

Harmonizing Approaches In Turkish Folk Music Works ¹

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Abstract

Turkish Folk Music, one of our traditional music genres, differs from other traditional music types with its unique structure. Its maqam structure and musical attitude make this music have a special resonance. For this reason, these features make Turkish Folk Music suitable for polyphony and harmonic accompaniment. The researcher performed harmonization and accompaniment studies on some selected Turkish Folk Music works in this study to give the artworks a deeper variety of colors and different expressions. Although the researcher gives examples on the piano instrument, one can obtain similar results by transferring the chords of the study to other instruments. In this study, the researcher emphasized different approaches from simple chords to alternative harmonization in selected Turkish Folk Music works, and within the framework of this perspective, he tried to obtain deeper colors and a completely different depth on the tones (resonance) of the artworks.

Keywords: Turkish Folk Music, Harmonizing Approaches, Harmonization, Jazz Music.

Introduction

Monophonic Turkish Folk Music has a different structure from the tonal sound system of western music, with its melodic, rhythmical, and maqam features. According to Türkmen (2007), the harmonization of polyphonic Turkish music is explained under three headings: tertian (tertiary) harmony, quartal harmony, and the composer works using different harmonic methods without too much adhering to the rules. Unlike the harmonic system in tonal structure, Kemal İlerici (1974; cited in Parasız & Gülüm, 2018) developed a harmony system in polyphony by examining the structure and melodic elements of Turkish music. This system, known as the quartal system, was developed based on the melody, rhythmic, and maqam structure of Turkish music, and today many works were composed for instruments, voices, operas, and orchestras. While there are musical structures that use tonal and quartal harmony systems together, there are also works composed without adhering to these structures. Şenalp (2016) stated that people have musical perceptions accustomed to western harmony and temperament system; on the other hand, they have an appreciation and commitment to traditional melodies and rhythm patterns. For this reason, our traditional melodies and the understanding of polyphonic composition in accordance with the harmonic structure of western music continue to merge.

As it is known, in Turkish Classical Music and Turkish Folk Music, which are Turkish traditional music genres, there are many works with uniquely beautiful words and melodies. The microtonal sound system and maqams of Turkish traditional music give these types of music a unique color and make them unique. The works are mostly performed in traditional style as well as in different arrangements and with polyphonic choir or orchestra ensembles but of course, when it comes to polyphony and multi-vocalization, the microtonal structure in the music system comes to the fore. According to Tuncer (2021), "There is also the emergence of microtonal studies that try to overcome the traditional scale and sound system, the change of sound sources, or the increase in expression-oriented experiments that push the dynamic and sound limits of instruments (or the human voice). This

¹ This study was presented orally at the 13th ICONTE Conference held on 12-14 May 2022.

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situation has also challenged the technical possibilities of instruments and the conventional forms of instrument-playing techniques.”

When the system that provides polyphony is examined, it is seen that the temperament system in which the sounds are divided equally into the one-octave distance. The equal distribution of sounds allows the harmonious resonance of more than one sound at the same time and the use of polyphony. There are different solutions for multi-vocalizing the works in Turkish traditional music for orchestra or piano accompaniment. For this study, works that will experience minimal loss when microtonal notes are played according to the temperament system were selected.

Objective

This study aims to present different approaches and exemplary practices in polyphony by making examples of harmony and accompaniment in Turkish Folk Music works. This study is considered important in terms of understanding the color and harmony differences between the existing harmonic arrangement and resonance searches of different approaches, examining the harmonic structure of the application examples, and developing a perspective.

Method

In this study, the researcher applied different approaches to harmony and accompaniment on works selected as examples in Turkish Folk Music and applied the analysis method with work analysis. Therefore, the study is a thematic compilation. The researcher explained the examples discussed in the research within the scope of the subject with different harmonization examples. The works whose expressions do not weaken when played in the temperament system were selected. Also, the works examined in this study were selected from the works that the researcher had previously worked on for a recording project or concert work.

Findings

“Çalın Davulları Çaydan Aşağıya” (Play Drums Downward The Stream)

This folk song, which belongs to the Rumelia region, showed in the Figure 1, is played in G major tone. The first notation below shows a simpler or standard example of harmony.

