

The Rhythmic Structure Of Anatolian Folk Music

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Abstract: The traditions or customs can be defined as any kind of habit that handed on through generations though it does not have any written rules. At the same time, traditions embrace the spirit that establishes strong ties among the members of societies. Regarding this basic definition, music, especially the folk music can be assumed as a tradition which reflects the life styles of a nation. In terms of reflecting the Anatolian life style, the Türkü's which is the general name for both singing and performing in the Anatolian Folk Music tradition, should be examined. Our concern in the present study is the in Anatolian Folk Music and its rhythmic structure. This subject is worth to examine because recent Anatolian Folk Music roots back to the ion traditions which has roughly a 3000 year conjoined culture.

Keywords: Music, Folk Music, Rhythm, Anatolia.

Introduction

Since prehistoric times, in a social group whose survival depends on nature, the individual and the group have been viewed as identical. Every line of behavior and tradition in such groups has been depicted as anonymous, and these anonymous features have represented the group itself. That is, society has determined its own life style based on an unwritten set of rules, which in turn has led to the emergence of the concept "tradition" in societies living on farming, stock farming, forestry, ant etc.

Tradition is defined as "a set of habits with unwritten rules which is passed on from one generation to the next fostering a common spirit and a strong affiliation among the members of the group." (Turkish Language Association)

As for folk music, the Hungarian composer Berta BARTOK provides the following definition: "Folk music can be alternatively defined as peasant music. Here peasant is used to refer to those who employ themselves in agriculture, and who Express themselves in their own creative way fulfill their physical and spiritual needs in accordance with traditions which they have deeply internalized.

It is fort his reason that folk music should be discussed under tradition. It should be noted that our discusion will not include how urbanization affected tradition since it is beside the aim of the present study.

Folk Music in Anatolia:

The tradition of singing or playing folk music in Anatolia is called “türkü”, and the rhythmic structure in türkü is called “usul” (mode). Anatolian Folk Music is probably the most significant element in the region reflecting 8000 years of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

What needs to be highlighted at this point is that despite the diversity of 8000 years in rule and religion, folk music seems not to be affected by any of it. That is, hardly has the rhythmic and melodic structure of the folk music changed through 8000 years no matter what civilizations have reigned, what languages have been spoken and what religions have been practised in the region. Therefore, folk music may be viewed as the only tradition that has maintained its original motifs through centuries.

Folk music can be discussed in terms of:

- a) melody
- b) rhythm
- c) instruments played

In addition, regional variations should also be included since they reveal differences in melody and instruments played. Notice the following:

- 1) Aegean and Mediterranean Folk Music
- 2) Central Anatolian Folk Music
- 3) Black Sea Folk Music
- 4) Eastern and Southeastern Folk Music

Such regional differences will not be discussed in the present study since our focus is on the rhythmic structure of folk music.

We have already mentioned the 8000 years of diverse civilizations and the resulting cultures and the folk music tradition in Anatolia. Examined carefully, the Anatolian folk instruments may provide evidence for the fact that they have managed to survive till this time with only slight changes. The instruments used in Anatolian Folk Music include: Percussion Instruments: Davul (drum), Def (tambourine), Deblek; Wind Instruments: Zurna (shawm, Turkish oboe), Tulum (bragpipe), Mey (piye), Cifte Kaval (double flute), Kaval (flute), Sipsi (whistle); String Instruments: Bağlama (lute) and Kemençe (Black Sea fiddle).

It has been recorded that the history of davul, def, deblek, çifte kaval, kaval, sipsi and bağlama dates back to ancient times. It is known that the Hittites and Lycians did use these instruments. However, it is not known whether they were used in religious rituals or in other non-spiritual practices. Pictures of these instruments as they were used in ancient times are available on your hand-outs followed by another set of pictures showing their current outlook.

The rhythmic structure of Anatolian Folk Music can be analyzed in terms of its melody. Thus, two categories are revealed: a) rhythmic melodies, b) free rhythm melodies

Rhythmic Melodies:

1) Simple Measure Rhythms:

These are two, three or four-stage rhythms which form the basis of Anatolian Folk Music. The rhythmic motifs are repeated two, three or four times. These repetitions may be seen within the same melody or different melodies.

Two-Stage Rhythmic Scale and Melody Sample: (Tren Gelir Türküsü-MALATYA)

2)Compound Measure Rhythms:

Of the simple measure rhythms two and three-measure rhythms combine to form compound rhythms which include five, six, seven, eight and nine-stage rhythms.

Five-Stage Rhythmic Scale and Melody Sample: (Oy Trabzon-KARADENİZ)

The image shows a musical score for a five-stage rhythmic scale and melody sample. At the top, there is a rhythmic scale represented by a sequence of notes with stems and flags, indicating eighth notes. Below this, there are five staves of music. The first staff is a treble clef with a 3/8 time signature. The subsequent staves are also in treble clef but without a time signature. The music consists of a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, forming a scale and a melody.

Six-Stage Rhythmic Scale and Melody Sample: (Atabarı-ARTVİN)

The image shows a musical score for a six-stage rhythmic scale and melody sample. At the top, there is a rhythmic scale represented by a sequence of notes with stems and flags, indicating eighth notes. Below this, there are two staves of music. The first staff is a treble clef with a 6/8 time signature. The second staff is also in treble clef but without a time signature. The music consists of a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, forming a scale and a melody.

