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Research Article

Rast maqam and form in Azerbaijani âşık music: A modal–intonational analysis of selected airs from the epic "Âşık Garip"

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Abstract

This study examines selected âşık airs performed within the epic Âşık Garip through a theoretical analysis of their modal–intonational, melodic, metro-rhythmic, and formal structures. Among the thirty-two airs constituting the narrative framework of the epic, fifteen are based on the Rast maqam; five representative examples- "Çukur Hava," "Dastanı," "Gülabi," "Güllü Göyçe," and "Kerem Köçtü"- were transcribed and analyzed in detail. The findings demonstrate that although these airs are grounded in the Rast maqam and particularly its Şikeste-i Fars section, their modal identity is dynamically articulated through shifting cadential tones, sectional expansion, and performance-based variation. The analyses reveal that recurring melodic nuclei -especially the "a" episode and its variants (a1, a2)- function as primary form-generating elements, ensuring structural coherence across multi-sectional designs. Metro-rhythmic organization plays a decisive role in shaping expressive character, often combining stable metric accompaniment with Ad libitum declamatory vocal delivery. Furthermore, the dialogic interaction between vocal and instrumental parts expands the harmonic and timbral field through saz-based quartal and quintal sonorities. Although the airs frequently appear in two- or three-sectional formal schemes, their underlying structural logic reflects a unified melodic core shaped by the semantic and narrative demands of the epic text. The study concludes that âşık music, as a syncretic oral art form integrating poetry and music, embodies structural flexibility, modal richness, and content-dependent formal variability within the framework of the Rast maqam tradition.

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Introduction

Âşık airs have essentially paved the way for the emergence of a melodic structure and a mature musical style born from the unity of word and music, since they embody the poetic semantics of the poems created by folk poets and master âşıks. Clarifying this issue, the folklore scholar M. Hakimov writes:

"In âşık literature, meter is the active poetic criterion of all genres... In this sense, meter and harmony in âşık poetry bring a particular fluency to the structural order of any poetic genre, to the semantic tones and independence of the poem, as well as to the âşık's performance and poetic language. In Azerbaijani âşık poetry, and likewise in folk ceremonial songs, tongue twisters, proverbs and sayings, düzgü forms and bayatıs, poetic phonetics has acquired a special significance and enhanced musicality" (Hakimov, 2004: 392).

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Comparing the performance style of âşık airs with the art of the khanende, Bülbül writes:

> "While the literary materials of the âşıks were solely in the Azerbaijani language, khanendes mostly sang in Persian. The true masters and creators of the Azerbaijani vocal style were the âşıks; they were the propagators and expressers of folk creativity. Khanendes adopted the genuinely popular features of their performance primarily under the influence of the âşıks. The âşıks are the most ancient performers of the Azerbaijani people and have lived with their ideals and aspirations" (Bülbül, 1965: 149).

Continuing his thought, the artist further notes:

> "One of the most beloved forms of âşık poetry is the six-line and five-line structures; in these forms only the initial and middle lines rhyme, whereas the final line, which functions as a kind of refrain, either does not rhyme at all or contains internal rhyme. Moreover, this line completes all subsequent stanzas either verbatim or with slight modifications" (Bülbül, 1965: 142).

In âşık creativity, particularly in conveying an epic (destan) to the public, music—namely, the âşık airs created on the basis of the text—possesses a strong aesthetic and emotional impact alongside the text itself. For example, in the epic "Âşık Garip," the differences in syllabic meter and phonetic structure among the texts used give rise to certain distinctions in the performance of the musical airs in accordance with the text. In this respect, even within the framework of the same âşık air, the epic "Âşık Garip," when performed on the basis of different texts, may lead to the emergence of different melodies.

Based on the experience in âşık creativity of performing different musical airs on the basis of the same text, it can be stated that in many cases, depending on the content of the poem, âşık airs sharing the same characteristic features but relying on different melodies are performed. Thus, within the same epic, the possibility of rendering different âşık airs expands. Research in this field shows that, for the poetic reflection of the epic shaped on the basis of different texts, a sequential (serial) mode of performance of âşık musical airs that share the same character and essentially the same semantics is characteristic.

Research Problem

In the article, the airs in the epic "Âşık Garip," performed by the Borchali âşık Aslan Kosalı, were transcribed and included in the analysis. Of the 32 âşık airs that constitute the plot structure of the epic, fifteen are in the Rast maqam. In this context, alongside the national tuning system, the tonal system has also been reflected in the analysis. The scope of the research may be presented in the form of the following sub-problems:

- What is the theoretical analysis of the âşık air "Çukur Hava"?
- What is the theoretical analysis of the âşık air "Dastanı"?
- What is the theoretical analysis of the âşık air "Gülabi"?
- What is the theoretical analysis of the âşık air "Güllü Göyçe"?
- What is the theoretical analysis of the âşık air "Kerem Köçtü"?

Method

This study is designed as a qualitative musicological analysis structured directly in accordance with the stated research sub-problems. The analytical framework is problem-oriented and focuses on the theoretical examination of selected âşık airs within the Rast maqam.

Research Design

The research is based on descriptive and analytical methods. The primary data consist of the âşık airs performed in the epic "Âşık Garip" by the Borchali âşık Aslan Kosalı. These performances were transcribed into staff notation and analyzed comparatively.

Among the thirty-two âşık airs forming the narrative structure of the epic, fifteen airs in the Rast maqam were identified. From these, five airs were selected in accordance with the research sub-problems: "Çukur Hava", "Dastanı", "Gülabi", "Güllü Göyçe", "Kerem Köçtü". Each sub-problem corresponds to the theoretical analysis of one of these airs.

Analytical Procedure

In order to address the research sub-problems, a systematic theoretical analysis was conducted for each selected âşık air. The analytical framework was structured around the examination of modal, melodic, structural, and text–music relationships within the context of the Rast maqam.

First, each air was examined in terms of its maqamic organization, including its scale structure, tonal center, characteristic melodic progression (seyir), and cadential tendencies. Particular attention was given to the internal modal development and the ways in which the melodic movement reflects the structural principles of the Rast maqam.

Secondly, the pitch organization of the airs was evaluated within the framework of the national tuning system. Where relevant, tonal relationships were considered comparatively in order to clarify modal characteristics and to identify possible microtonal or intonational nuances.

In addition, melodic construction was analyzed with respect to contour, range, motivic development, and expressive elements. Structural features such as phrase organization, repetition patterns, and formal coherence were also examined in relation to the stanzaic design of the poetic text.

Finally, the interaction between text and music was considered, focusing on the relationship between poetic meter and melodic rhythm, as well as the influence of syllabic structure on melodic shaping and variation.

Each sub-problem was addressed through the application of this general analytical framework to the corresponding âşık air. The results were then evaluated comparatively in order to determine shared characteristics and distinctive features among the selected Rast-based airs.

Finding

The Âşık Air "Çukur Hava"

"Çukur Hava" is one of the classical âşık airs and is well known in classical âşık tradition under the name "Çukur Oba." In some sources, this air is also referred to as "İrevan Çukuru." As its name suggests, this air belongs to the Göyçe âşık milieu.

The modal–intonational structure of this air is based on the intonational characteristics of the "Şikeste-i Fars" section (şübe) of the Rast maqam. The compatibility of the modal structure with a major tonal character is primarily reflected in its melodic organization.

In terms of character, "Çukur Hava" is dynamic, and its melodic language resolves within a wide range (diapason) through the leapwise presentation of its cadential tones. If the pitch "A" (as perdesi) of the "Şikeste-i Fars" section is accepted as the principal tonal center, it can be observed that the pitches F, E♭, and B function as cadential (axis) tones.

The modal structure of "Çukur Hava" is illustrated in the musical example below.

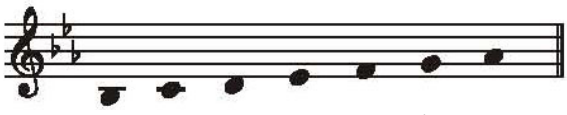

Figure 1. Modal–intonational structure of the Âşık Air "Çukur Hava"

The musical ideas in the first section of the air are constructed on the cadential tones F and E♭. Toward the end of the first section, before the declamatory (vocal-text) passage, the cadential tone is shifted downward to B. A noteworthy point here is that the pitch B assumes a transitional function, serving as a means of returning to the primary cadential tone F.

The cadential tones identified in the modal structure of the first section are of considerable functional importance. Since the construction of the melodic ideas relies on these pitches, the melodic structure encompasses a relatively wide range (diapason). While the range of the vocal part extends between B and F, that is, within the interval of a perfect fifth,

the instrumental part spans from A♭ in the small octave to B in the first octave. This demonstrates the breadth and structural richness of the musical ideas in the analyzed air.

In the second section of the work, the musical ideas are likewise realized primarily through the cadential tones F and B.

In the third section, since the principal cadential tone of the vocal part is F, the musical ideas are expanded to the boundary of an octave, covering the interval from B in the small octave to A♭ in the first octave.

The analysis of the modal–intonational structure of "Çukur Hava" indicates that the cadential tones of the maqam play a decisive role in the melodic construction of the air. Depending on the manner in which these cadential tones are employed, the range (diapason) of the air is presented both in broader and narrower forms. At the same time, the expressive characteristics of the maqam intonations determine the overall character of the melodic structure, directly embodying means of expression associated with a major tonal character.

The structure of the melodic language of "Çukur Hava" reveals the extensive use of both metric rhythms and expressive devices characteristic of tertian and quartal leaps.

The melodic language of the instrumental part is traditionally richer in color and expressive means. In order to enrich the musical language, tremolos, mordents, and short grace notes (ornamentations) are widely employed. As previously noted, metric organization also plays a significant role in shaping the melodic language. Although the melody is essentially structured in 6/8 meter, the use of different internal groupings within the measure is clearly observable. This is evident in the selected excerpts presented in the musical example (see mm. 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13).

The rhythmic components, based on the same meter but presented through different rhythmic patterns, provide a broad foundation for the vitality and rhythmic richness of the melodic language. In performance, the full technical capacity of the saz is utilized, enabling a richer harmonic texture.

Following the 20-measure instrumental introduction, the vocal part begins. Notably, after the highly sonorous and timbrally rich instrumental introduction, the vocal section enters without accompaniment. This creates a contrast between the rich timbral texture and a calm, monophonic sound. This moment of calm is later interrupted by a four-measure harmonic passage in the instrumental part, after which the principal theme of the vocal-instrumental section is heard. In shaping the melodic language of the vocal part, extensive use is made of the maqam's maye (principal cadential tone) B, as well as the cadential tones F, E♭, and C.

Unlike the instrumental part, the melodic language of the vocal section is not based on wide intervallic leaps but rather on the resolution of closely related cadential tones. The use of short grace notes (ornamentations) in the vocal line imitates the characteristic "boğaz" (throat) techniques of âşık performance. This is clearly observable in the musical example (see mm. 36–37).

The vocal part also incorporates an "Ad libitum" declamatory style. While the musical language of the first section is further intensified dynamically in the second section, there is a structural distinction: whereas the first section begins with a four-measure instrumental introduction, the second section begins directly with the presentation of the theme.

The analysis of the melodic language of "Çukur Hava" demonstrates the frequent use of both cantabile, lyrical, sustained tones and metrically precise passages shaped by distinctive throat techniques (see mm. 41–43).