Figure 1*Çalın Davulları 1st Version.***ÇALIN DAVULLARI**

(SELANİK TÜRKÜSÜ)

Kimden: Hüseyin YALTIRAK

In this simple arrangement of the work, the first two measures are the introductory and at the same time the second theme. Measures 3 - 8 are the lyric part and measures 9 - 13 are the refrain. The last two measures can be considered as the end of the work. G major chord is given for the intro part, which imitates drums and consists of G and B notes. G major chord is placed for the B note in the 3rd and 4th measures, and C major chord is placed for the C, B, and A sharp notes in the 3rd measure. B minor chord is used for F sharp in the 6th measure. By the same logic, and similarly, in this example, the most suitable chords that can sound standard are used in every part where the notes in the measure coincide with or resonate close to the chord notes.

The chords showed in Figure 2 are placed from a different perspective.

Figure 2

Çalın Davulları 2nd Version

ÇALIN DAVULLARI

(SELANİK TÜRKÜSÜ)

Kimden: Hüseyin YALTIRAK
Düz. & Arm.: Devrim BABACAN



In this example, before the selection of chords, it is seen that minor 7th (m7), major 7th (M7), and 9th and even 11th forms of chords are frequently used in terms of the targeted color. G Maj7 chord is seen again in the first measures of the intro and lyric part. Then, to draw attention to a few examples, instead of the C chord used in the first example, A minor (Am7), which is the substitute chord of that chord, is used. In the same way, the researcher performed approaches that can be considered close but change the hearing quite a bit, such as B minor 7th (Bm7) for G major and Bm7 for D major chord. Especially for the 8th measure G and E notes, the C chord was used as before, but this time the 11th chord resonance was obtained by using the D note in the bass.

In the refrain part, substitute chords are used again. Since the Am7 chord is targeted in the 11th measure, the E7 chord, which is dominant of A minor, was used in the second half of the 10th measure. In the last sentence on the endings, the C/D chord was followed by a G chord. The B7(b9) chord at the end of the first ending appears to be a dominant chord of Em7 at the beginning of the refrain.

“Çanakkale İçinde” (In Canakkale)

Çanakkale ballad is a well-known folk song from the Kastamonu region and is often performed with different keys and arrangements. In these examples, the researcher writes the folk song in D minor.

In Figure 3, the chords for this song that are relatively easy to play but written with a simpler understanding.

Figure 3

Çanakkale 1st Version

ÇANAKKALE

Kimden: İhsan OZANOĞLU
Düz.: Devrim Babacan

The musical score for "Çanakkale 1st Version" is presented in three staves of music. The first staff begins with a D minor chord (D^{MIN}) and a G major chord (G). The second staff starts with a G major chord (G), followed by a G minor chord (G^{MIN}) and a C major chord (C). The third staff begins with a D minor chord (D^{MIN}), followed by a B^b chord, a C major chord (C), and ends with a D minor chord (D^{MIN}). A ritardando (Rit.) marking is placed below the first staff of the third line. The music is written in 4/4 time and features a mix of eighth and quarter notes, with some notes beamed together.

Generally, D minor and G major chords are used in terms of harmony of chords and melody notes. The most striking parts are the transition of the same chord from major to minor in the 6th measure and the progression with B^b and C chords to the Dm chord in the 9th measure.

In the second version of the song below (Figure 3), the researcher took a different approach and tried to obtain more detailed colors.

Figure 4
Çanakkale 2nd Version

ÇANAKKALE

Kimden: İhsan OZANOĞLU

Düz.: Devrim Babacan



First of all, this variation of the folk song was written as a piano piece. As in the example above, although melody and chord harmony are maintained, different resonances are tried to be obtained in the middle parts. That's why there are differences in the timing of the chords. In the second part of the song, starting from the bass B note, a downward bass progression and appropriate chords were designed, and this progression went up again in the 10th measure to reach the B flat note, which was again connected to the B natural note when returning to the 6th measure for repetition.