Seven Stage Rhythmic Scale and Melody Sample: a-(Bir Çift Durna Gördüm-YOZGAT) b-(Çayelinden Öteye-KARADENİZ)

The image shows a musical score for two seven-stage rhythmic scales and melody samples. At the top, there are two rhythmic scales labeled (a) and (b), each represented by a sequence of notes with stems and flags, indicating eighth notes. Below these, there are four staves of music. The first two staves correspond to sample (a) and the last two to sample (b). Each sample consists of a treble clef staff with a 7/8 time signature and a corresponding melody staff without a time signature. The music consists of a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, forming scales and melodies.

Eight-Stage Rhythmic Scale and Melody Sample: (Bugün Ber bir Güzel Gördüm-TOKAT)

♪ ♪ ♪ + ♪ ♪ + ♪ ♪ ♪



**Nine-Stage Rhythmic Scale and Melody Sample: a-(Süpürgesi Yoncadan- EĞİN)
b-(Pingan Kınası-KEMALİYE)**

♪ ♪ + ♪ ♪ ♪ + ♪ ♪ + ♪ ♪ (a)
♪ ♪ + ♪ ♪ + ♪ ♪ + ♪ ♪ ♪ (b)



3)Complex Measure Rhythms:

Simple and compound measure rhythms or two or more compound measure rhythms combine to form complex measure rhythms, which include ten, eleven, fifteen, sixteen and twenty-one stage rhythms.

Ten-Stage Rhythmic Scale and Melody Sample: (Urfa'ya Paşa Geldi)

The image shows the musical notation for a ten-stage rhythmic scale and a melody sample. At the top, there is a rhythmic scale represented by a sequence of notes with stems and flags, indicating eighth notes, with plus signs between some notes. Below this, there are two staves of music. The first staff is in 10/8 time and contains a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The second staff continues the melody with similar rhythmic values. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Eleven-Stage Rhythmic Scale and Melody Sample: (Havada kar Sesi Var)

The image shows the musical notation for an eleven-stage rhythmic scale and a melody sample. At the top, there is a rhythmic scale represented by a sequence of notes with stems and flags, indicating eighth notes, with plus signs between some notes. Below this, there are two staves of music. The first staff is in 11/8 time and contains a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The second staff continues the melody with similar rhythmic values. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Fifteen- Stage Rhythmic Scale and Melody Sample: (Zeynep –SİVAS)

The image shows the musical notation for a fifteen-stage rhythmic scale and a melody sample. At the top, there is a rhythmic scale represented by a sequence of notes with stems and flags, indicating eighth notes, with plus signs between some notes. Below this, there are two staves of music. The first staff is in 15/8 time and contains a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The second staff continues the melody with similar rhythmic values. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Sixteen- Stage Rhythmic Scale and Melody Sample: (İstanbul'dan gelir Kayık)

The image shows the musical notation for a sixteen-stage rhythmic scale and a melody sample. At the top, there is a rhythmic scale represented by a sequence of notes with stems and flags, indicating eighth notes, with plus signs between some notes. Below this, there are three staves of music. The first staff is in 16/8 time and contains a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The second and third staves continue the melody with similar rhythmic values. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Twenty-One- Stage Rhythmic Scale and Melody Sample: (Ekin Kavrama Havası - MERZIFON)



Free Rhythm Melodies:

“Uzun Hava” and “ozanlama” are examples of free rhythm melodies which are defined as having a free style of singing and playing. The term free rhythm is not use to mean that there is no rhythm in such melodies, but rather to mean that the rhythmic movements are carried out more freely. Free rhythm melodies have some common features which are listed below.

- 1- A one –to-one correspondance between the number of syllables in verses and the number of notes in melodies
- 2- Accent
- 3- Extensive embellishment
- 4- Onset rhythmic structure flowing into free rhythmic structure later on

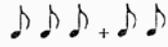
Since they foreground the melodic feature rather than the rhythm, free rhythm melodies will not be discussed in the present study.

Conclusion

The rhythmic structure of Anatolian Folk Music is basically formed by various manifestations of simple measure rhythms. THE fact that eight of the thirteen types of rhythmic scales are built on an unbalanced rhythm called. Aksak Rhythm is the most distinctive feature of the rhythmic structure of Anatolian Folk Music.

One other finding is that the Ioanians, who lived in Anatolia in 500s AD, did use two different types of aksak rhythm of 5/8 called PEON-I and PEON-II. Following is the scale of these rhythms.

PEON-I

u u u _ 5/8 

PEON-II

_ u u u 5/8 

This provides support for our earlier proposal that Anatolian Folk Music prevailed in different religious and linguistic groups throughout history.

As of 1826 in Ottoman times, there had been attempts to provide training in western music, which were then followed by the establishment of School of Music Instructors in 1924 in the Republic Era. This movement reached its peak in 1936 when Ankara State Conservatory was founded. Currently, thousands of students are provided a nation wide training in ten conservatories scattered around Turkey.

Turkish composers who received their musical training either in Turkey or abroad very often employ the rhythmic structure of Anatolian Folk Music in their Works. The motivation for this is the consciousness about nationality and creating a national music comprising traditional motifs. Most of the Works of some contemporary composers display Anatolian Folk Music melodies, most of which include the aksak rhythm. The samples you are about to hear are of this nature, as well.

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