The analyses indicate that diverse structural forms of the melodic language are employed in order to create varied and colorful timbral effects. The developmental structure of the melody is shaped, on the one hand, by the cantabile flow grounded in strict rhythmic measures, and on the other hand by a harmonically richer melodic language. Rhythmic components play a crucial role in shaping the formal elements of the melodic language. The characteristic features of âşık performance style, the use of throat techniques, and intervallic leaps contribute to a melodic structure marked by contrast and flexibility.

The metro-rhythmic characteristics of "Çukur Hava" are realized in a manner entirely specific to the âşık tradition. Although the work is generally based on a 6/8 meter, episodic appearances of 3/8 and 9/8 meters are also encountered. While the diversity of meter is not extensive, the richness of the rhythmic structure derives from a range of rhythmic

components inherent in national âşık creativity. The subdivision of metric units into smaller rhythmic groupings preserves the rich rhythmic tradition of âşık art.

A notable feature is that individual measures with differing rhythmic patterns create, in overall performance, the impression of belonging to a unified rhythmic structure. The musical example presents various rhythmic components grounded in 6/8 meter but articulated through different rhythmic patterns. These patterns, through shifts in internal metric accents, reveal rhythm types characteristic of âşık music (see mm. 1, 3, 5–6, 9, 11, 13, 17).

The rhythmic components of the instrumental accompaniment are based on the same foundational material yet articulated through varying rhythmic structures. In analyzing these structures, it is particularly instructive to examine comparatively both the rhythmic patterns executed on the melody string and those performed on the drone (dem) strings. This reveals both the refinement of performance technique and the manner in which diverse rhythmic patterns ultimately converge into the fundamental metric expression of the piece (see mm. 13–14, 30, 36, 42–43).

The vocal–instrumental section of "Çukur Hava" is structured upon both strict metric organization and "Ad libitum" (free) meter. In both cases, the metric structures of the vocal line are echoed in the instrumental performance. The alternation between strict meter and "Ad libitum" declamation in the vocal structure creates a simplified perception of rhythm for the listener. While the melody is grounded in a rhythmic framework, the recitative-like character of the "Ad libitum" passages acquires an expressive quality akin to spoken language.

The rhythmic analysis of "Çukur Hava" demonstrates that the foundation of its metric structure lies in rhythmic formulas specific to âşık creativity. Neither in the instrumental nor in the vocal rhythmic structures does the work depart from the national performance tradition. The richness of the rhythmic structure is achieved through varied internal metric constructions.

The musical form of "Çukur Hava" consists of three sections. Each section follows an A + A1 + A2 stanzaic (kuple) structure. At the beginning of each section, an extended instrumental introduction is presented.

The first section (A) traditionally consists of an instrumental introduction and a vocal part. After a 28-measure instrumental introduction, the vocal part begins, incorporating four subsections (a + b + c + d). The first subsection (a) is structured as a period consisting of two phrases: the first phrase spans four measures, while the second consists of five measures. The second subsection (b) proceeds with variable meters such as 9/8, 6/8, and 3/8. Following the seven-measure third subsection (c), the fourth subsection (d), characterized by "Ad libitum" declamation, takes place.

Thus, the formal structure of the first section may be represented as follows:

Formal Scheme of Section A
A = I / V (a + b + c + d)

Where:

I = Instrumental Introduction (28 mm.)
V = Vocal Section
a = Period (4 + 5 mm.)
b = Variable meter (9/8 – 6/8 – 3/8)
c = 7 mm.
d = Ad libitum declamation

The second section (A1) consists of a 16-measure instrumental introduction (mm. 74–89) followed by a vocal part comprising three subsections. The thematic material of these subsections shows similarity to the themes of the vocal subsections in the first section.

The first subsection is in 6/8 meter and is declamatory and recitative in character. Although the second and third subsections resemble the first, a certain degree of thematic variation is observed in them.

Formal Scheme of Section A1
A1 = I (16 mm.) / V (a + b + c)

The third section (A2) likewise begins with an instrumental introduction and proceeds, as in the second section, to a vocal part consisting of three subsections. These subsections are essentially constructed upon the thematic material of the vocal subsections of the first section, though presented in a modified form.

Formal Scheme of Section A2

A2 = I / V (a + b + c)

Complete Formal Structure of "Çukur Hava"

A + A1 + A2

Where:

A = I (28 mm.) / V (a + b + c + d)

A1 = I (16 mm.) / V (a + b + c)

A2 = I / V (a + b + c)

The theoretical analysis of the musical form of "Çukur Hava" demonstrates that its essential musical structure is, in fact, single-sectional in nature. In order to comprehensively reflect the melo-poetic characteristics of the epic and the semantic content of the text, the second and third sections were constructed as variant forms derived from the primary structural model established in the first section.

The Âşık Air "Dastanı"

"Dastanı" is one of the classical âşık airs. Although it is not performed very frequently within the âşık repertoire, it occupies a distinctive place due to its unique characteristics. In terms of form, "Dastanı" is broad and comprehensive in structure and is built upon the foundations of the Rast maqam.

Since the structure of the Rast maqam corresponds to a major tonal character, it shares similar timbral qualities. From a tonal perspective, "Dastanı" corresponds to D♭ major (Des-dur). The texture (factura) of the instrumental part spans an octave, while the structure of the vocal–instrumental section is confined within the interval of a perfect fifth.

The modal structure of "Dastanı" is illustrated in the musical example below.

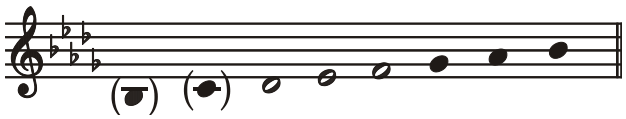

Figure 2. Modal structure of the Âşık Air "Dastanı"

In the given musical example, D♭ functions as the principal (maye) pitch, while E♭ and F serve as cadential tones. As can be understood from the texture (factura) of "Dastanı," the major-character modal structure makes its presence broadly felt throughout the entire work.

In the first measure of "Dastanı," the âşık employs an *Ad libitum* passage, successfully demonstrating the characteristics of the Mahur maqam in a manner specific to maqam performance practice. The principal theme, however, is developed in the tonal framework of D♭ major. Both the *Moderato* tempo and the presentation of the texture in sixteenth-note motion contribute to the somewhat optimistic and lively character of the piece.

The melodic themes of the first section are fundamentally based on D♭ major. In the second section, however, the opening of the theme makes use of the cadential tone F. Although the musical sentences, written in a question–answer form, initially rely on F, the completion of the musical idea returns to the principal tonality. While the second section incorporates *Ad libitum* declamatory performance style, it also draws upon the principal cadential tone of the maqam.

In the third section, the cadential tone E♭ is likewise employed in shaping and constructing the musical sentences. Thus, by resorting to different cadential tones across various sections, the performer enhances tonal effects and creates a dynamic timbral diversity, preventing the air from remaining in a monotonous sonic state.

The analysis of the modal structure of "Dastanı" demonstrates that the major character of the maqam is fully reflected in the themes and musical ideas. The development of the melodies is constructed in accordance with the tonal hierarchy of the cadential pitches.

It should also be noted that, in the shaping of the major characteristics of the maqam, the mobility of the rhythmic formulas plays an essential role. The frequent shifting of accentuation patterns that emphasize rhythmic formulas within the measures determines the metric structure of the air. In this regard, E. Nazaykinsky writes:
"The relationship between mode and meter shows that the qualitative differentiation of accented and unaccented tones within the measure may influence the formation and reinforcement of specific pitch relations that constitute the foundation of mode and harmony in music" (Nazaykinsky, 1972: 247).

While D♭ major holds particular importance in the first section, the use of the cadential tones F and E♭ in subsequent sections introduces dynamic diversity into the melodic timbre of the air.

Within the Borchali âşık milieu, this air is widely appreciated and frequently performed. The analysis of its melodic language reveals not only the richness of its musical idiom but also specific features of traditional form-building elements embedded in its musical ideas.

From a theoretical perspective, it is appropriate to examine the melodic language of "Dastanı" from two angles. The melodic language of the accompaniment (müşayiət) part, as in other airs, is richer and more multilayered. The musical language of the vocal part, on the other hand, requires examination in terms of performance technique, national timbral qualities, and the use of throat (boğaz) techniques.

The air begins with an extended 25-measure instrumental introduction. The first measure is realized in *Ad libitum* form. Since this introductory music serves to acquaint the listener with the modal-intonational features and scale of the air to be performed, it functions as a preparatory element preceding the main melodic theme. The principal theme begins not in the first, but in the second measure.

The melodic foundation of the main theme, structured in 9/8 and 6/8 meters, is derived from the rhythm–intonation formulas introduced in the first measure. Throughout the subsequent development of the accompaniment part, these formulas continuously appear as structural rhythm–intonation patterns shaping the overall melodic construction (see mm. 3, 7–12). They are likewise of great importance within the melodic structure of the main theme itself (see mm. 6–9).

The accompaniment melody spans a wide range and is constructed in a multilayered manner. The first musical sentence of the principal theme is concentrated within four measures, while the second musical idea unfolds in the following four measures based on similar elements. To enrich the melodic language, the performer employs not only varied metric structures but also tremolos, short grace notes, mordents, and other performance techniques.

Technically, the melodic language is agile and rapid. Within the metro-rhythmic structures of the accompaniment, sixteenth notes predominate. The melodic development is frequently presented in a descending motion. For instance, between mm. 14–19, the melody descends from B♭ of the first octave to D♭ of the same octave, spanning the interval of a seventh. The rhythmic formulas that constitute the melodic foundation of the air appear in 9/8, 6/8, 2/4, and 3/8 meters, demonstrating that metro-rhythmic formulas serve as the primary form-building elements.

The final musical idea of the first section concludes with a technically developed ten-measure melodic structure. The role of the drone (dem) strings of the saz in enriching the melody should also be emphasized. The second and third strings, continuously supporting the melody in chordal fashion, enhance the harmonic language. This performance style is also observed in subsequent sections.

The second section likewise contains technically developed expressive phrases and motifs. Of the 13-measure instrumental introduction, six measures resemble technically advanced, etude-like melodic sentences. The metro-rhythmic formulas described in the first section reappear at the conclusion of the accompaniment part. Harmonically, the melodic language of this section is characterized by colorful timbres. The episodic accompaniment passages between vocal entries are likewise rich in both harmonic and technical dimensions, indicating the dynamically elevated character of the air.

Although the third section is shorter in scope, its melodic language differs from that of the preceding sections. Whereas the first and second sections display technically developed melodic structures, here we encounter a simpler and

more restrained melody in 9/8 meter. The fundamental metro-rhythmic formulas observed earlier are absent from the accompaniment of this section, confirming its relatively autonomous character (see mm. 122–125).

The 18-measure melodic language of the third section may be divided into two parts. The first musical idea spans six measures (mm. 122–127), followed by a second six-measure idea (mm. 128–133) that completes the structural framework. Measures 134–138 develop material derived from the final subsection, adding a degree of movement. The first six measures are cantabile in character, while subsequent passages are more agile and animated. Unlike previous sections, 12/8 and 9/8 meters play a central role here.

The fourth section displays an even more animated melodic character. Its three-measure introductory accompaniment differs structurally from earlier sections. Overall, the melodic texture (factura) and structural design of the third and fourth sections contrast with those of the first and second. Although the accompaniment passages between vocal–instrumental parts in the fourth section differ technically and harmonically from earlier sections, they remain rooted in traditional âşık creativity. The fourth section concludes together with the vocal performance.

