

## THE CLASSIFICATION OF PRE-MODAL MELODIES\*

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The classification of documents related to folk music, both recordings and transcriptions, is a problem which must be solved as must that concerned with the notation of these melodies for scientific purposes. Unless these documents are categorized in an extremely simple and logical manner, it is certain that ethnomusicologists will continue to face enormous difficulties in searching through archives, and possibly many documents will be overlooked.

To the best of my knowledge, such a method, convincingly suitable for the purposes intended, has not yet been proposed. Probably because of their focus on needs of a particular area, attempts made to date to solve this problem seem not to gain universal approval. On the other hand, one would be right in wondering whether it is possible to establish an international method of classification. There is, spread throughout the world, a virtually unlimited diversity of folk melodies, whose main characteristic is the fact that they are "re-created" each time they are performed according to the fancy of the singer or player. In addition, although we may deal initially with certain aspects of melody (pitches, scales, modes, etc.), it is undeniable that we should also consider in our classification the words connected with the music, as well as rhythms, intrinsic structure, etc. In fact, a method which would enable us to classify all of our heterogeneous documents, and all details related to them, would be extremely complicated and unwieldy. Moreover, it goes without saying that some of these details can be effectively dealt with only by scholars who are native to the country from which the music itself comes. Furthermore, certain details found in transcriptions cannot withstand the test of objectivity, an indispensable quality if they are to be considered in a useful and acceptable classification system. Most documents in archives chance to be furnished by amateurs who,

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\*The term "pre-modal" refers to recitations which exhibit clear patterning of rhythm, to recitations which do not exhibit this characteristic, and to melodies containing two, three, or four differing pitches.

unfortunately, cannot satisfy the exigencies of the science. Transcriptions based on music not recorded on tapes, discs or cylinders can obviously only be considered as an outline of that music. We must, therefore, nolens volens, renounce our ideal and content ourselves with a simple and manageable method of classification. What shall this method be? We can divide our items roughly into such headings as: 1) Music played on instruments, 2) Sung music 3) Music both sung and played on instruments. The extremely general character of this classification invites the accumulation within each category of all kinds of materials whose only actual relationship is that they are either played on instruments, sung, or performed simultaneously in both manners. Few would agree that this method is of itself sufficient. We must therefore avoid generalities of this sort. For similar reasons, classification according to peculiarities of rhythm should also be rejected. Thus we must initially omit consideration of data relating to the method of performance, rhythm, etc. in developing the classification system, though these aspects of music must of course be considered at a later stage.

Once these elements are eliminated — despite their manifest importance as characteristics of melodies — we have but “pitches.” How, then, are we to treat this bare material? We must remember that we have not yet approached the most important element of any melody, the element by which the melody is shaped, viz., the “modal element,” utilizing the term “modal” in its most general meaning. All melodies are somehow shaped in accordance with a “modal conception” which is inherent in, and a natural consequence of, both human instinct and the secret working of the subconscious. It might be objected that this statement does not take into consideration the existence of melodies which fall in the “pre-modal” category. Yet we find here, if only in its embryonic state, the same conception, a conception based on an inherent desire to cling to something stable. As for the so-called nonstability of the “final pitch” in pentatonic melodies or in melodies containing less than five pitches, this false idea is the result of preconceived convictions and alluring hypotheses which cannot be discussed within the limits of this article. It will therefore not be taken into consideration here.

It would seem, therefore, that the safest method of classifying folk melodies would be to group them, as a first step, according to their modal peculiarities: premodal melodies, pentatonic melodies, melodies showing influence of the maqam, Gregorian chant, tonal music, etc.

The second step would be to regroup the melodies, within each primary category, according to other special features. Thus, step by step, we should establish subordinate categories within the main groupings. In dealing with the rhythmic aspects of melodies — with the exception of those that exhibit some rhythmic traits foreign to the region of their origin — we shall in most cases be concerned with aspects which are characteristic of a particular region. Despite their regional stamp, these aspects are of the highest importance in developing an exact knowledge of the material, as they are in comparative studies. These rhythmic aspects of the material must certainly be classified in their turn, employing an appropriate method.

