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## 6. Nation, memory and music education in the Republic of Turkey: A hegemonic analysis

Tom Parkinson & Olcay Muslu Gardner

### Abstract

In this chapter, we consider the relationship between music education and national identity through a chronological focus on the Republic of Turkey. We chart how theories of Turkey's preeminent sociologist Ziya Gökalp provided the basis for a new, post-Ottoman Turkish nationalism and directly informed models of music education that were intended to establish the cultural hegemony of the dominant political elite, but which inadvertently positioned music education as a key site of struggle for cultural representation, memory and national identity for at least the next century. We contribute to the internationalisation of both sociology and music education, in two principal ways: firstly, we situate Gökalp's work and legacy—little known outside of Turkey—in relation to mainstream European sociology by illustrating Durkheim's influence on Gökalp's concept of Turkishness, and consider its application through music education reform in terms of coercion and consent, within a Gramscian understanding of hegemony. Secondly, through this broader sociological framing of Turkish music education, together with close analysis of contemporary music education policy, we offer transferable insight concerning how music education can represent, shape and challenge national identity and official culture.

### Introduction

The Republic of Turkey was established on 29 October 1923 by Mustafa Kemal, who had led the Turkish National Movement armies (*Kuvâ-yi Milliye*) to victory during the Turkish War of Independence (*İstiklâl Harbi*) following the First World War and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Adopting the title of 'Atatürk' ('Father of Turkey'), Kemal became the Republic's founding head of state, and until his death in 1938 oversaw the transition from a multicultural Ottoman society governed under Islamic caliphate to a secular nation-state of the European model. To achieve this, he adopted a comprehensive vision for Turkish national culture based on the work of the poet and sociologist Ziya Gökalp (1876–1924), a follower of Durkheim and the preeminent figure in Turkish sociology. Considered in Gramscian terms, this vision was rolled out across society through a synchronised combination of state coercion on one hand, and civil society reforms designed to garner consent from the populace on the other.

In the wake of the Ottoman Empire's collapse, Gökalp advanced the notion of Turkism (*Türkçülük*) as an alternative unifying identity to Ottomanism. In doing so, he not only introduced a system of thought but also evoked 'a utopia that heavily influenced Turkish intellectuals' (Yılmaz

2010, p. 29). Turkism relied on the existence of a supposedly ancient Turkish culture that predated the arrival of Islam and the Ottoman epoch, and which Gökalp argued was the authentic inheritance of all who considered themselves to be Turks. Gökalp (1923/1968, p. 15) proposed that Turkishness depended not on common ethnicity, but on ‘a sharing of education and culture’:

At our present stage of social development ... social solidarity rests on cultural unity, which is transmitted by means of education and therefore has no relationship with consanguinity. ... There are fellow citizens in our country whose ancestors came from Albania or Arabia sometime in the past ... If they have been educated as Turks and have become used to working for the Turkish ideal, we must not set them apart from other citizens (ibid. pp. 13-15).

Gökalp published his definitive work *Principles of Turkism (Türkçülüğün Esasları)* in 1923, the same year that the Republic was established, and died the following year. The theories outlined in *Principles* concerning cultural and social reform influenced Atatürk and the new Kemalist ruling class heavily and underpinned an astonishing overhaul of music education extending from the highest levels of the state to the interface between teacher and student.

In the following section we examine Gökalp’s notion of Turkishness in order to understand the Kemalist rationale for cultural and educational reform, and music education reform specifically. We then offer a Gramscian analysis of music education reforms implemented during the first three decades of the Republic, and then in the latter half of the twentieth century during which Kemalist hegemony waned and an ascendant Islamically-oriented political class sought to reassert Turkey’s Eastern heritage. We go on to consider the pedagogic legacy of these reforms, particularly in relation to the bifurcation of ‘Western’ and ‘Turkish’ music and the preference for written notation over oral transmission, and their implications for cultural memory and tradition. Finally, we provide a discourse analysis of reports and speeches from the Third National Culture Summit (*Millî Kültür Şûrası*) held in March 2017, at which Turkey’s cultural future, and music education specifically, were discussed, and speculate on the future direction of Turkish music education.