An examination of the vocal–instrumental texture reveals a structurally consistent framework across all sections. In addition to metric structures shaping the melodic language, *Ad libitum* passages and ornamentations such as mordents, tremolos, and grace notes are widely employed. A comparative analysis of the notated throat techniques confirms that this performance style is characteristic of the Borchali âşık tradition.

The theoretical analysis of both the accompaniment and vocal–instrumental melodic language demonstrates that, although traditional âşık performance practice is widely employed, the technically agile and dynamically elevated intonations—arising from the character and content of the air—define its distinctive identity.

The metro-rhythmic analysis reveals the extensive use of traditional 6/8, 2/4, 3/8, 12/8 meters, as well as *Ad libitum*. Although the work is generally grounded in 6/8 meter, the manifestation of rhythmic formulas in diverse configurations contributes to the enrichment of the melodic language.

"Dastanı," compared with previous airs, is broader in formal scope. The work consists of four sections—A + B + C + D—comprising vocal and instrumental parts.

The first section (A) begins with an extensive instrumental introduction. After a free, descending scale-like passage, a 23-measure introduction in 9/8, 6/8, 2/4, and 3/8 follows. Performed in *Moderato* tempo, the small rhythmic configurations—grace notes, mordents, trills—and the quartal–quintal intervals in the accompaniment provide vitality.

Following the introduction, the vocal part begins, presenting the musical idea in two sentences. The nine-measure first sentence ("Başına döndüğüm") is melodically dense, written within a tertian intervallic framework. The accompaniment presents simplified rhythmic echoes of the introduction's intonations. The second sentence (a1) repeats the first with slight rhythmic variation. The first section concludes with a ten-measure instrumental passage.

The overall formal structure of the first section may be represented as follows:

Formal Scheme of Section A
A = I / V (a + a1)

The second section (B) begins with a 10-measure instrumental introduction. Although rhythmically and melodically similar to the introduction of the first section, it is followed by a vocal part consisting of five subsections. These subsections are connected through instrumental interludes.

The first subsection (a), developed over twelve measures, resembles the melody of the first section. The second subsection (a1), spanning ten measures, repeats the first with subtle metro-rhythmic modifications. The third subsection (b), consisting of nine measures, is performed in an *Ad libitum* style. The fourth subsection (c), characterized by melodic and rhythmic variation, comprises eleven measures. The fifth and final subsection (a), which reiterates the first subsection, is presented within ten measures.

Formal Scheme of Section B
B = I (10 mm.) / V (a + a1 + b + c + a)

The third section (C), consisting of 18 measures, begins with an introduction that differs entirely in thematic and melodic structure from those of the preceding sections. The vocal part comprises two sentences: the first sentence (a)

spans ten measures, while the second sentence (a1) repeats the first over eight measures. The section concludes with a five-measure instrumental passage.

Formal Scheme of Section C
C = I / V (a + a1) + I (5 mm.)

The fourth section (D) begins in D♭ major (Des-dur) with a brief three-measure introduction. The vocal part consists of three subsections. The middle subsection is presented in *Ad libitum* declamatory style, while the other subsections make extensive use of melismas (ornamentations).

Formal Scheme of Section D
D = I (3 mm.) / V (a + b + c)
Complete Formal Structure of "Dastanı"
A + B + C + D

Where:

A = I / V (a + a1)
B = I / V (a + a1 + b + c + a)
C = I / V (a + a1) + I
D = I / V (a + b + c)

The theoretical analysis of the musical form of "Dastanı" demonstrates that, in comparison with the other airs performed within the epic, this air possesses a broader and more complex formal structure. Although it consists of four independent sections, the fundamental melodic nucleus that unifies all sections within a single modal-intonational framework is the recurring "a + a1" musical episode.

The expansive presentation of the air derives directly from the poetic semantics of the text. In other words, the formal breadth of the composition reflects the semantic depth and narrative development inherent in the epic context.

The Âşık Air "Gülabi"

The âşık air "Gülabi" is composed on the modal–intonational foundations of the "Şikeste-i Fars" section (şübe) of the Rast maqam. In terms of its melodic structure, "Gülabi" differs from other âşık airs, and its melodic language incorporates elements derived from folk song tradition.

The opening measures of the air are presented entirely on the basis of metro-rhythmic formulas characteristic of âşık creativity, clearly indicating that the work begins within the traditional âşık idiom. However, after the seventh measure, a melodic language specific to folk song performance is introduced into the execution. From a modal–tonal perspective, this integration achieves a refined and expressive embodiment.

The construction of the melody in this manner demonstrates that, upon a shared modal foundation, it is possible to perform melodic ideas reflecting different performance styles. This situation reveals the extensive expressive possibilities inherent in Azerbaijani national maqam–intonational systems.

It should be emphasized that in national maqams, the manner in which intonations are constructed upon cadential and dominant tones allows, when their potential is effectively utilized, the expression of different performance styles, ideas, and images within the same modal structure. The example presented in this analyzed air shows that the coexistence of distinct performance forms within the same melodic language is closely related to the richness of intonational variety in the "Şikeste-i Fars" section.

The scale and modal structure of "Şikeste-i Fars" are illustrated in the musical example below.

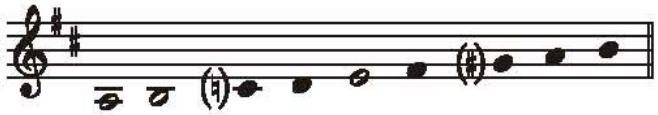

Figure 3. Scale and modal structure of the "Şikeste-i Fars" section of the rast maqam

Although the modal foundation of "Şikeste-i Fars" does not appear fundamentally different from previous constructions, it differs in terms of intervallic relationships and tonal characteristics. In the modal structure described above, the arrangement of intervals in a 1 + 1 + ½ tetrachordal pattern constitutes the structural basis of the Rast maqam.

In the vocal and instrumental parts of "Gülabi," the presentation of melodic structures upon various scale degrees of the maqam results in the reciprocal use of both Rast and Şikeste-i Fars modal-intonational features within the same modal framework. For instance, the melodic ideas extending to approximately the 90th measure in the first section rely on Rast intonations; however, in the subsequent measures, the shift of the cadential tone to E causes the intonations of the Şikeste-i Fars section to predominate.

Moreover, the use of the pitch G♯ in the first octave—both at the beginning of the first section and within the instrumental passages of the second section—evokes the intonations of the Segah maqam. This creates the impression of an internal modal dialogue between Rast and Segah.

In the second section of the air, the cadential (istinad) tones E and B are widely employed in shaping melodic ideas, and the performer maintains this stylistic approach until the conclusion of the piece. Although "Gülabi" is structurally based on the Şikeste-i Fars section, the comparative and substitutive use of Rast and Segah intonations produces both modal interaction and diverse tonal effects.

The lyrical timbres of the melody and the musical imagery shaped by Segah and Şikeste-i Fars intonations endow the melodic language with particular vitality and lyricism. The melodic structure of the air is derived from the principal theme of the well-known folk song "Yakan Düğme." The fluency and expansiveness of the melodic language foreground musical images that seem to reflect the captivating beauty of the people and their geography. The entire texture of the air is architectonically constructed upon the structural elements of this folk song's main theme.

From the first measure onward, musical tones are presented in conjunction with rhythmic formulas, and the cadences concluding on B in the first measure and on A in the second are noteworthy: in the first case evoking the characteristic timbre of Segah, and in the second recalling Mahur.

Following the six-measure instrumental introduction, the main theme is presented. Composed of two six-measure musical ideas, the principal theme leans more toward a maqam (muğam) stylistic orientation than toward âşık creativity per se (see mm. 7–14). Notably, in order to establish a melodic language characteristic of âşık tradition, transitional musical images derived from maqam-oriented folk style are incorporated. These images are constructed on the basis of elements from the main theme (see mm. 19–21).

Although 3/8 and 2/4 meters are employed in shaping the melodic language, the sequential, stepwise descending motion in the third measure—descending tone by tone—demonstrates the widespread use of rhythmic formulas characteristic of âşık creativity. These rhythmic elements contribute significantly to the dynamic and dance-like qualities of the air.

The melodic language of the vocal–instrumental part is structurally simple. The vocal melodic line may be analytically divided into two parts, as it extensively employs Segah and Mahur intonations. Due to the frequent shifting of cadential tones, musical ideas conclude alternately on A and B in the small octave. The imitation of the vocal line on the solo string of the instrumental accompaniment allows the melody to resonate in dual form—both vocally and instrumentally—throughout the texture.

Although the first section's vocal–instrumental part is not harmonically or technically dense, the freshness and originality of its melodic language, along with its memorable imagery, appeal strongly to the listener. Characteristic throat techniques (zengüle-type embellishments) of âşık performance are also employed. The three-measure coda-like episode at the end of the first section uses an element of the main theme, which also forms the structural basis of the instrumental accompaniment in the second and third sections.

The second section begins with a 23-measure instrumental introduction. While its melodic structure is built upon elements of the principal theme, the use of sequential descent (tone-by-tone motion) reinforces a melodic language characteristic of âşık creativity (see m. 134). The vocal–instrumental part begins similarly to the first section, and both

accompaniment and vocal textures maintain structural consistency. The section concludes with a 16-measure instrumental passage distinguished by fuller and more characteristic harmonic resonance.

The third section's instrumental part is likewise constructed from elements of the principal theme. In addition to technical execution, rhythmic formulas play a decisive role in shaping the melodic structure. The vocal part of the third section resembles the stylistic and modal-intonational characteristics of the preceding sections, indicating a unified stylistic and structural identity.

The theoretical analysis of the melodic language of "Gülabi" demonstrates that it is fundamentally grounded in the melodic characteristics of both folk music and âşık creativity. Rhythmic formulas and the sequential method function as principal form-generating elements.

The first section of "Gülabi" employs 3/8 and 2/4 meters, which play a driving role throughout the entire composition. Rhythmic formulas serve as essential structural components of the melodic language. Given that both folk and âşık melodic characteristics underpin the composition, the centrality of the 3/8 meter to both traditions becomes evident.

The introductory rhythmic formulas form the nucleus of the entire melodic structure (see mm. 1, 3, 9–10, 13–15, 18). Variations in internal rhythmic groupings enrich the melodic expression. Differences between the rhythmic patterns of the melody string and accompanying strings further demonstrate characteristics specific to âşık performance tradition (see mm. 90–93, 140–144).

Although a limited variety of meters is used, the rhythmic formulas introduced at the outset form the melodic core of "Gülabi." Alterations within internal metric groupings result in expressive variation and enrich the melodic language.

Formally, "Gülabi" is structured on a large scale and consists of three sections (A + B + C), each possessing distinct characteristics. The first section (A), in B minor (h moll), begins with a 35-measure instrumental introduction. While primarily grounded in 3/8 meter, occasional use of 2/4 is also observed. Alterations (raised VI, lowered XI degrees) appear during development. Performed in Moderato–Allegro tempo, the introduction combines melismatic ornamentation (trills, mordents) with syncopated measures, contributing both richness and structural gravity.

The vocal part of the first section consists of three subsections (a + a1 + a2). The first subsection (a) resembles the introduction's thematic material and widely employs eighth and sixteenth notes as form-generating elements. The nine-measure first subsection is followed by the eleven-measure second subsection (a1) and the ten-measure third subsection (a2).

Formal Scheme of Section A
A = I / V (a + a1 + a2)

The second section (B), in accordance with tradition, consists of an instrumental introduction and a vocal part. The 23-measure instrumental introduction (mm. 130–152) is constructed upon the introductory material of the first section. The thematic similarities between the introductions aim to unify the different sections within a single, coherent compositional framework.