The second part, which is between the 6th and 11th measures, can be detailed as follows. The G9/B chord is used due to the bass B note in the 6th measure and the A notes in the melody. From the next measure, the bass note showed a chromatic descending feature. Although the chord used for the G note in the melody in the first half of the 7th measure appears as Bm7(b5), the function here can also be considered as G7(b9)/B. The Bbm9 chord, which is used for the A flat note in the melody in the next half of the measure, served as a transition chord between the previous B minor chord and the first chord of the next measure, A minor.

as a dominant of G9. Similarly, the C11 chord is used in the first half of the measure to give the F9 chord in the second half of the next measure a sense of resolution.

BbM7 and Eb9 chords are used in accordance with the melody in the 9th measure. Here again, an upward progression began, in which the chords Em7 and F9 were used for the G note in the melody in the 10th measure. The F9 chord has been resolved to the Bb9 chord, and this time a descent has started up to the A7(b9) chord to reach the tonic. Although the melody line insists on F and E notes in measures 11th and 12th, the chords Bb9, Am7, Ab13, and A7(b9) are used in these measures, and the sentence is settled with the chord D minor. In this measure, as in the second ending, which is the 5th measure, the melody is repeated with the C7(b9) chord.

Yağmur Yağar Taş Üstüne (Rain Falls on the Stone)

This abbreviated arrangement of this piece, which is an anonymous Rumelian folk song, is written in B flat minor tone. In this work (shown in Figure 6 below), harmonization is written from a slightly different perspective.

Figure 6

Yağmur Yağar Taş Üstüne

YAĞMUR YAĞAR TAŞ ÜSTÜNE Rumeli (Anonim)
Düz.: Devrim BABACAN



The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system (measures 1-5) features a voice line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes chords: Bbm7, Cm7, Dbmaj7, Bbm7, Cm7, Dbmaj7, Bbm7, Cm7, Dbmaj7, and Bb7(b9)/D. The second system (measures 6-9) continues the voice and piano parts, with piano chords: Ebm9, Abmaj9, Dbmaj7, and Gbmaj9. The third system (measures 10-13) includes a first ending and a second ending for the voice, with piano chords: Gdim, Edim, Ab11, Bbm7, Bb7(b9), and Bbm9.

The DbM7 chord was determined for the A flat and F notes in the second measure, but a progression was made with the Bbm7 and Cm7 chords to this DbM7 chord. The same chords are used over and over again by repeating the musical phrase three times.

The Ebm9 chord was used for the first notes of the second part of the piece, D flat, E flat, and F. Also, for this reason, the chord Bb7(b9)/D is used as the dominant chord at the end of the previous part. In the second part, a chord progression in the form of Ebm9, AbMaj9, DbMaj7, and GbMaj9 is considered, known as march harmony because it harmonizes with the melody.

The second part is ended with the Bbm7 chord after the Ab11 chord. Accordingly, an effort to connect the Gb chord to the Ab chord is seen in the 10th measure of the score. The two related chords G dim and E dim played the dominant role for the Ab chord, and the second part ended with the Bbm9 chord. For the repetition to the 6th measure, Bb7(b9) dominant is used in the first ending.

Conclusion

It is possible to harmonize almost any music that has the conditions suitable for polyphony with different thoughts. In the Turkish Folk Music, artists have performed and are performing this type of work frequently in many works. In this study, a wide variety of harmony applications were made to the selected works. As can be seen in the images above, the researcher tried to go beyond alternative resonances by including chords that can give different colors based on the notes of 7th, maj7, 11th, and 13th chords instead of chords that can only be considered as standard. As a result of these, the researcher tried to obtain a structure that sounds relatively different and adds a little more depth effect to the melody. It is possible to see the examples in which many new ideas are applied without harming the general pattern and expression of the works, both in the media organs and through social media. Other than that, there are studies based on explanation and exemplification on the polyphony of Turkish Music in our country, but similar articles have been found, although not parallel to this study. For example, Saęer and Ersoy (2014) suggested that modern harmony should be taught to students in music education institutions and that modern harmony examples of Turkish Music-themed works should be reproduced for students. Albuz (2011) stated in his study that polyphony can be easily done with tertian harmony in Turkish Music works that are close to the tonal system, and different polyphony experiments can be easily carried out by trying possible ways. It can be said that such works bring a new breath to the performances that are used to hearing and perhaps become monotonous, and bring vitality to outdated performances.

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