### **Culture, Civilisation and Turkishness**

Despite holding a professorship at Istanbul University, Ziya Gökalp had not himself received a formal education and had developed his sociological understanding autodidactically,

largely through reading Durkheim (Nefes, 2013). In his university teaching and contributions to the national high school curriculum he had sought to explain the Ottoman, Islamic and Turkish civilisations from a Durkheimian perspective (Nefes 2013). The influence of Durkheim (and to a lesser extent Tönnies) is written large in Gökalp's own theoretical work, particularly in terms of his focus on collective consciousness and use of dualistic frameworks, but in developing the original concept of Turkishness Gökalp moved beyond simply applying Durkheim's theories to Turkey and advanced his own sociological dualism of culture (*hars*) and civilisation (*medeniyet*). All societies, Gökalp declared, possessed both a culture and a civilisation, the former representing a society's unifying character and the latter its ordering structures. Similar to Durkheim's understanding of religion (Nefes 2013), according to Gökalp (1918/1959, p. 98) culture was the aesthetic and moral manifestation of 'social conscience' and conveyed a society's 'cherished ideals and norms of conduct.' Culture was therefore essential for achieving social unity and solidarity. Civilisation on the other hand, like magic for Durkheim, was a utilitarian means of managing interactions between individuals, and was not unique to particular culture groups.

Gökalp believed that authentic Turkish culture could be found in the practices and lore of the folk (*halk*), among whom he saw the spontaneous expressions of the nation's soul, whereas the Ottoman civilization had been superimposed onto the Turkish nation by the Byzantines and Arabs, suppressing its authentic culture. It therefore followed that if the Turkish nation was to sit among the world's great nations, it needed to shed what Gökalp saw as the moribund Ottoman civilisation and synthesise its authentic culture with the modern, progressive civilisation of the Europeans.

Though Gökalp had no musical background, music is afforded significant attention and importance in *Principles*. Gökalp's interest in music lay in its sociological utility as a means to bind culture to civilization. In common with earlier European nationalist thinkers (see Benjamin 2008; Bohlman 2004; and Steinberg 2004 for nuanced analyses of European nationalist music in the long nineteenth century), Gökalp (1923/1968, p. 24) believed that Turkey's *volksgeist* could be heard in its folk songs, which were authentically Turkish, whereas 'Ottoman' music (the term by which

Gökalp referred collectively to the many diverse forms of Turkish classical music) was contrived and foreign:

There are two forms of music in our country. The first is Turkish music which evolved naturally among the people. The other is Ottoman music, which was adapted from Byzantium by Al-Farabi. ... Whereas Ottoman music is a technique based on specific rules, Turkish music consists of melodies unfettered by rules, systems and technique, of sincere songs which express the heart of the Turk.

This understanding of Turkish (folk) music upheld the idea of the Turkish nation as a culture group with a common essence, and thus supported Gökalp's nationalist aspirations by evoking an imagined community of 'Turks'. Building on these foundational conceits, Gökalp's proposals for musical reform followed the examples of earlier European nationalist composers. He believed that the synthesis of Turkish culture and modern civilisation would be exemplified in the setting of bucolic folk melodies in Western polyphony:

I submit, therefore, that our national music will be born of a marriage between Western and folk music. Our folk music has given us many melodies. If we collect these and harmonise them in the Western manner, we shall have both a national and a European music (Gökalp 1923/1968, p.99).

These proposals were taken up enthusiastically by the Kemalists. The following quotations by Atatürk, the first from his assessment of a 1928 concert and the second from a 1930 interview with the German journal *Vossische Zeitung*, display the extent to which his understanding of music aligned with Gökalp's:

This unsophisticated [Eastern] music ... cannot feed the needs of the creative Turkish soul. We have just heard music of the civilized world and the people, who gave a rather anemic reaction to the murmurings known as Eastern music, immediately came to life (quoted in Oransay 1985, cited in Erol 2012, p. 45).

These [Eastern musics] are inherited from the Byzantines. Our genuine music can be heard among the Anatolian people (quoted in Saygun 1987, cited in Degirmenci 2006, p. 56).

As is discussed below, the cultural and education policies implemented during the early days of the Republic followed a mutually-constituting logic that placed polyphonic, nationalistic repertoire at the top of the aesthetic hierarchy and Ottoman music at the bottom.