It is well known that some archives employ methods which do not differ fundamentally from those discussed above. The characteristics of a sound classification system should be utility, manageability, and flexibility. Owing to the fact that the problems of classification have not been discussed sufficiently amongst scholars, each archivist creates his own system and we thus are confronted with differing and often contradictory solutions of the same problems. Since some of the basic problems concerning the very structure of the music, such as those relating to pentatonic music, are yet to be settled, scholars who work in archives seem to prefer a classificatory system particularly adapted to the traits of melodies of their own country. It is true that most archives are but depositories of recordings of folk music. Nevertheless, when working in the archives where transcriptions do exist, terrible difficulties must be surmounted to secure the few items one might require due to the existing disparities in classification methods utilized. The adoption of an international method of classification — a method comparable to those in use in libraries — would obviously be of great assistance to all scholars.

With the hope that I may contribute towards this end, I shall now endeavor to present the main outlines of such a method. As I have already mentioned, different melodic types must be placed within the categories to which they belong. On the other hand, it does not seem feasible to develop a single system of classification which will embrace every possible case. There is too great a heterogeneity of melodic types. (Compare, for example, the types major-minor, pentatonic, maqam, etc.) The system I shall offer will therefore be limited in its application to pre-modal types, i. e., that group of musical manifestations which comprises recitations utilizing definite or indefinite rhythms and melodies containing not more than four differing pitches. It must be emphasized that the system propounded does not consider in detail the rhythms of the recitations.

The method presented here consists of writing down all probable combinations in each category. The limited number of formulae and combinations given below represents a partial listing only of the most frequently met pre-modal types. The system is open ended and can be expanded to encompass, for example, SAX, YSYSXY, or any other combination imaginable as necessary.

The following is a key to the symbols used:

1. When no metrical signature is given in the musical example, the bar lines represent textual divisions, not metrical organization.
2. The use of an 'x' rather than a note head indicates an indefinite pitch as found in speech.
3. The letters 'A' through 'H' and 'a' through 'h' found in the diagram boxes represent definite pitches. The capital letters S, X, and Y found in the same position represent differing types of recitation as explained below.
4. The letter 'z' found in formulae represents the variable element in the formula.

#### RECITATIONS

S = Recitations which do not exhibit definite patterning of rhythm, i.e., those which do not exhibit repetition of rhythmic patterns, whose rhythmic organization is based upon the exigencies of speech.

X = Recitations showing a tendency towards definite patterning of rhythm.

Y = Recitations exhibiting clear rhythmic patterning.

O A	1	2	3
	S	SX	SY
O B	1	2	3
	X	XS	XY
O C	1	2	3
	Y	YS	YX

See Examples 1 and 2 on page 24.

## MELODIES

- a) All melodies are transposed so that the final pitch (son final) of each is 'A'.
- b) The actual final pitch of the melody is noted on the index card referring to the melody.
- c) The pitches are represented by the letters of the German alphabet system.
- d) Since the system is analytic in nature, for convenience pitches which lie between the chromatic tones are converted to the nearest pitch found in the tempered chromatic scale.

Monophonic Melodies and their Combinations with Recitations

I A	A
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I B	1	2	3	4	5	6
	AS	AX	AY	ASX	ASY	AXS
	7	8	9			
	AXY	AYS	AYX			

I C	1	2	3	4	5	6
	SA	XA	YA	SXA	SYA	XSA
	7	8	9			
	XYA	YSA	YXA			

See Examples 3 and 4 on page 25.

Diphonic Melodies

Formula:  $^z A$

II A	1	2	3	4	5	6
	$^b A$	$^h A$	$^c A$	$^{cis} A$	$^d A$	$^{es} A$

7	8	9	10	11	12
$e_A$	$f_A$	$f_{is}_A$	$g_A$	$g_{is}_A$	$\underline{a}_A$

13	14	15
$\underline{b}_A$	$\underline{h}_A$	$\underline{c}_A$

II B

1	2	3	4	5	6
$g_{is}^A$	$g^A$	$f_{is}^A$	$f^A$	$e^A$	$es^A$

7	8	9	10	11	12
$d^A$	$c_{is}^A$	$c^A$	$\overline{h}^A$	$\overline{b}^A$	$\overline{a}^A$

13	14	15
$\overline{g_{is}}^A$	$\overline{g}^A$	$\overline{f_{is}}^A$

See Examples 5, 6 and 7 on page 26.

