motion-based theories has been increasing.

Harold Powers, stated about the “modern studies” in 1958:

“Modern studies of both Gregorian and Byzantine repertory have come to attach more and more importance to melodic formulas and melody-types as determinants of modal character. And in the earlier medieval treatises formulas or melody-types characteristic of a given mode are sometimes referred to or cited. Particularly interesting in this respect is the treatise of Aurelian of Rome, from the middle of the 9th century, in which an eight-mode scheme is mentioned for the first time in the medieval literature. The term

“tonus” is defined, but no mention is made of anything like an octave-species. The fact that Aurelian uses the terms Protus, Deuterus, Tritus, and Tetrardus, and refers at some length to his acquaintance with the Byzantine *enechemata*, indicates that he got the eight-mode idea from Eastern Church sources. But his passages dealing with each of the eight modes individually are not concerned with the *ambitus*, *finalis*, etc., of the later theorists, but rather with melody-types and formulas” (1958: 457).

After nearly 50 years, in 2001, Frans Wiering writes that: “Modes are often discussed as if they are first of all scales, an approach which Jessie Ann Owens calls ‘neo-modal’” (2001: 2). Similarly, Robert Porterfield also emphasizes that: “Latin authors did not describe, define, or illustrate the modes of plainchant in terms of octave-spanning scales. ... mode is conceived not as a type of scale but as a type of melody” (2014: 45–46). As we have seen, despite the hegemony of scale-based understanding, in the musicological field, the mode concept is still in the research on the basis of melodic motion.

A similar situation, in Turkey, is experienced in the process of questioning the *makam* notion. Several researchers such as Oransay (1966), Signell (1976, 1986), Tura (1988), Stubbs (1994), Feldman (1996), Öztürk (2014a) provide remarkable contributions to *makam* studies. In this respect, it can be said that a new understanding shows increasingly development in the field of *makam* studies. The common question for this kind of researches as a departure point seems to be the following: what do people know and how do they explain what they already assume to know? In other words, what is the basis for their knowledge? The following idea expressed in relation to the chant research by Jeffery (1992: 119) “asking new kinds of questions, informed by new kinds of information” is shared here under the topic.

The main issue of this paper, in my point of view, is to examine whether an understanding of the concept of mode, like in *makam* theory, reflecting a melodic motion-based knowing model in its original historical course exist or not. If so, by which words is the concept of motion described in this kind of knowledge and basically, how these words refer to what properties of the motion? In the

process of preparing this paper, a doctoral dissertation conducted by Robert Porterfield in 2014, has contributed to me in terms of being a full investigation of such questions, as well. It is understood more clearly that theorists who represent the melodic motion-based approach have been existed in the field of *makam* and mode theories. As shown in detail by Porterfield (2014), such an epistemology appears to have validity for the understanding which is called as *cantus tradition* by Cohen (2002: 38) in terms of the concept of mode.

Concentration on melodic motion in theory

Essentially, any melodic motion shows three phased line of development in terms of function: beginning, proceeding and ending. These functional phases as the formal sections attached to each other describe the “manner of the principal motion” or “principal melodic behavior” in terms of the melodies which exhibit similarities in diversity. When considered through this basic logic, it is seen that the words, mainly, which are used in relation to the melodic motions in the theories of *makam* and mode shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The main words related to the melodic functions in *makam* and mode theories.

	Melodic Motion (Melodic Behavior / Manner)			
	1. Beginning Function	2. Proceeding Function	3. Ending Function	
			a.) temporary ending	b.) regular ending
Makam Theory	agaz mebde mahrec ewel zuhur [etme yeri] çıkış [yeri]	seyir intikal hareket gidiş geçiş	asma karar muvakkat karar	karar mahatt son/nihayet istirahat durma/dinlenme
Modal Theory (cantus tradition)	recitatio tenor tuba intonatio initio/initium/initus primum/principium inceptio/inceptus	modulatio/modulandis movendus/modulus transitio cursus medium processus/processo ambitus	mediatio/medial differentia/varietas divisio/distinctio definitio affinale/confinale	terminatio finalis/finitio modus terminus

The words and the melodic functions

The rich “word” diversity in the table makes us think of a need for a new approach to the issue of terminology with a slightly different perspective. When considering terms are specific and standard words which are given specific meanings within a specialized context, it is clearly seen that the situation in the table does not represent this kind of standardization.