**Musical reform through coercion and consent: Institutions, repertoire and pedagogy**

During the first two decades of the Republic, the government attempted to shape the nation's values, tastes and activities in line with Gökalp's vision, and effect a 'social revolution from above' (Oncu 2003, p. 315) using the powers of the state. This could not be achieved through coercion alone however, and the government understood that it would need to reform the nation's cultural and educational institutions in order to win the active consent of the populace. The application of state power that followed therefore exemplified what Gramsci (1971, p. 271) termed the 'integral state', extending beyond 'governmental-coercive apparatus' (ibid. p. 265) to include the *ideological* apparatus of civil society institutions, and thus representing 'the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance, but manages to win the active consent of those over whom it rules' (ibid. p. 244).

In relation to music education, coercion and consent were synthesised within a systematic programme of reform in which 'Ottoman' (Turkish classical) music and its institutions were coercively suppressed and Western art and Turkish folk music were actively promoted through new institutions. The Sufi *Derviş* lodges, which had been the primary hubs of sacred music education during the Ottoman period, were closed and outlawed in 1925. In 1924, school music education in Western music was made compulsory under the new national curriculum (*Tevhid-i Tedrisat*), and a Music Teacher Training institute (*Musiki Muallim Mektebi*) was established to train music teachers in Western instruments.

The *Darul'Elhan* ('House of Melodies'), an Ottoman music conservatory in Istanbul established in 1914, was transmuted into the *İstanbul Belediye Konservatuvarı* (Istanbul Municipal Conservatory) in 1927, and its staff were made to undertake compulsory fieldwork in Anatolia to learn and collect folk songs (Küpana 2015). The *İstanbul Belediye Konservatuvarı* was modelled on Western European conservatoires, and instruction in Turkish classical music and instruments was banned. During the latter half of the 1920s, promising young musicians were sent to conservatories in Western and Central Europe to learn the requisite skills for composing and teaching the new polyphonic national music, and returned to take up faculty positions. Though many musicians

undoubtedly embraced this opportunity, the following anecdote from the composer Cemal Reşit

Rey reveals the coercive climate surrounding music reform during this period:

[The] Minister of Education Abidin Özmen invited eight of us to a congress in Ankara ... 'Come on then! [he cajoled] We are supposed to do music reform, how are we going to do this? ... [Atatürk] has called me on the phone a few times recently' ... We were completely stumped. We could not figure out what decision to take (quoted in Yazici 2014, p. 1266).

Atatürk bemoaned the slow pace of reform in his ten-year speech to parliament (Atatürk 1933) and redoubled the State's efforts in the 1930s. Between 1934 and 1936, Turkish classical music was banned entirely from State radio. Eminent musicians, educators and composers from countries such as Germany, Austria and Hungary, including Paul Hindemith, Béla Bartók and Eduard Zuckmayer, were invited to Turkey to act as consultants and institutional managers to advance the music education reform project. The European-style Ankara State Conservatory (*Ankara Devlet Konservatuvarı*) was established in 1936 under Hindemith's recommendations, and would become the Republic's bastion of Western art music. In 1938, the *Musiki Muallim Mektebi* was coopted into the Gazi Education Institute (*Gazi Eğitim Enstitüsü*) with Eduard Zuckmayer as its director. Zuckmayer implemented Western pedagogical techniques and oversaw the training of the country's music teachers until 1970, embedding Western art music and its accompanying pedagogies in all schools across the country.

A counter-hegemonic discourse soon emerged within the conservatories that argued for the sophistication and Turkishness of traditional Turkish classical music (Gedik & Bozkurt 2009). This led to intense debate between the Gökalpists, who claimed that traditional Ottoman music was Hellenic, Byzantine and Arab (and thus un-Turkish), and those who argued that Ottoman music was in fact an authentic aspect of Turkic culture that shared the same origins as Turkish folk music (Karakayali, 2010) and which had in fact predated and *even influenced* the Greeks, Byzantines and Arabs. Music theorists such as Hüseyin Arel and Rauf Yetka sought to rationalise Turkish classical music using techniques of Western music theory, and had some success in raising its esteem and stemming its erasure from the cultural landscape. Nonetheless, it is significant that under the hegemonic conditions of the conservatoires established by the Gökalpists, Turkish classical music

achieved legitimacy only by way of Western notation and theory, and by being ‘cut off from its historical properties such as oral transmission, memorisation, and its broader Islamic connotations’ (Poulos 2011, p. 166). Paradoxically therefore, while these legitimising efforts challenged the Kemalist’s westernising hegemony to an extent, they also consented to the Western-centric value hierarchy imposed by the Gökalpists in adopting notation.