The three subsections of the vocal part in the second section likewise function almost as a reiteration of the vocal structure of the first section.

Formal Scheme of Section B
B = I (23 mm.) / V (a + a1 + a2)

The third section (C) begins with a 12-measure instrumental introduction (mm. 154–165). Unlike the previous introductions, this one concludes with a vocal resonance on the words "Ah yar ey."

The vocal part of the third section, as in the preceding sections, consists of three subsections, and no essential structural differences are observed among them. Melodic intonation, rhythmic organization, and textural design are preserved consistently. The air effectively concludes with the vocal part.

Formal Scheme of Section C
C = I (12 mm.) / V (a + a1 + a2)

Complete Formal Structure of "Gülabi"

A + B + C

Where:

A = I / V (a + a1 + a2)

B = I (23 mm.) / V (a + a1 + a2)

C = I (12 mm.) / V (a + a1 + a2)

The analysis of the musical form of "Gülabi" demonstrates that, although the work is presented in a three-sectional structure, it essentially exhibits a single-sectional character within the framework of classical performance practice.

In order to convey the semantic depth of the epic and the poetic nuances of the text to the listener, the musical form is presented expansively during performance. The recurrence of the introductions, vocal parts, and especially the repeated "a + a1 + a2" musical episodes in all three sections further confirms this interpretation.

The Âşık Air "Güllü Göyçe"

The air referred to as "Güllü Göyçe" in the epic *Âşık Garip* corresponds to the classical âşık air known as "Göyçe Gülü." This air is so popular among âşık enthusiasts that performers across all âşık milieus of Azerbaijan include it in their repertoires and render it with remarkable mastery.

The air is constructed upon the modal–intonational structure of the Rast maqam. The modal structure presented below encompasses the scalar organization of both the instrumental and vocal parts.

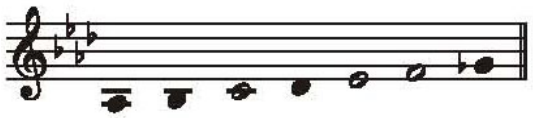

Figure 4. Modal–intonational structure of the Âşık Air "Güllü Göyçe" within the rast maqam

The fact that the vocal part spans the interval of a diminished fifth (C–G♭) demonstrates that the analyzed air is rooted in an ancient tradition. Within the structure of the Rast maqam, the pitches E♭, F, and C function as principal tones. Here, C represents the maye (tonal center) of the Rast maqam, while E♭ and F serve as its cadential (istinad) tones. The entire melodic construction of the air—individual musical ideas and phrases alike—is shaped around these three pitches.

Although "Güllü Göyçe" characterizes the intonational features of the Rast maqam, the major quality of the maqam provides broad possibilities for a vivid and majestic musical expression. The use of an ostinato metro-rhythmic structure in the melodic design clearly highlights the characteristic features of the maqam.

The theoretical analysis of the modal–intonational structure of "Güllü Göyçe" indicates that the modal field remains unchanged throughout the entire texture. Since the Rast maqam appears frequently in the modal structures of many âşık airs, the intonations of this air converge and integrate with the melodic language of other Rast-based airs. Indeed, the more ancient character of the analyzed air suggests that other âşık airs constructed on Rast may have drawn from its intonations, performance style, and metro-rhythmic structure.

The melodic language of "Güllü Göyçe" is realized in accordance with the national âşık tradition. In the instrumental introduction, six measures of rhythmic structures are performed before the presentation of the melodic idea. This affirms that the melodic foundation of the air is to be articulated upon these metric structures. It should be noted that accents do not fall on every measure, but rather effectively on every second measure, creating a distinctive stress pattern. Such accentual organization contributes to the lyrical and psychological character of the melody.

The melodic language of the instrumental part is presented within a relatively narrow range. In both the accompaniment and vocal–instrumental parts, the melodic foundation primarily relies on the pitch E♭ and, in certain instances, F. Rhythmic components play a decisive role as form-generating elements, a fact observable both at the beginning of the vocal part and within the accompaniment style (see mm. 36–38).

A notable feature is the prominence of rhythmic formulas in the accompaniment preceding and, at times, following the vocal performance. Short grace notes and mordents are widely employed in the melodic structure of "Güllü Göyçe."

The frequent inclusion of short grace notes is particularly characteristic of the Borchali âşık performance tradition (see mm. 55–56, 77–78, 140).

In the middle section of the first part, *Ad libitum* passages are extensively utilized. Although the measure preceding the *Ad libitum* section is based on 9/8 meter, subsequent development incorporates free metric organization. The performer inserts instrumental passages between the *Ad libitum* section and the following strictly metered vocal parts. Within these accompaniment passages, metric structures clearly form the basis of the melodic foundation (see mm. 120–129).

The four-measure coda-like musical idea at the end of the first section shares the same character as the five-measure final closing passage of the work. The conclusion of the air is achieved through the articulation of rhythmic formulas, further confirming the central role of rhythmic structures in shaping the melodic foundation.

The melodic language of the second section differs from that of the first; however, rhythmic elements continue to play a crucial role in shaping its development. Unlike the first section, the melodic development here may be traced along ascending and descending contours. The sorrowful and lyrical character of the melodic language is clearly observable (see mm. 177–189).

The vocal range of the second section expands to the interval of a minor sixth (C–A♭), resulting in a brighter and more resonant timbre (see mm. 128–142).

The analysis of the melodic structure demonstrates that rhythmic formulas are of fundamental importance in its formation. Although the melodic languages of the two sections differ, rhythmic elements occupy a central position in both. The frequent use of short grace notes—characteristic of the Borchali âşık milieu—reveals that "Güllü Göyçe," originally belonging to the Western Azerbaijan âşık tradition, is here embodied within another âşık performance school style.

"Güllü Göyçe" occupies a distinctive position within the âşık repertoire and incorporates the specific metro-rhythmic and melodic traditions of the Western Azerbaijan âşık school.

Formal Scheme of Section A
A = a + b + c + a1 + a2

The second section begins with an instrumental introduction. This introduction resembles the accompaniment (müşayiət) part of the first section. The vocal part of the second section consists of two subsections. In both, various melismatic devices (triplets, mordents, grace notes) and variable meters are widely employed, contributing to a lively and animated melodic character.

Formal Scheme of Section B
B = I / V (a + b)
Complete Formal Structure of "Güllü Göyçe"
G + A + B

Where:

G = Introductory Section (a + b)
A = a + b + c + a1 + a2
B = I / V (a + b)

The theoretical analysis of the musical form of "Güllü Göyçe" reveals that the work is essentially structured in a simple two-sectional form. However, in performance practice, the introductory section functions almost as an independent unit, thereby expanding the perceived formal scope of the piece.

The extensive presentation of the introduction is characteristic of epic performance tradition. Prior to the delivery of the poetic text grounded in the narrative structure of the epic, the introduction serves to enliven the gathering and direct the audience's attention toward the forthcoming performance. This reflects the performance style of the epic narrator—the âşık.

Within the expansive realization of the first section, the episodes "c + a1 + a2" are added to the structure, further broadening its formal dimension.

The Âşık Air "Kerem Köçtü"

The âşık air "Kerem Köçtü" is constructed on the modal–intonational foundations of the "Şikeste-i Fars" section of the Rast maqam. Although the overall modal structure of the air is based on the Rast maqam, its reliance on the "Şikeste-i Fars" section arises from a compositional necessity inherent in the broader structure of the epic.

The "Şikeste-i Fars" (also referred to as "Hoceste") section functions as one of the principal driving sections in many maqams—particularly in Rast. However, in essence, it is grounded in the intonational characteristics of the Segah maqam.

In this context, while it can be affirmed that "Kerem Köçtü" is constructed upon the Şikeste-i Fars section, it must also be acknowledged that, at several structural points, the air is shaped on the basis of Rast modal–intonational principles.

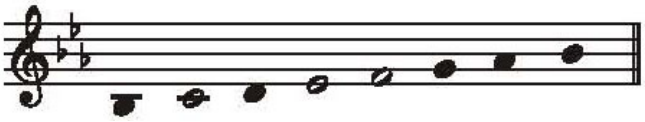

Figure 5. Modal structure of the vocal part in the Âşık Air "Kerem Köçtü" (Şikeste-i Fars Section)

The melodic foundation of "Kerem Köçtü" is essentially constructed upon the cadential tone E♭ of the Şikeste-i Fars section. In the melodic structure of the vocal part in the first section, the intensive use of the maqam tones E♭ and F further reinforces the functional significance of the pitch E♭—referred to as the "upper" (üstü) degree of Şikeste-i Fars (Müberrika – N.R.).

The modal structure of the vocal part is illustrated in the musical example below.

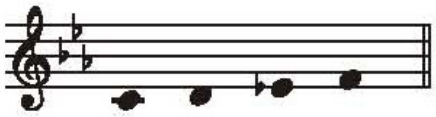

Figure 6. Modal structure of the vocal–instrumental texture in the Âşık Air "Kerem Köçtü"

Melodic phrases constructed within the interval of a perfect fourth (quartal span) are characteristic of âşık creativity. In the second section of the air, other cadential (istinad) tones—namely C and F—are also widely employed in shaping the melodic idea.

The analyses demonstrate that, in both the vocal and instrumental parts, the three principal cadential tones (C, E♭, and F) are used with particular intensity. The modal structure of the vocal–instrumental section of "Kerem Köçtü" is presented in the musical example below.

Unlike the vocal part, the instrumental part possesses a wider range (diapason). Consequently, it is natural that the modal structure in the instrumental texture encompasses a broader pitch spectrum.

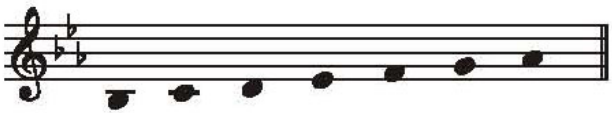

Figure 7. Modal–intonational and metro-rhythmic structure of the Âşık Air "Kerem Köçtü"

The fact that "Kerem Köçtü" is constructed upon the Şikeste-i Fars section has directly influenced the emotional framework of its melodic structure. The melody, presented in an Allegretto tempo with a march-like and majestic character, reflects the expressive, burning intonations characteristic of the Şikeste-i Fars section. This expressive quality derives from the modal–intonational structure of the air.

The theoretical analysis of "Kerem Köçtü" demonstrates that the characteristic features of its melodic idea fully reflect the modal–intonational system to which the work belongs. While the air is grounded in Şikeste-i Fars—thus incorporating Segah intonations—it simultaneously retains specific Rast intonational features. This coexistence expresses the emotional richness inherent in Azerbaijani modal–intonational traditions.

The melodic language of "Kerem Köçtü" adheres to the traditional âşık style. In addition to modal–intonational features, metric structures play a decisive role in shaping the melodic language. In the formation of the melodic structure,

4/4 and 2/4 meters are employed, while free metric organization and Ad libitum practice assume a central function in the vocal–instrumental texture.

Unlike previously analyzed airs—where varied metric patterns contribute to architectonic diversity—here the metric framework remains relatively stable and rarely changes.

The rhythmic patterns of the accompaniment, primarily grounded in 4/4 meter, provide a broad foundation for constructing the melody in a lyrical, scale-like (gammavari) manner. The musical example demonstrates that the melody exhibits a lyrical, "meno mosso, cantabile" character (see mm. 1–4).