### Triphonic Melodies

III A Formula:  $\overset{z}{b}_A - \underset{z}{g_{is}}^A$

III 1A

1	2	3	4	5	6
$\overset{h}{b}_A$	$\overset{c}{b}_A$	$\overset{c_{is}}{b}_A$	$\overset{d}{b}_A$	$\overset{es}{b}_A$	$\overset{e}{b}_A$

7
$\overset{f}{b}_A$

III 1B

1	2	3	4	5	6
$\overset{g}{g_{is}}^A$	$\overset{f_{is}}{g_{is}}^A$	$\overset{f}{g_{is}}^A$	$\overset{e}{g_{is}}^A$	$\overset{es}{g_{is}}^A$	$\overset{d}{g_{is}}^A$

7
$\overset{c_{is}}{g_{is}}^A$

III 1C	1	2	3	4	5	6
	gis <sup>A</sup> b	gis <sup>A</sup> h	gis <sup>A</sup> c	gis <sup>A</sup> cis	gis <sup>A</sup> d	gis <sup>A</sup> es
	7					
	gis <sup>A</sup> e					

III 1D	1	2	3	4	5	6
	b <sup>A</sup> gis	b <sup>A</sup> g	b <sup>A</sup> fis	b <sup>A</sup> f	b <sup>A</sup> e	b <sup>A</sup> es
	7					
	b <sup>A</sup> d					

Other possible triphonic formulae:

$$\text{III 2} \quad \begin{matrix} z & h & A \\ & / & \backslash \\ & g & A \\ & z & \end{matrix}$$

$$\text{III 3} \quad \begin{matrix} z & c & A \\ & / & \backslash \\ & fis & A \\ & z & \end{matrix}$$

$$\text{III 4} \quad \begin{matrix} z & cis & A \\ & / & \backslash \\ & f & A \\ & z & \end{matrix}$$

$$\text{III 5} \quad \begin{matrix} z & d & A \\ & / & \backslash \\ & e & A \\ & z & \end{matrix} \quad \text{etc.....}$$

See Examples 8, 9, 10 and 11 on pages 27 and 28. Note that two possible classifications of the same melody are given for Example 8.

Tetraphonic Melodies

$$\text{IV 1/1} \quad \text{Formula:} \quad \begin{matrix} z & hb & A \\ & / & \backslash \\ & g & gis & A \\ & z & \end{matrix}$$

IV 1/1 A	1	2	3
	c hb <sub>A</sub>	cis hb <sub>A</sub>	d hb <sub>A</sub>

IV 1/1 B	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">fis g gis<sup>A</sup></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">f g gis<sup>A</sup></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">e g gis<sup>A</sup></td> </tr> </table>	1	2	3	fis g gis <sup>A</sup>	f g gis <sup>A</sup>	e g gis <sup>A</sup>
1	2	3					
fis g gis <sup>A</sup>	f g gis <sup>A</sup>	e g gis <sup>A</sup>					
IV 1/1 C	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">h<sup>b</sup> A gis</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">c<sup>b</sup> A gis</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">cis<sup>b</sup> A gis</td> </tr> </table>	1	2	3	h <sup>b</sup> A gis	c <sup>b</sup> A gis	cis <sup>b</sup> A gis
1	2	3					
h <sup>b</sup> A gis	c <sup>b</sup> A gis	cis <sup>b</sup> A gis					
IV 1/1 D	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">g gis<sup>A</sup> b</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">fis gis<sup>A</sup> b</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">f gis<sup>A</sup> b</td> </tr> </table>	1	2	3	g gis <sup>A</sup> b	fis gis <sup>A</sup> b	f gis <sup>A</sup> b
1	2	3					
g gis <sup>A</sup> b	fis gis <sup>A</sup> b	f gis <sup>A</sup> b					
IV 1/1 E	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">b<sup>A</sup> gis g</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">h<sup>A</sup> gis g</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">c<sup>A</sup> gis g</td> </tr> </table>	1	2	3	b <sup>A</sup> gis g	h <sup>A</sup> gis g	c <sup>A</sup> gis g
1	2	3					
b <sup>A</sup> gis g	h <sup>A</sup> gis g	c <sup>A</sup> gis g					
IV 1/1 F	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">gis<sup>A</sup> b<sup>h</sup></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">g<sup>A</sup> b<sup>h</sup></td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">fis<sup>A</sup> b<sup>h</sup></td> </tr> </table>	1	2	3	gis <sup>A</sup> b <sup>h</sup>	g <sup>A</sup> b <sup>h</sup>	fis <sup>A</sup> b <sup>h</sup>
1	2	3					
gis <sup>A</sup> b <sup>h</sup>	g <sup>A</sup> b <sup>h</sup>	fis <sup>A</sup> b <sup>h</sup>					

Other possible tetraphonic formulae:

<u>IV 2/1</u>	z <sup>ch</sup> A -	z <sup>fis</sup> g <sup>A</sup>	
<u>IV 2/4</u>	z <sup>es</sup> h <sup>A</sup> -	z <sup>es</sup> g <sup>A</sup>	
<u>IV 4/5</u>	z <sup>fis</sup> cis <sup>A</sup> -	z <sup>c</sup> f <sup>A</sup>	
<u>IV 7/2</u>	z <sup>fis</sup> e <sup>A</sup> -	z <sup>c</sup> d <sup>A</sup>	etc...