This standardisation of Turkish classical music through Western notation occurred in tandem with that of folk music, beginning with the state-sponsored collection of folk songs from all regions of Anatolia. The paradoxical aim was to evidence a rich mosaic of regional folk traditions while at the same time downplay difference and emphasise common Turkish culture (Demirenci 2006). Musical and lyrical elements in folk songs that did not conform to stipulated regional and national characteristics, such as microtones and other melodic and rhythmic elements, and lyrical references to ethnic and religious diversity, were ironed out (Balkılıç 2009).

At the same time, new performance styles ‘not present in the tradition’ (Karahasanoğlu 2014, p. 170), such as mixed-gender choral singing, were introduced. The newly collected and standardised repertoire of folk music was disseminated from 1948 onwards via the *Yurttan Sesler* (‘Voices from the Homeland’), a mixed-voice choir whose performances were broadcast over the State-controlled TRT radio, and later TRT television. Although TRT was not an educational institution *per se*, its house musicians were required to undertake formal training within a “‘modern” educational structure’ to ensure the integrity of the station’s outward ‘educational profile’ (Poulos 2011, p. 177). *Yurttan Sesler* founding director Muzaffer Sarisozen was clear about the didactic function of its broadcasts:

[The aim of *Yurttan Sesler* is] neither ‘solely entertainment’, nor to reflect the diversity of our folk music genres. The main aim of [*Yurttan Sesler*] is to unify the hearts of our community to guide our people in their movement towards a single feeling (Çeren 1944, as cited in in Güray, 2016, p.109)

By the 1980s, the state conservatoires and TRT together ‘controlled the collection, public dissemination and teaching of an “official” national folk music’ (Stokes 2012, p. 98). The resulting repertoire and pedagogies can be understood as a particular form of invented tradition identified by



Hobsbawn (1983) in which existing practices are ‘modified, ritualised and institutionalised’ and rendered invariant. The resulting loss of musical knowledge and cultural memory has been widely acknowledged (e.g. Balkılıç 2009; Demirenci 2006; Güray 2016; Karahasanoğlu 2014).

### **1950-2000: The decline of Kemalist hegemony**

While the early Kemalist musical reforms have been well documented in research, subsequent periods have been afforded far less attention. Yet the period from 1950 onwards has seen some significant changes in both cultural climate and higher education in Turkey, which have more or less accompanied political oscillations between Kemalism and Islamism. The election of Adnan Menderes as prime minister in the 1950s heralded a period of comparative pluralism during which the state relaxed restrictions on Islam in public life and became more accommodating of Turkish classical music in broadcasting (Stokes 2012), though not yet within formal education. Under the Islamist *Şelâmet Partisi* (MSP) government of the 1970s, educational curricula were suffused with religious content. Most significantly, it was during this period that traditional Turkish instruments, which had been banned from formal education since the founding of the Republic in 1923, again featured in the curricula of music teacher training programmes (Göktürk-Cary 2014) and Turkish classical music was taught in higher education for the first time since the dissolution of the *Darul’Elhan* in 1923. The founding of the first State Conservatory of Turkish Music (*Türk Musikisi Devlet Konservatuari*) at Istanbul Technical University in 1976 marked the declining hegemony of Kemalism in the spheres of culture and education, and a renewed identification with the Ottoman past. The *Türk Musikisi Devlet Konservatuari* would soon usurp the *Ankara Devlet Konservatuari* as ‘perhaps the most central educational institution through which musical discourses continue to be bifurcated and disseminated’ (Gill-Gürtan 2011, p. 624).

The 1980 *coup d’etat* ushered in an era of depoliticisation and cultural amnesia’ (Maessen 2014) during which teachers were banned from involvement in politics or expressing political views (Göktürk-Cary 2014). This was followed by increasingly centralised music curricula in the 1980s

and 1990s overseen by the Council for Higher Education (YÖK), and a curtailing of teacher autonomy. In 1998, YÖK declared there to be ‘a standardisation problem’ in music education, noting ‘goal conflict, ... and irresponsible and individual use of sources’ (Kalyrici 2005, as cited in Eğılmez 2010, p. 3120). Reforms did not address the issue of repertoire however, and higher music education continued to operate in restrictive, bifurcated structures (Aksoy 1999) separating ‘Western’ music from ‘Turkish’ music.