Toward the beginning of the vocal–instrumental section, the performer incorporates triplets to heighten the dynamic tension of the melodic language. The musical example also reveals the use of national ornaments (mordents) and harmonic enrichment (see mm. 16–19).

The vocal part of the first section begins in Ad libitum style. Following a one-measure vocal entrance, the performer inserts episodic accompaniment passages between vocal phrases, thereby enriching the harmonic resonance of the melodic language. Although it is traditionally customary for the accompaniment to remain relatively simple during vocal execution, here the performer utilizes all strings of the saz, foregrounding a richly colored sonority. In this performance style, harmonic enrichment becomes a primary expressive goal (see m. 23).

As shown in the example, the melody is further enriched by the resonant timbre of the accompaniment. The harmonic structure, derived from combinations of fourths and fifths in the accompaniment strings, imparts a distinctive national color and consonant richness to the melodic line.

In the accompaniment, the melodic language is constructed through scale-like sequential motion, while the vocal part relies structurally upon the cadential tone E♭. The vocal melodic construction avoids wide leaps; instead, it frequently employs the neighboring tone F in close proximity to E♭. In effect, the vocal melodic language of "Kerem Köçtü" is formed through various groupings of the pitches E♭ and F.

The second section begins with a nine-measure instrumental introduction. The instrumental melodic language is rich, colorful, and harmonically full. It utilizes a broad range, including the characteristic perfect fifth (B–F) typical of traditional âşık creativity.

In the vocal–instrumental section, the melodic structure initially centers on E♭ and later on C and F as cadential tones. The shifting of cadential and tonal centers in the second section reveals tonal diversity within the melodic language. Notably, the rarely encountered 3/2 meter is also employed. A declamatory style appears as well (see m. 68).

The second section is formally expansive. The performer frequently inserts instrumental passages between vocal phrases, creating a dialogic interaction between the vocal and solo instrumental parts.

Toward the conclusion of the work, the melodic language shifts from its earlier lyrical quality to a more dynamic, coda-like character—agile, majestic, and grand in sonority (see mm. 122–130). The development principle of the melody, as shown in the example, substantiates this interpretation.

The metro-rhythmic analysis indicates that traditional âşık rhythmic patterns are not extensively employed. Instead, two dominant rhythmic structures prevail: the free Ad libitum meter of the vocal part and the 4/4 metric organization of the accompaniment. The persistent use of 4/4 allows the melodic development to assume a form reminiscent of classical musical traditions.

Although isolated measures of 2/4, 5/4, and 3/2 appear, these remain episodic. The structural stability of 4/4 may therefore be regarded as the principal form-generating element of the melodic design. The strong beats fall on the first and third pulses, allowing the lower strings of the saz to reinforce harmonic weight and stability. This contributes to the sense of grandeur and dynamism in the harmonic resonance of the air.

The vocal–instrumental texture is largely based on Ad libitum principles. While the main poetic lines are delivered freely, certain recurring textual phrases are set within strict metric patterns to preserve syllabic alignment (see mm. 59, 72–74).

Metro-rhythmic analysis confirms that two principal rhythmic foundations govern the air: the free declamatory vocal style and the stable 4/4 accompaniment. This duality enables the air to assume a quasi-classical stylistic character.

"Kerem Köçtü" is structured in a two-sectional (A + B) form. The first section (A) begins with a 22-measure instrumental introduction in 4/4 and 2/4 meters, characterized by a simple texture and scale-like melodic motion. The use of melismas and triplets enhances its dynamism. The vocal part of the first section consists of three subsections (a + a1 + a2), connected by instrumental interludes that bind the thematic material.

The phrases are declamatory and recitative in character. The first phrase (a) spans three measures and encompasses two principal tones, with the accompaniment repeated. A three-measure instrumental passage connects it to the second phrase (a1), which repeats the first. The third phrase (a2) presents a slightly modified and expanded reiteration of the preceding material.

Accordingly, the formal structure of the first section may be represented as:

A = I (22 mm.) / V (a + a1 + a2)

The second section (B) begins with a nine-measure instrumental introduction (mm. 49–57). The melodic material of the introduction consists of scale-like (gammavari) progressions and repetitions. The vocal part, as in the first section, is composed of three phrases; each phrase exhibits a declamatory character derived from the structure of the poetic text.

Formal Scheme of Section B
B = I (9 mm.) / V (a + a1 + a2)

The air concludes with a coda formed by a slightly modified repetition of the first section. Accordingly, the overall musical form of the âşık air "Kerem Köçtü" may be represented as follows:
Complete Formal Structure of "Kerem Köçtü"

A + B

Where:

A = I / V (a + a1 + a2)
B = I / V (a + a1 + a2)

The analysis of the musical form of "Kerem Köçtü" demonstrates that the work is structured in two sections. As revealed by its structural organization, the air exhibits a multilayered configuration of themes and musical episodes.

The element that unifies all musical episodes into a single coherent structure—both thematically and in terms of maqam and intonational characteristics—is the "a" musical episode and its variants, "a1" and "a2." These function as the principal form-generating nucleus of the composition.

Conclusion

The present study has demonstrated that the classical âşık airs performed within the epic *Âşık Garip* exhibit a structurally flexible yet internally coherent modal–intonational organization. Although each air is grounded in a specific maqam framework—predominantly Rast and its Şikeste-i Fars section—the analyses reveal that modal identity is not static but dynamically articulated through shifting cadential tones, intonational emphasis, and performance-based variation.

In the examined airs, particular cadential nuclei (such as E♭, F, and C in *Kerem Köçtü*; the Rast tonal center in *Güllü Göyçe*; and the Şikeste-i Fars-based structures in *Gülabi*) function as form-generating centers. These pitch nuclei unify the melodic discourse despite sectional expansion and internal variation. The recurring use of core musical episodes—especially the "a" episode and its variants (a1, a2)—serves as the principal structural mechanism binding the form into an integrated whole.

The metro-rhythmic analyses further indicate that, unlike many âşık airs traditionally based on 6/8 or asymmetrical rhythmic patterns, certain airs such as *Kerem Köçtü* rely predominantly on stable 4/4 metric organization in the accompaniment, contrasted with the Ad libitum declamatory freedom of the vocal line. This duality between metric stability and vocal flexibility constitutes a fundamental expressive principle of the genre and significantly shapes the architectonic structure of the form.

Moreover, the relationship between vocal and instrumental parts frequently assumes a dialogic character. Instrumental interludes not only connect thematic units but also expand the harmonic and timbral field through the

use of fourth- and fifth-based sonorities characteristic of saz performance practice. This contributes to the perception of formal breadth and expressive grandeur.

The analyses also confirm that the multi-sectional appearance of these airs does not necessarily imply structural fragmentation. On the contrary, even when presented in two or three large sections, the works retain an underlying single-form character grounded in recurring melodic kernels and modal consistency. The expansion of form emerges primarily from the semantic and narrative demands of the epic text, rather than from purely musical necessity.

Consequently, the findings demonstrate that âşık music, as a syncretic art form combining poetry, music, and performance practice, possesses an inherently variable formal structure. Its form is content-dependent, shaped by the poetic semantics and narrative development of the epic. The observed sectional expansions, metric contrasts, and intonational shifts are not deviations from tradition but intrinsic features of a living oral performance system in which variation and structural elasticity constitute essential creative principles.

Limitations

The study is limited to the selected five âşık airs performed by Aslan Kosalı within the epic "Âşık Garip." The findings therefore reflect the stylistic and modal characteristics of these specific examples and do not claim to represent the entirety of Rast-based âşık tradition.