See Examples 12 and 13 on page 28.

This method enables us to immediately classify all recitations and all melodies not containing more than four pitches. The archivist's task will be to listen to the recitations and melodies and to

indicate the appropriate formula on the index card. Variants will also be entered on index cards.

The author has employed this method for some time. He finds the complete classification dictionary which he has prepared — which gave rise to this article — both simple and satisfactory. He hopes to publish a more detailed exposition of the system at a later date.

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#### TRANSCRIPTIONS

Unless otherwise indicated below the transcriptions were made by the author from recordings in his private collection.

- Example 5. György Kerényi, ed., Gyermekjátékok (Children's Games), Vol. I of Corpus Musicae Popularis Hungaricas, ed. Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály (Budapest, 1951), example 14.
- Example 8. Cvjetko Rihtman, "Folk Music of the District of Jajce," Bulletin of the Institute of Folklore Research, No. 2 (1953), p. 42, no. 8.
- Example 9. Kerényi, op. cit. example 54.

A-minj. Ye-dik ya-dik yi-ya-me-dik, Sirag da-ha ge-tir di-ya-me-dik, Bül-kül yu-wa-sul,

Sag-sa-gan ta-wa-sul, Bu-dur ag ek-me-gen Sof-ra du-a-sul.

Example 1

(O B1)

(Y)

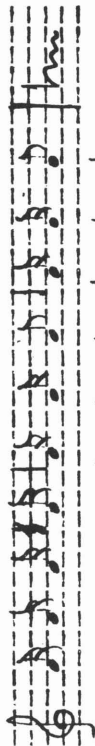
Çiğ-dem çiğ-dem ge-tir-dik, kay-fi-mi-gi yi-tir-dik. Yağ ve-re-nin

(X)

oğ-lu ol-sun, Bul-gur ve-re-nin ku-ç ol-sun.

Example 2

(O C3)



Bi-le-mye-diy lum-bur-lop, lum-bur-lop,

Example 3

(I A)

(Jocca. 108)



Ü-şü-dün buy-duy so-ğuk-tan, Bir ka-rı şuk-ta o-ğuk-tan,



Ş-beş he-dik kay-na-dur, De-dem ak-h-ni oy-na-dur.

Example 4

(I B3)

Ci-gán, ci-gán, ci-ga-ró, nem a pi-pá-ba va-ló, mēra pi-pa tū-ges,  
 a ci-gán meg tū-hes.

Example 5

(II A2)

(♩ = 105)

É-lim e-lim ö-pe-lex, É-den sū-kan to-pa-lak,

Example 6

(II A3)

(♩ = ca. 114)

Ha-cu ley-lex, lex, lex, Ha-ni ba-na ser-dek, Ser-de-ğin i-si-yok,

Example 7

(II B2)

(♩ = 66)

O - va - ko se bi - ber si - je, o - va - ko, o - va - ko!

(III 1D 2 and III 2C 2)

Example 8

Haj, ré - tes bé - les, mi - ndi - jart ke - se - rú' lesj.

(III 2D 3)

Example 9

(♩ = ca. 126)

Ta - ra - ni - m ka - ta, Daj - la - ra dü - tü, Hey gi - di - ni - m ku - fu, Ar - di - ma dü - tü.

(III 2A 3)

Example 10



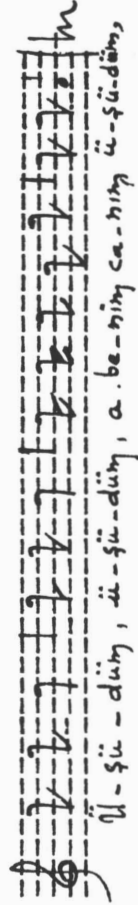
(III 12A 14)

Example 11



(IV 1/2 E3 and IV 2/2 D3)

Example 12



(IV 3/2 A5)

Example 13