Today, the teaching of Western music in conservatoires in Turkey continues broadly in line with Hindemith’s European model prescribed in 1936 (Erdal, 2012). As we discuss in the next section, however, the gradual subordination of orality to literacy that occurred over the course of the twentieth century has become a major flashpoint in the teaching of Turkish music, leading to debates concerning the authenticity of not only repertoire, but also pedagogy.

### **Literacy and orality in Turkish music education: tradition, process and duty memory**

The Ottomans’ reliance on living memory and oral transmission as the principal resource for musical instruction, which had ensured a balance of stability and dynamism in the Turkish classical traditions for centuries, rendered that knowledge particularly vulnerable in the context of the Kemalist’s hegemonic campaign whose *modus operandi* was to erase the Ottomans from social memory and standardise repertoire. Western stave notation provided a means to systematically wrest musical knowledge and authority from individuals and place it in the hands of the state. This highlights the bureaucratic function of notation in disembodying and archiving musical knowledge and can be seen in the context of ‘the longstanding project of cultural correction and unification through the help of written texts’ (Karakayali 2010, p. 362) with precedents including the standardisation of Catholic liturgy in medieval Europe under Charlemagne, where notation was used in music education to promote cultural coherence and, in turn, social cohesion.

As discussed earlier, the standardisation of Turkish classical and folk music entailed the application of the Western-derived notational system to musical traditions based in the microtonal

*makam* system, and which had been transmitted orally over centuries. Karahasanoğlu (2014, p. 165) argues that notation can be

a useful educational tool, [but] is not a sufficient medium for transmitting the nuances of the Turkish *makam*, which requires face-to-face education in the form of *meşk* for a complete understanding.

The term *meşk* refers to the Ottoman system of music education in which the student (*çirak*) learned the *makam* system by observing and imitating their master (*usta*) in everything from phrasing to body posture and breathing. The master embodied a lineage (*meşk silsilesi*) along which not only musical knowledge, but also pedagogical technique and lifestyle ethics had been transmitted between generations. Being centred on a long-term relationship between student and master, *meşk* mediated the interface between tradition and innovation to allow the ‘gradual assimilation’ (Karakayali 2010, p. 351) of new ideas into a tradition—that is, into a cognitive-cultural entity comprising a society’s ‘customs, methods and working standards’ (Dewey 1925, p. 25).

Dewey (1912-14, pp. 356-57) distinguished, however, between tradition *as thing* and *as process*, the former designating ‘a doctrine ... currently accepted in a community [and] added on from generation to generation’, and the latter designating ‘the entire operation of transmission by which a society maintains the continuity of its intellectual and moral life’. Applying Dewey’s distinction to the orality-literacy dualism in Turkish music education helps to reveal the sociocultural implications of disrupting the pedagogical foundations of music education. Earlier attempts to historicise Ottoman classical music had entailed recording lyrics, compositional form, *makam* and *usul* (rhythm) and the composer’s name, but not precise transcriptions of musical notes in the manner of Western notation. This approach acknowledged historicity without creating a ‘frozen monolithic repertoire’, and the process of oral instruction ‘tended to erase the particularities of the individual compositions’ (Feldman 1992, p. 85). In the case of Turkish folk music, Karahasanoğlu (2014) notes that it was created and taught outside of any literate context by people with no formal education of any kind. In both cases a degree of dynamism was permitted that

allowed for the tradition and musical culture to develop *as process* through teaching, performing and learning.

When fixed in notation, however, musical knowledge can be considered tradition *as thing*—a static textual referent for any subsequent rendering in sound. Once such a *thing* is conceived, the possibility of knowledge developing *as process* is inhibited and constitutes deviation from, rather than permitted assimilation into, the tradition (*as thing*). The notated folk repertoire curated by the State conservatoires and TRT thus rendered folk music ‘a static form that cannot be changed, rather than as a dynamic oral tradition’ (Karahasanoğlu 2014 p. 169). In Karahasanoğlu’s (ibid., p. 170) assessment, notation-based pedagogy has caused ‘serious damage to our music’.