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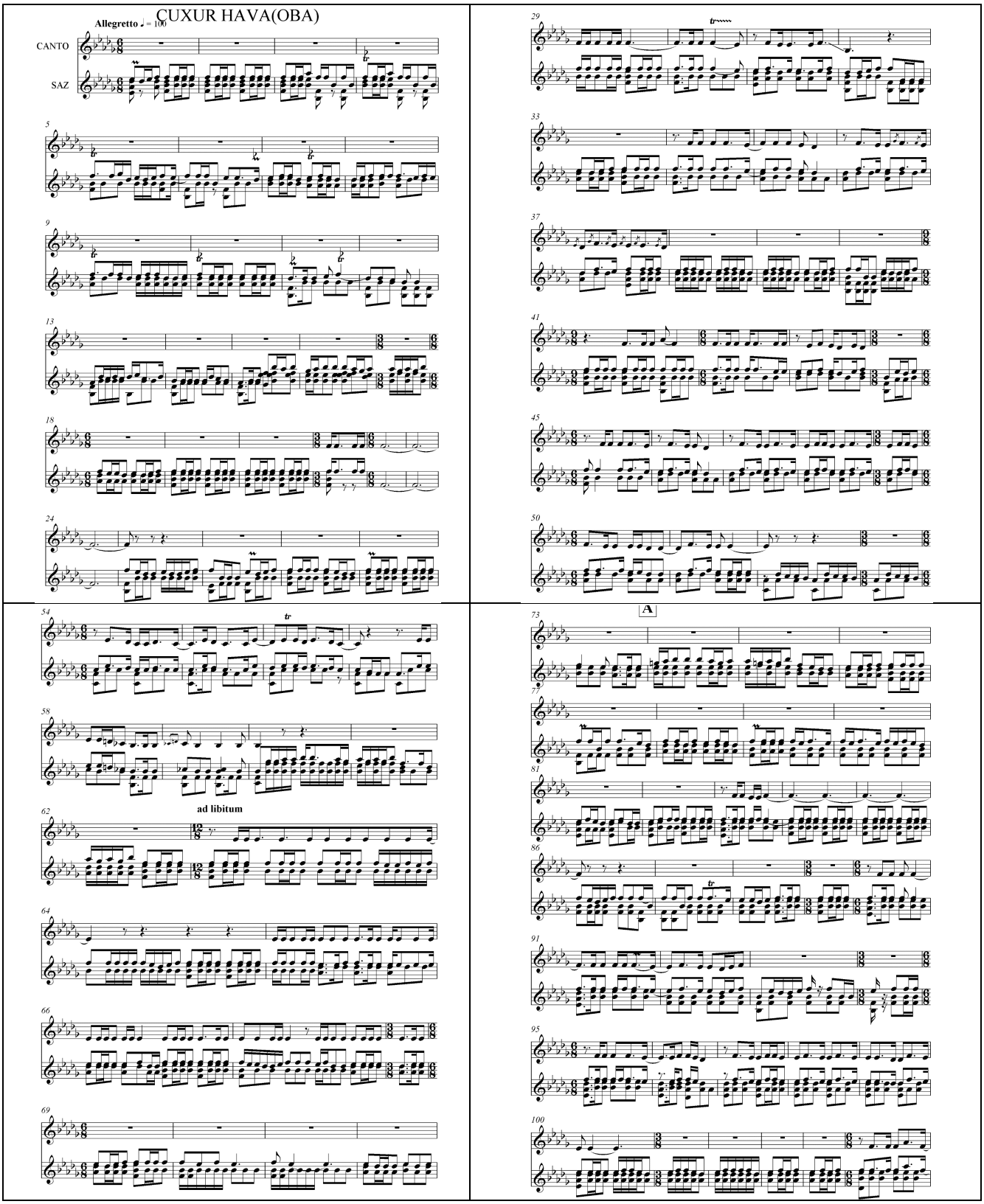
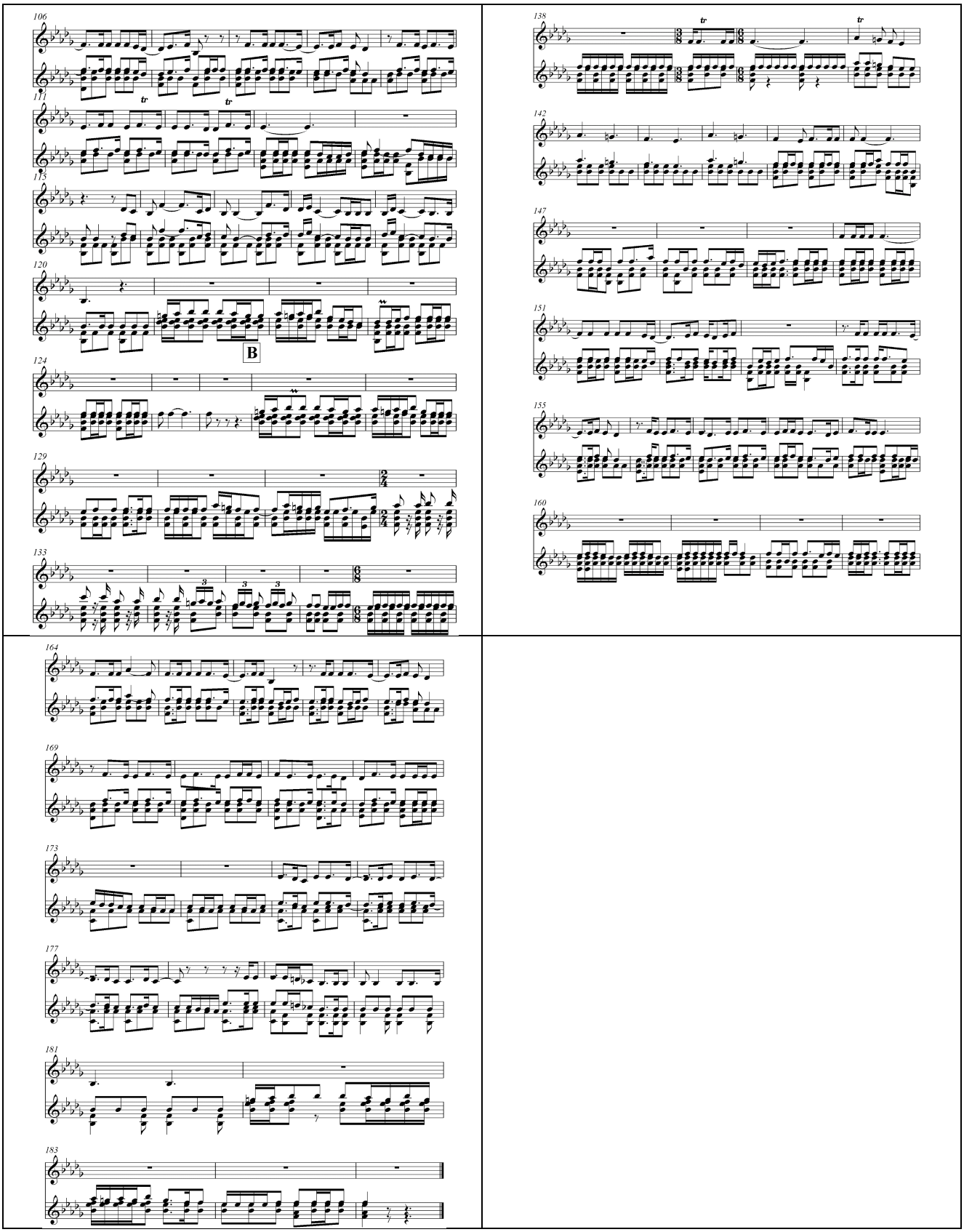
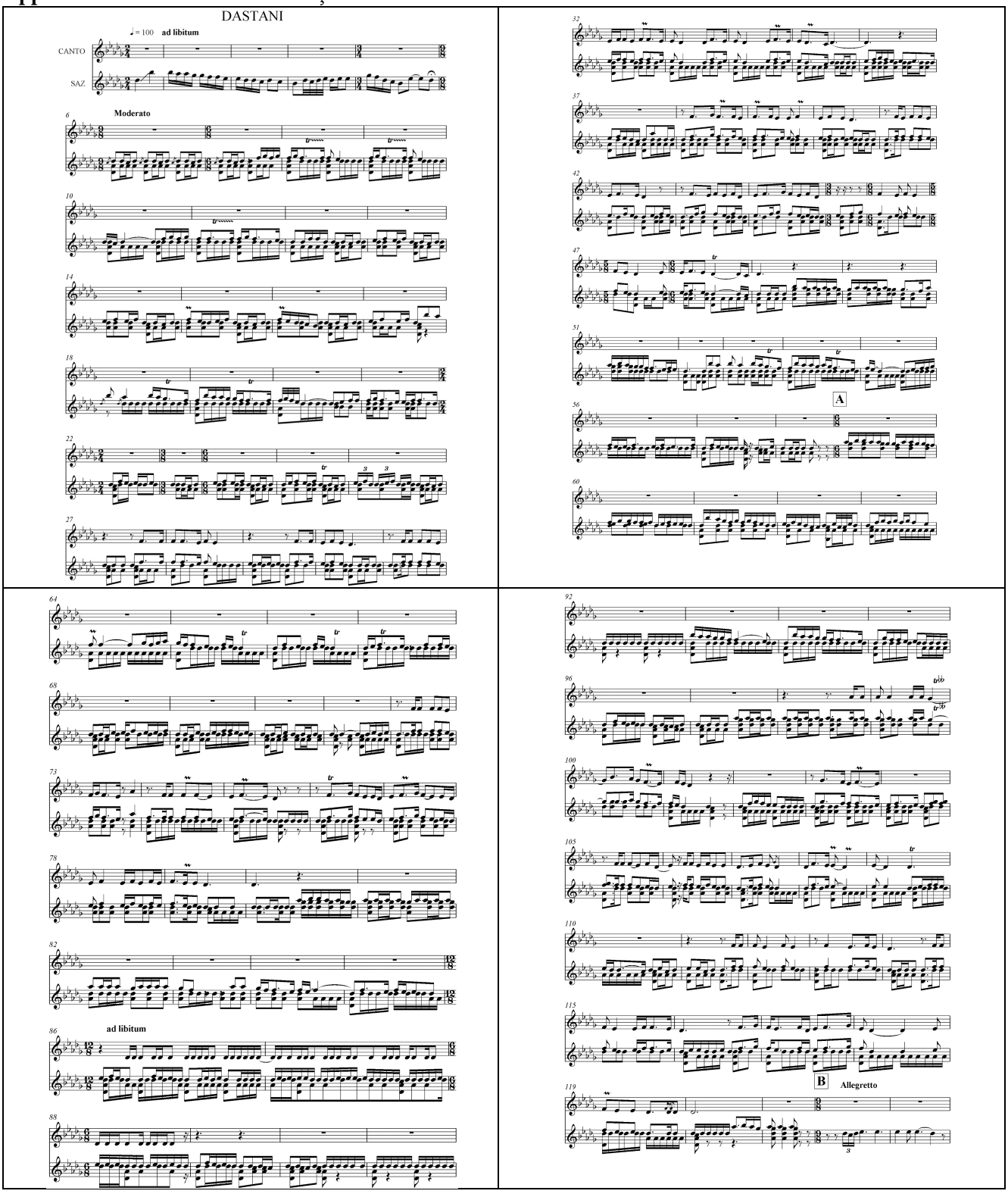
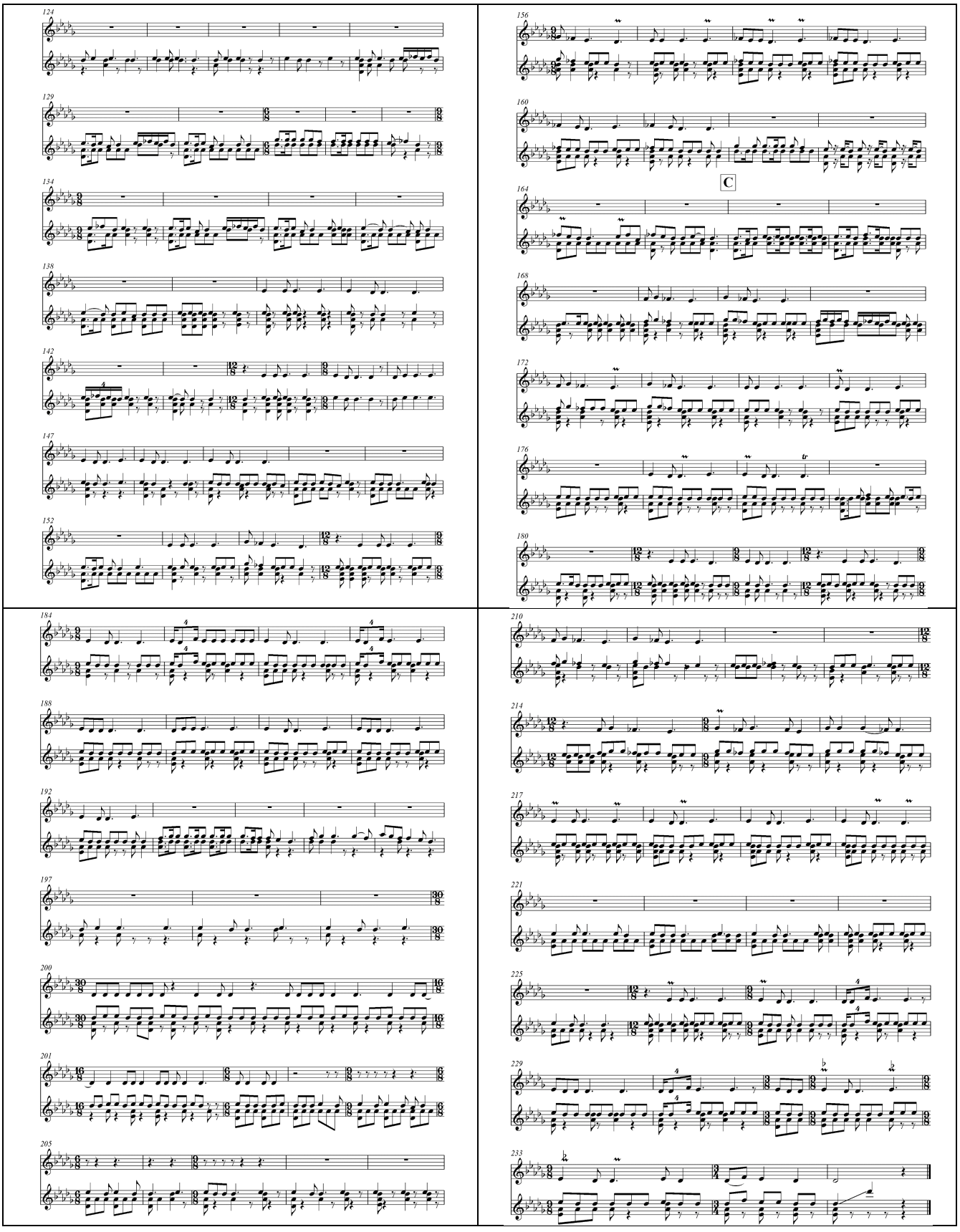
Appendix 1. Notated Score of the Âşık Air "Çukur Hava (Oba)"