Conversely, there are many synonymous words here, rather than standard terms and substantially these words also show some basic functions related to the melodic motion. As seen in the table, in both theories, the same melodic functions are actually expressed in multiple synonymous words. This case clearly shows that the concept of “melodic function” has a very different context from “harmonic function”. For instance, as a harmonic function, the dominant, is “always” the fifth degree of octave-scale whether major or minor, and it is fixed as long as the tone change (Horton and Ritchey, 2000). However, the melodic function called *agaz* in *makam* theory and *tenor* in modal theory does not “always” have to be the first sound in melody. Thus, it is clear that melodic functions point out a “center” in motion. Besides they indicate a certain position and melodic behavior/manner. The first of these specifies a “principle” which can be interpreted and can vary in practice, while the latter states a definite and unchanging “rule” (Öztürk, 2014a; 2015). The important point here in terms of melodic function is how the words are used to indicate the manner of motion that the melody principally depends on. Because, essentially, melodic motion is recognized as a specific *makam* or mode along with sections it has.

a) The beginning function: *Agaz/mebde/mahrec* and *tenor/tuba/initiatio*

In the explanations focusing on the melodic motion, the beginning of motion carries a great importance. When the knowledge transmitted with the *makam* and mode theories on this topic is considered together, it is seen that some theorists put emphasis on the beginnings (Palisca, 1978; McAlpine, 2004). It would not be wrong to say that the subject of beginnings is not recognized as well as endings by theoreticians. The basic reason for

this is that there is no necessity that the first sound of the melody should be the same as the functionally centered one in the beginning.

As noted by McAlpine (2004), when compared with ending which can be easily recognized due to taking place at the end of a piece, it is understood that the melodic diversity which can be seen at the beginning has occupied the minds of theorists mostly. In fact, it seems possible to identify the beginning function in three ways as: (a) a single central sound carried on, (b) a melodic figure directed to the center, (c) a central sound at the end of initial section (“half” cadence).

b) The proceeding function: *Seyir/intikal* and *modulation/movendus*

This functional section shows a development in two ways: (a) with circular motion, (b) with orientational motion. It is seen clearly that, of those, the circular motion forms a basis for the development of the ideas of *makam* and mode (Figure 1).

Circular motion: uni-centric melodies

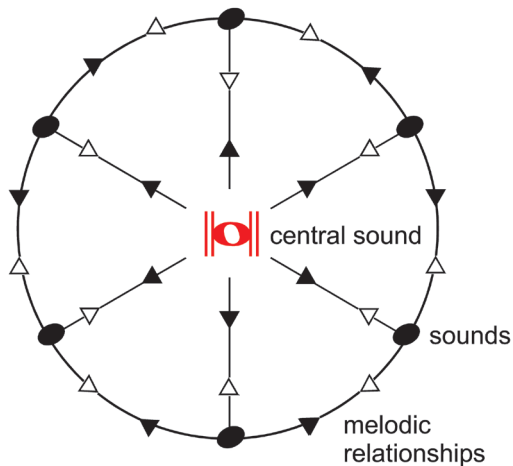


Figure 1. Circular motion and uni-centricity.

As is well known, *makam* is a word literally stating “location/place”, “position”, “situation/condition” or “rank of state”. Therefore, the sound which is located in the center of the circular motion overlaps exactly with the meaning of the word “*makam*” (“*positio*/position”, “*locatio*/location”, “*locus*/place”, and so on). In this type of motion, the beginning and ending of melody occurs on the “same” pitch. The sounds which are located on the orbit of the circular motion are subject to a single central sound and revolve around it. This kind of melodies has been qualified as “uni-centric” by Öztürk (2014a, 2015). In the melodies with the circular motion usually show the lines like arc (piece of circle) or simple harmonic movement in the upper, lower or both parts of the central sound. Following melodic sections include the examples for circular motion (Figure 2).

Rast Nim Sakil, Acemi
(Kantemir, 2001: 166-67)

Rast Makam

(rewritten on D by Öztürk)

B E

circular motion

Christe, qui lux es
(Hiley, 2009: 72)

Protus plagalis (Mode 2)

B E

circular motion

uni-centric melody
(central sound is D)
"circular motion"

Figure 1. Melodic examples for uni-centric melody formation.

The second type of motion is a “linear motion” in orientational character (Figure 3). This motion always shows development between two different centers. The beginning and ending centers of the motion are different each other. Linear motion, essentially, symbolizes a displacement or going from one place to another. Melodies with linear motion are called as “bi-centric” (Öztürk, 2014a). Following examples are for linear motion (Figure 4).