What is most notable in Karahasanoğlu’s (2014) understanding of *meşk* is its oneness—pedagogy is considered inextricable from performance and repertoire. Similarly, Karakayali (2011, p. 350) notes that not only the music itself but also the process of teaching and learning in *meşk* was sacrosanct in the Ottoman period; ‘time and toil’ on the part of the student were not understood in transactional terms but rather as integral and valuable aspects of the *meşk* tradition (*as process*). Of particular importance here is that *meşk*, as a pedagogical system that depended on patience and memory, mediated not only the nature but also the pace of cultural change. Comparable to Hobsbawm’s (1983. p. 2) understanding of custom in traditional societies, it had ‘the double function of motor and fly wheel’, permitting innovation only if it was ‘compatible, or even identical, with precedent’. This contrasts starkly with pedagogies that employ notation as a time-saving technology, and highlights a divergence in the ‘underlying value orientations regarding how music education should be carried out’ (Karakayali 2011, p. 350).

The term *meşk* has become unstable in contemporary usage (Gill-Gürtan 2011; Poulos 2011) and might refer to a number of different pedagogical approaches. In particular, it has become shorthand for one-to-one instrumental tuition, which overlooks the extra-musical aspects of discipleship (Poulos 2011) and emphasises individual practice and repetition (Gill-Gürtan 2011). More than this,

however, *meşk* has become a performative ideograph used by musicians and educators in Turkey to signal their orientations towards Turkey's musical, and social, history. In this respect, Karahasanoğlu's (2014) interpretation of (and advocacy for) *meşk* can arguably be read as an example of what Gill-Gürtan (2011) calls duty memory in the discourses of Turkish musicians: Karahasanoğlu asserts that only *meşk*, which confers 'both the training method and repertoire' (2014, p. 166) onto subsequent generations, can adequately preserve the 'authentic' characteristics of Turkish music and protect them from 'being forgotten' (ibid. p. 167).

To summarise at this point, the cooption of music education into the ideological apparatus of the state (Gramsci 1971) throughout the Republican period, across both Kemalist and Islamist governments, ultimately failed to achieve hegemony. Far from the unified national culture that the Kemalist reformists had envisaged, the legacy of the early Republican cultural and educational reforms is a contested cultural milieu (Aksoy 1999) in which ideological debates surrounding the notions of authenticity and Turkishness have yet to be reconciled. In the following, final section of this chapter we turn our attention to the contemporary context.

### **Pluralism or protectionism: Where next for Turkish music education?**

Turkey's contemporary cultural landscape is highly dynamic at the levels of policy and practice, making it difficult to identify or predict clear trends. At the present time, there are signs that suggest a number of possible directions for music education, and musical life more generally, yet these can be ambiguous or contradictory. Nonetheless, they offer some insight into the sociocultural context surrounding music education in Turkey, and into how the legacy of the historical developments documented in this paper manifest in the present moment.

Between the 3rd and 5th of March 2017, representatives from the arts, culture, education and tourism sectors were invited to participate in the 3rd National Culture Summit (*Millî Kültür Şûrası*) in Istanbul, hosted by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The stated aim of the Summit was to take stock of the current state of culture in Turkey, and to chart a new course for the centennial of

the Republic in 2023. It invited engagement with the question of how a nation with long cultural traditions was to respond to the challenges of cultural impoverishment, alienation and globalisation in the 21st century (Kalin 2017). In his opening address, President Erdoğan declared that:

We should rediscover and rebuild our national and cultural values, which reflect the native Turkish culture and arts, against cultural alienation and imperialism through a universal perspective. That a cultural product is in a native and national form never hinders it from bearing a universal meaning and message (MoCT 2017a, our translation).

This frames the notion of national culture in terms of recovery from damage, memory loss and corruption by outside forces, and thus reiterates a familiar, meta-level refrain used recurrently throughout the Republic's existence from Gökalp onwards, notwithstanding obvious differences in understandings of what constitute authentic 'national and cultural values' and 'native Turkish culture and arts'. Erdoğan's advocacy for localism before globalism can be interpreted as resistance to Western cultural hegemony, particularly in light of comments made a few days later by his official spokesperson—and nationally-renowned bağlama player—Ibrahim Kalin, who asserted that 'culture's etymological and historical connection [is] to the soil on which humans live' and that 'much of what goes around as 'universal culture' is in fact Western cultural products portrayed as global currency', echoing President Erdoğan's call for 'an awareness of one's own cultural values, as well as a need to protect and nourish them' (Kalin 2017, p. 201, our translation). Although Kalin acknowledged that cultural interaction can support the 'growing and flourishing' of cultural traditions, he expresses a much more cautious position regarding Western cultural products specifically, and their influence on Turkish culture.