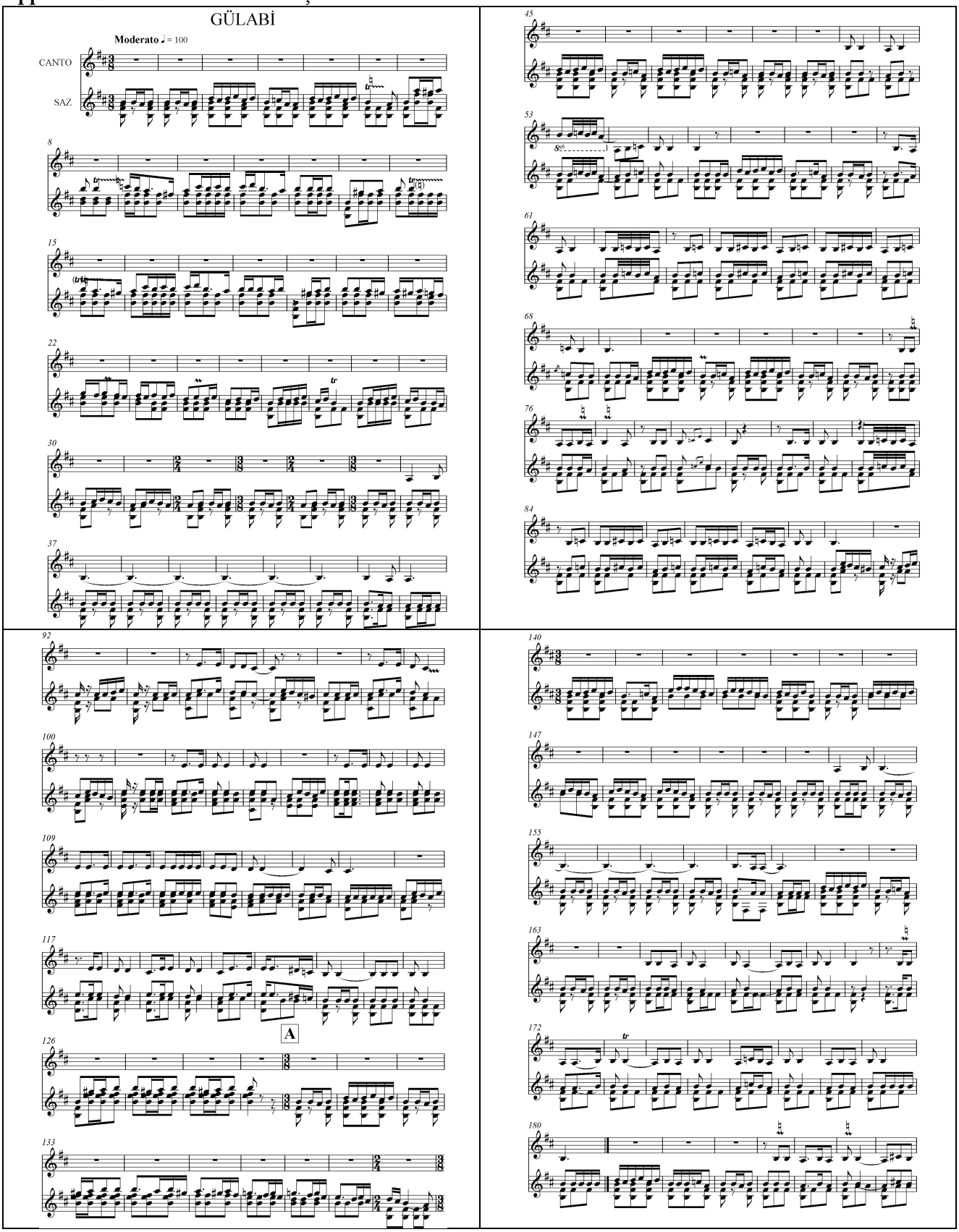

106
111
115
120
B
124
129
133
138
142
147
151
155
160
164
169
173
177
181
183

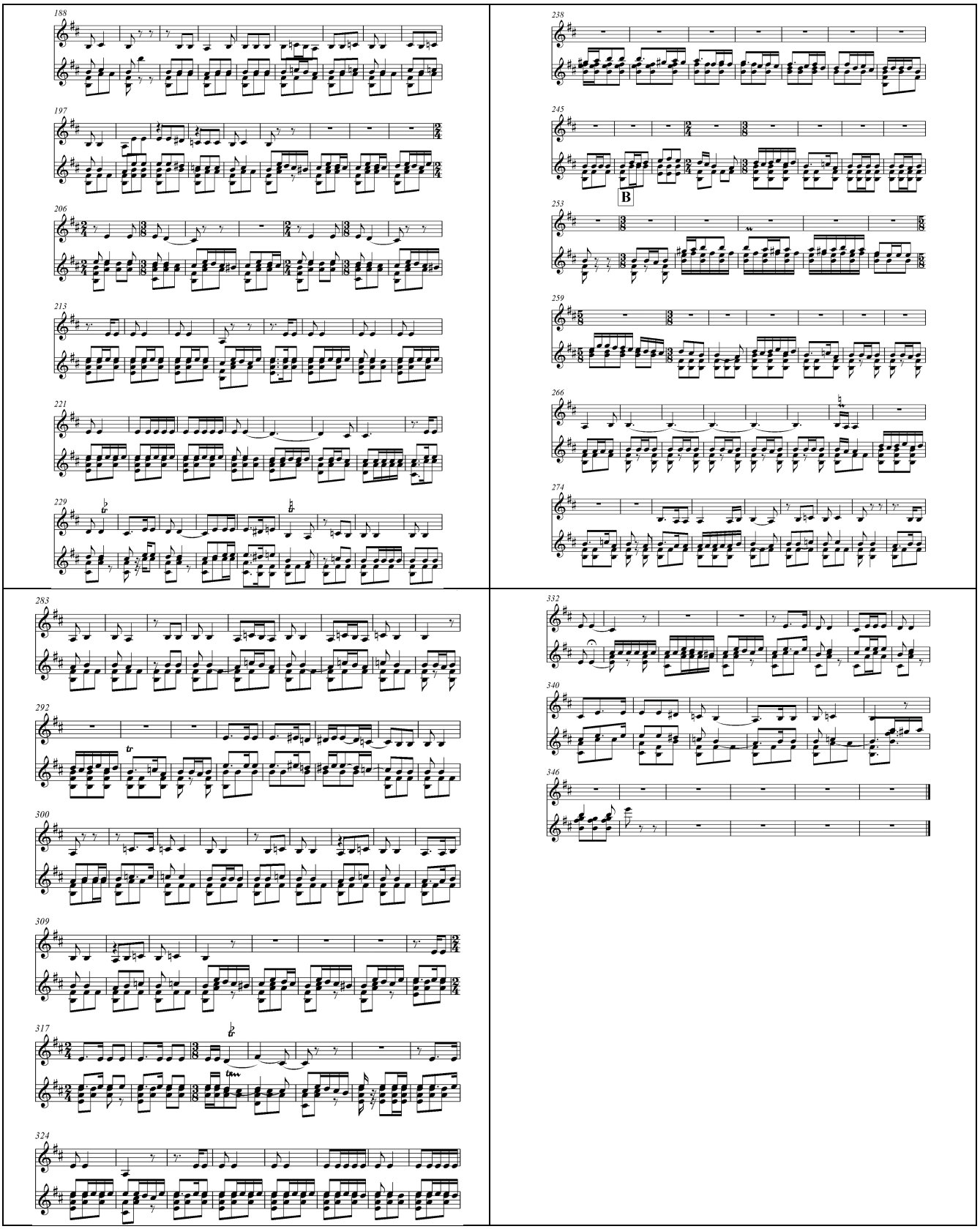
Appendix 2. Notated Score of the Âşık Air "Dastanı"