Linear motion: bi-centric melodies

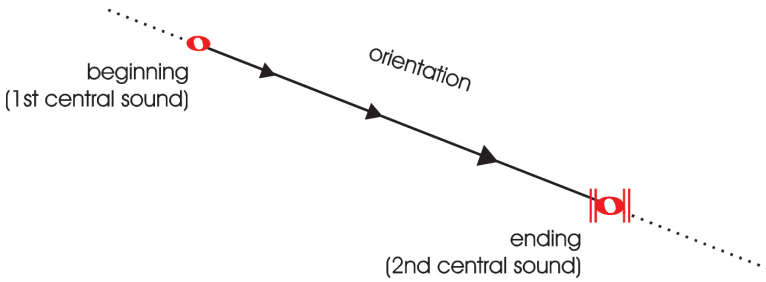


Figure 2. Linear motion and bi-centricity.

Buselik Sakil, Acemler (Kantemir, 2001: 87) Buselik Makam (rewritten on D by Öztürk)

Secundum magnam (Hiley, 1993: 92) Protus authenticus (Mode 1)

bi-centric melody
(central sounds are *a* and *D*)
"linear motion"

Figure 3. Melodic examples for bi-centric melody formation.

Consequently, circular and linear motions are the core of the *makam* understanding in two basic types, uni-centric and double-centric. In the *makam* theory, the melodies showing the development around more than two centers are classified as *şube* (*shuba*, “branch”) or *terkib* (“compound/mixture”). *Şubes* and *terkibs* occur from various parts of a *makam* or mixing different *makams* (Öztürk, 2014a; 2014b; 2015).

c) The ending function: *Karar/mahatt/istirahat* and *terminatio/finalis/finitio*

As a melodic function, the ending, just like the beginning, can be seen in three ways: (a) as a single central sound, (b) as a melodic figure shaped around the final sound, (c) as a specific cadencial manner. It can be easily recognized that taking place of the ending at the end of a piece or sentence as the final sound is allowed through this function. Therefore, most theorists accept the endings as the most reliable references for the recognition of *makams* and modes (Powers, 1980; McAlpine, 2004; Atkinson, 2009; Öztürk, 2014a; Porterfield, 2014).

McAlpine stated (2004: 177):

“we might too remind ourselves of the philosophical sense of finality or purpose: that the piece seeks its final, that the purpose of the piece is to get to its end. ...A ‘mode’ was a means to an end, almost literally. For if you do not know where you are going, how can you even set out? But the modes were able to provide the map for the journey, because they were able to sort out pretty well all songs according to their destinations.”

This emphasis on the endings stem from the center at which the melody stops is apparently clear. Indeed, the final sounds, in particular, form a basis for the classifications of *makams* and modes. Hence, in both theories, it should be accepted that the ending function has a primary importance and privilege.

d) The temporary ending function: *Asma karar/muvakkat karar* and *mediatio/differentia*

From the point of theorists, it could be argued that this is the function which leads to the emergence of, probably, the most contradictory views. Despite having a temporary nature, it is also functionally an ending that must not be forgotten. This type of ending is seen at the end of the sections having completely circular motion. It is obvious that this determination will provide a significant clarification about the subject, despite the various conflicting views reaching today.

Since circular motion has the feature of being uni-centric, it is seen that the ending which is at the end of the beginning section

occurs on the same central sound. This feature is particularly typical for a circular motion centered on the fourth or fifth of the final sound. When the ending sound is different from the beginning one, this condition is lead to the emergence of the concepts of *şube* (Öztürk, 2014b, 2014c) or *differentia* (Atkinson, 2009; Lundberg, 2011).

Conclusion

Within the limits of this paper, I have intended to draw attention to basic topic: the effect of melodic motion principle as a knowing and explaining function on the ideas of *makam* and mode. The melodic-motion principle is not a principle formed by scale-based understanding. Inherently, it does not have any relationship with the idea of octave scale. It is obvious that the scale-based approaches are the speculative explanations considering the issue on the basis of measurement structurally, in terms of the makam and mode theories. Therefore, it can be argued that such an understanding is not sufficiently comprehensive because pushing the concept of “inter-relationship” (in melodic terms) the second plan.

The melodic motion oriented explanation can be seen as a novel epistemological approach in terms of today’s common knowledge. It is seen that there is a rich terminology describing the stated functions in both theories. This case clearly shows that the diversity in the nature of the “motion” has a reflection on the language associated with it. For this reason, it is clearly seen that on the terms focused on the melodic movement and on the functions they describe, more cross cultural and cross linguistic studies must be carried out. In particular, in terms of terminology, investigating the network of synonyms, used for the same melodic functions can open new horizons in terms of what is known today. In addition, it is clear that the identifications made here on the two basic elements (circular and linear motion) of melodic movement enable us to make comprehensive explanations in terms of melodic movement. Questioning how and what we know, a search for a new knowledge on the concepts of *makam* and mode, despite the commonly accepted approaches forms the core message of this paper.

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