Messages of resistance to Western cultural hegemony can thus be heard from the highest echelons of the state. As yet, however, music appears to be lower on the policy reform agenda than other domains of culture such as theatre, which have seen radical changes to their funding and governance structures (see Aksoy & Şeyben 2015). The recommendations for music education by the music commission of the Cultural Summit were somewhat ambiguous; on one level, they explicitly called for both Turkish and Western music to be included in curricula from primary to

tertiary level, suggesting a pluralistic, reconciliatory position. Yet the phrasing and emphases of the recommendations implicitly delimit what is considered ‘Turkish’ and what is not:

A ‘Youth Culture House’ should be opened in every city of Turkey. Conservatory graduates and those qualified by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and who have teaching skills, should be assigned to these houses where our own traditional instruments and music and Western arts should be taught.

[and]

A musical education based on traditional music should be devised, and the national musical instruments such as the saz/bağlama or lute should be brought to the centre. Training should not exclude any musical type (MoCT 2017b, pp. 3-5, our translation).

In the first example, despite the recommendation that Turkish music and Western instruments be included side by side in music education, ‘Western’ music is placed syntactically outside of what is ‘our own’ and ‘traditional’. The second example, which again calls for all musical ‘types’ to be reflected in curricula, carries a corollary subtext— that some music types *have (hitherto) been excluded* from curricula, and that national musical instruments have hitherto *not* been placed at the centre of music education— and thus evokes a memory of cultural exclusion.

A further recommendation of the music commission at the Culture Summit was for state conservatories to be ‘restructured as universities of music and performing arts ... which incorporate traditional and polyphonic musical cultures’ (MoCT 2017b, p. 4). *Prima facie* this is a pluralist and reconciliatory proposal, explicitly acknowledging value across the Western-Turkish distinction, but it has bureaucratic and hegemonic implications. As discussed earlier, Turkey’s state conservatories have proliferated in the main according to two, bifurcated types: ‘Turkish’ and ‘Western’ (Çelenk 2016). Notwithstanding the shifts over time in relation to cultural climate, and associated dynamics of power and influence, these institutions have, since the founding of the *Türk Musikisi Devlet Konservatuari* in 1976, been afforded authority and autonomy in terms of repertoire and pedagogy on either side of the ‘Turkish’ ‘Western’ bifurcation, which has allowed for the parallel development of both musical cultures. However, the recommendation that these cultures be drawn together within the same institutions, while explicitly pluralist, could jeopardise this autonomy and pit these musical cultures against each other in terms of institutional emphasis and resourcing.

We have sought in this short chapter to demonstrate the role of music education in the construction of Turkish national identity and official culture. Although we cannot predict the future of Turkish music education based on cultural policy and discourse alone, it is clear from the examples presented here that it remains a key locus of struggle for cultural memory and hegemony, and that distinctions in relation to repertoire, pedagogy and tradition reflect ideological fault lines that stem from the foundation of the Republic of Turkey and have dominated cultural life in Turkey for almost a hundred years.

The music education reforms detailed here occurred as part of a post-war nation-building project following the collapse of a centuries-old social paradigm, and as such, they were more overt and dramatic than those seen elsewhere. Yet for this reason they offer a vivid point of reference for those considering the sociological implications of music education reforms or norms in different contexts which, although more subtle and insidious, may nonetheless function as part of the state's ideological apparatus (Gramsci 1971). We hope that the example of Turkish music education might bring international readers to examine the relationship between music education and national identity in their own contexts, and to consider the roles and experiences of various actors and stakeholders within and beyond the music classroom in sustaining and challenging hegemony.

### **Reflective Questions**

1. (How) have music education institutions and/or educators contributed to shaping or challenging national identity in your country?
2. Do music education curricula in your country reflect a particular cultural hegemony within society at large?



3. Are certain musical genres and/or traditions implicitly devalued by the normative pedagogies used in music education institutions in your country?
4. Are you aware of any struggles for representation in music curricula in your country, and if so, what are the social implications of these struggles?

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