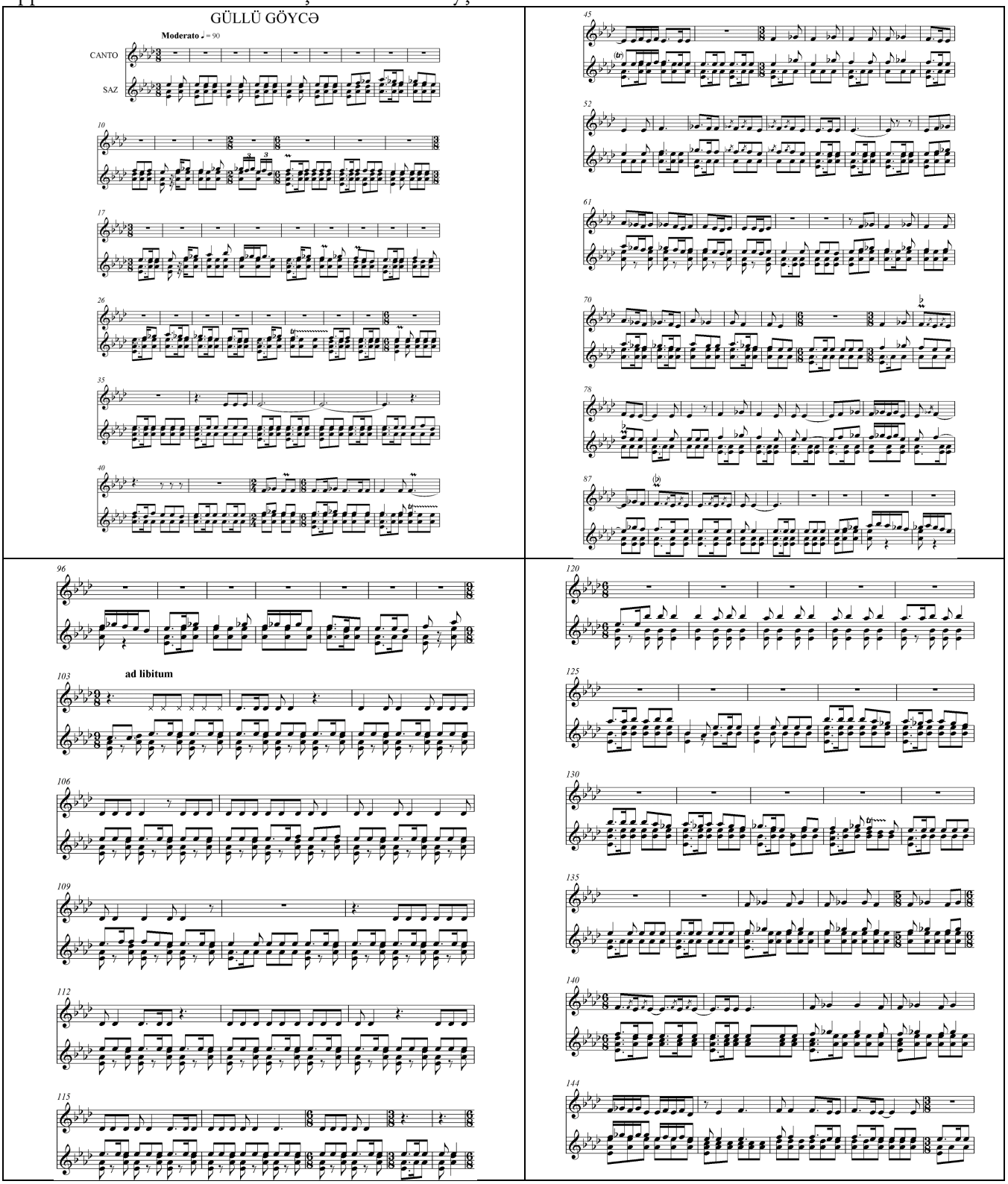

124
129
134
138
142
147
152
156
160
C
164
168
172
176
180
184
188
192
197
200
201
205
210
214
217
221
225
229
233

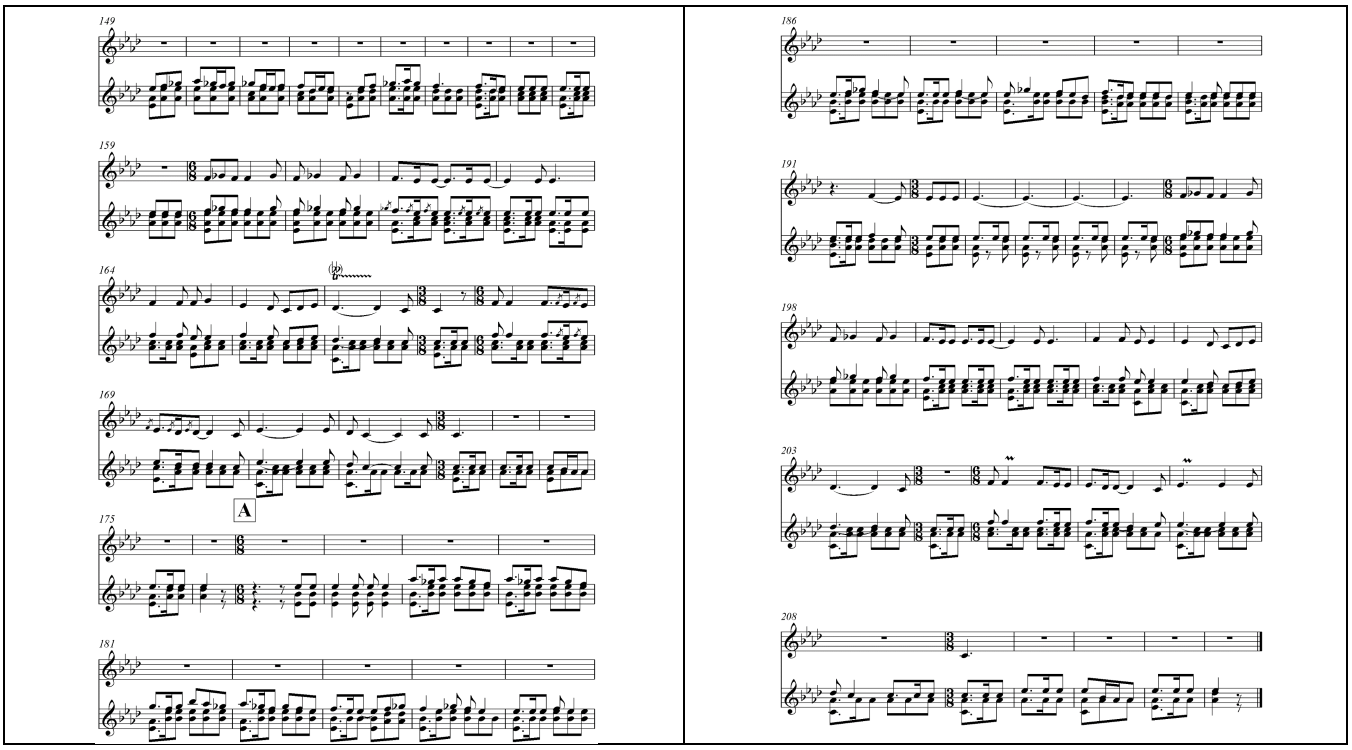
Appendix 3. Notated Score of the Âşık Air "Gülabi"



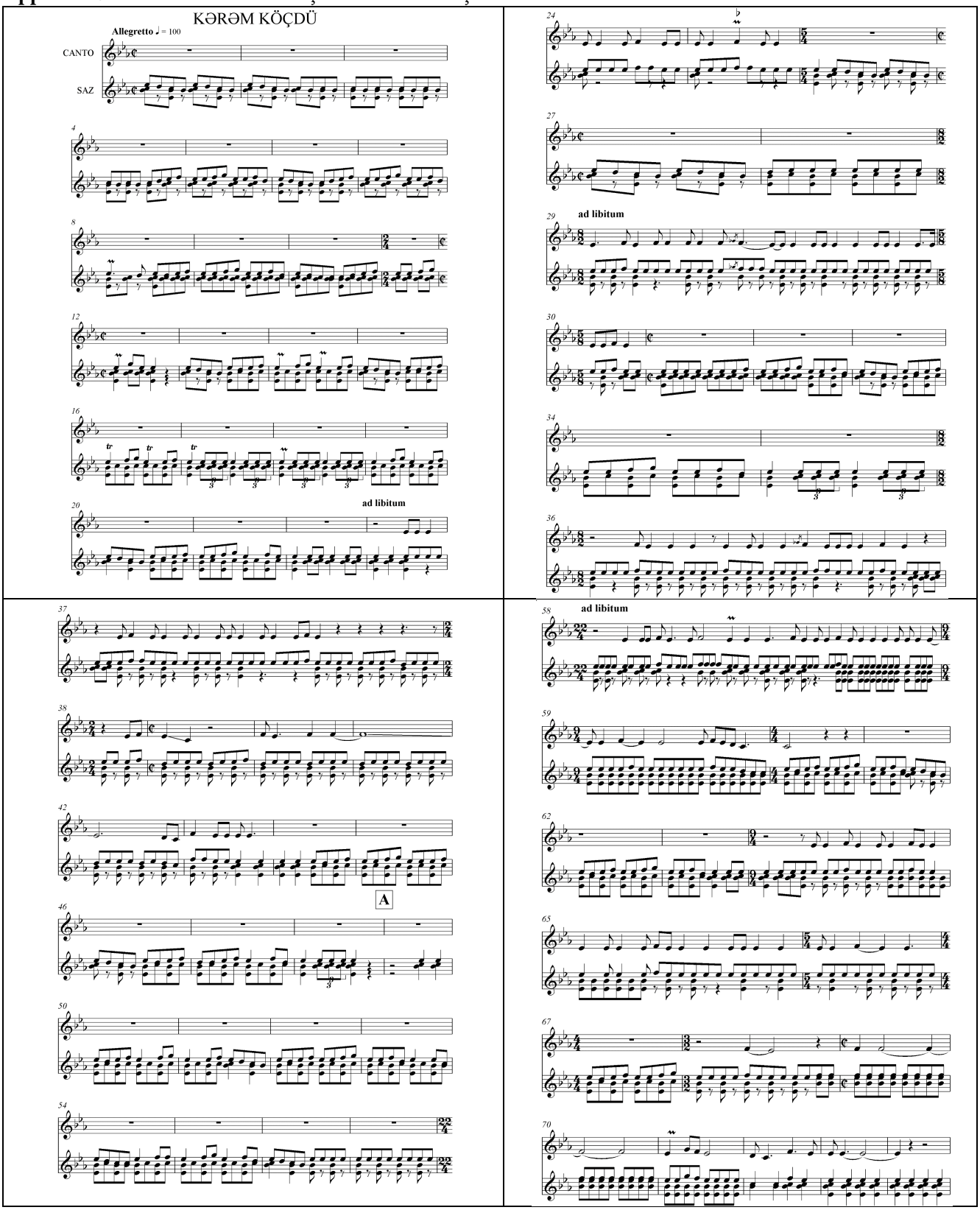

188
197
206
213
221
229
238
245
B
253
259
266
274
283
292
300
309
317
324
332
340
346

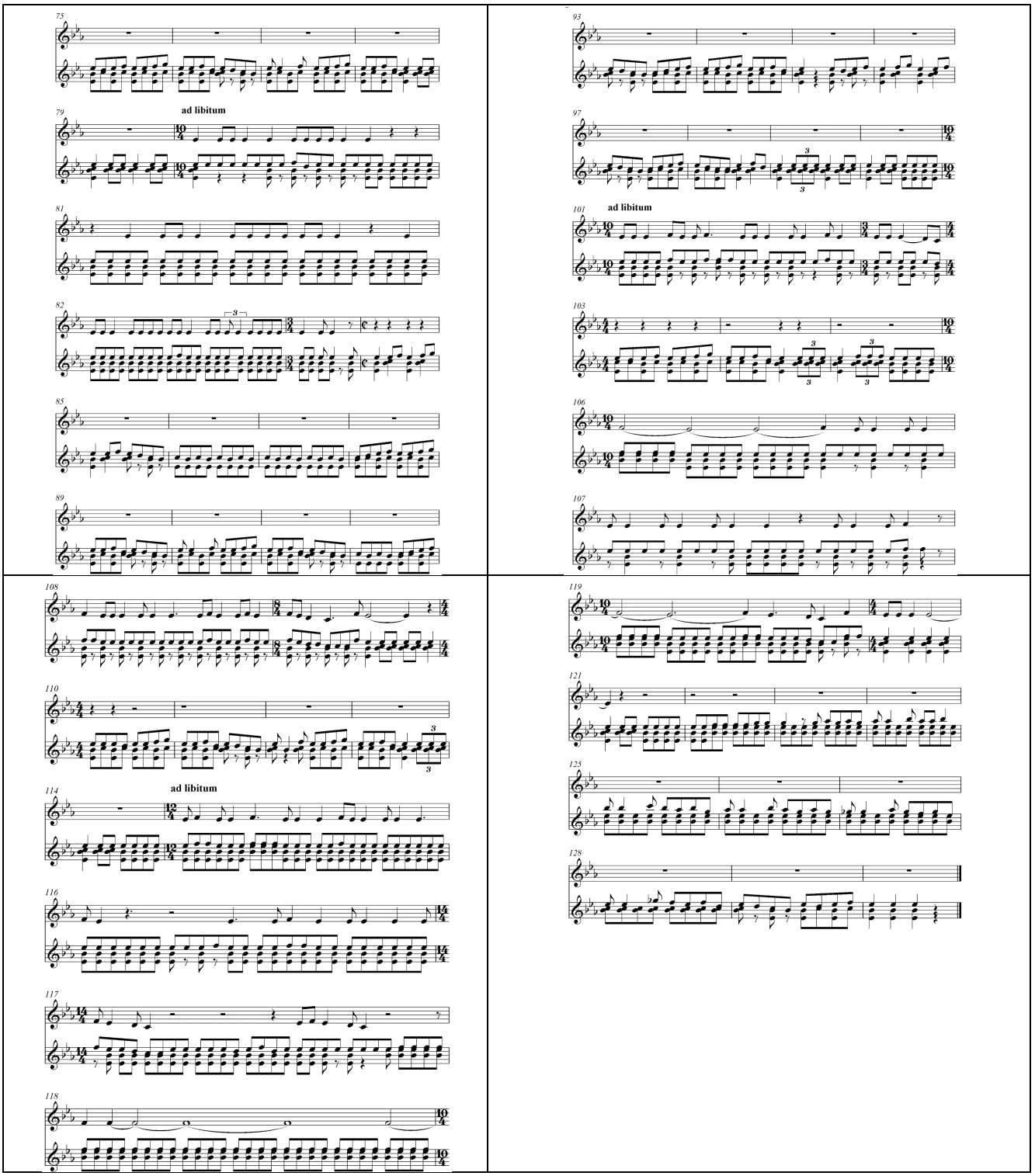
Appendix 4. Notated Score of the Âşık Air "Güllü Göyçe"




149
159
164
169
A
175
181
186
191
198
203
208

Appendix 5. Notated Score of the Âşık Air "Kerem Köçtü"




75
79
ad libitum
81
82
85
89
93
97
101
ad libitum
103
106
107
108
110
114
ad libitum
116
117
118
119
121
125
128