

Musicological Debates between Greeks and Turks in the Late Ottoman Empire

Dialogue and the Creation of the 'Other'

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When Apostol Efendi attempts to philosophize, he not only assumes the countenance of the Greek fisherman of two thousand years ago, but he has a go at money, at the merchant, at God and His Son, and, politely, even at the lobster, as if he had witnessed dialogues with Socrates (Faik 1987: 149).

During the years around 1900, both Ottoman Turkish and Greek intellectuals of Istanbul debated questions of historical continuity, the former being especially intrigued by the supposed continuity between their Greek neighbours and the ancient Greek civilization. In the late Ottoman Empire, music was a public, scholarly and multi-ethnic sphere of communication where the question of continuity often popped up, either as an effort to map the history of cultural practice and the system of knowledge or to use music for political and ideological ends. This specific sphere of communication was open to everyone irrespective of class, ethnicity and religion, provided that the person concerned possessed the relevant knowledge and skills. The musicological debates discussed in this essay were the subject of newspaper columns, usually among participants who also met at public concerts or in voluntary musical associations and music schools. I will attempt to show how multi-ethnic music-making, exchanging professional skills and collaborative efforts to systematize musical concepts and styles encouraged a scholarly dialogue on music among Ottoman practitioners of various confessional or national origins.

At the same time, music also served to draw borders between the parallel projects of cultural nation-building in an era in which identities became increasingly exclusive and monolithic.

The Era of 'Musical' Nationalisms: An Introduction

In the aftermath of the Greek-Ottoman War (1897), which ended with the defeat of Greece, one can schematically distinguish four outlooks or political projects which seemed feasible to members of the Greek *millet* of the Ottoman Empire. If I claim that there was a significant clandestine activity forming part of a (Greek) state-sponsored irredentism among Ottoman subjects, I may be accused of adopting a teleological approach, seeing events of the early 1900s in the light of what was to happen only in 1919. Certainly, loyalties within the urban community and the public sphere were often flexible, so that in many cases it is difficult to define the terms of political activism (Kechriotis 2003). Nevertheless, one can safely say that, until 1922, the 'Great Idea'—that sought to create a Greek state encompassing all ethnic Greek-inhabited regions—remained one of the main political orientations of Hellenism.

Owing to its defeat in 1897, the Greek state, however, could no longer function as the sole champion of the Greek nation. Given the growing Slavic challenge in Macedonia, certain Greek policymakers began to consider a revision of Greco-Turkish relations in order to create a barrier against Slavic incursions into Macedonia and Thrace. This new post-1897 outlook favoured a multi-ethnic Eastern empire in which Hellenism would offer its cultural benefits to a union of peoples which would also include Balkan and Anatolian elements (Veremis 1999). A third vision highlighted the uniting spiritual authority of the Patriarch of Constantinople, Joachim III, who led the Greek *millet* between 1901 and 1912, and particularly promoted this idea. Put differently, he proposed an ecumenist ideal which was to embrace the Orthodox people of the Balkans and Russia and opposed any secular challenge to his authority by the Ottoman government on the one hand and the irredentist Greek state on the other. As a fourth possibility, the Ottoman political elite advanced the notion of Ottoman citizenship and adherence to a unifying Ottoman identity. The relationship between the last two options was becoming complicated especially after the Young Turk Revolution in 1908 had re-instituted the constitution, marking a change from community privileges to the rights of the citizen. However, it is also true that the two components of the ecumenical scheme supported by Joachim III remained attractive political possibilities until the end of the First World War—on the one hand, the 'imperial' alternative focusing on the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire and, on the other, the

'pan-Orthodox' perspective. The latter envisaged the unification of all the Orthodox including the Slavs in their quality as fellow believers (Stamatopoulos 2010).

As Elli Skopetea noted, despite the frustration caused by the 1897 defeat, in the first decades of the twentieth century, the prevailing mood in the Greek world was hope and expectation. Skopetea wrote that the 'mourning' for 1897 did not last too long, as new developments in the region—the revolution of the Young Turks and the military coup in Greece (1909)—were taken as the beginnings of a regeneration (1999). From a variety of political and social positions, intellectuals, publicists and bureaucrats of the Hellenic Kingdom and Ottoman Greeks looked forward to a movement of regeneration, embodied in the concept of culture, which they often defended from a nationalist position, criticizing Western rationalism (Veremis 1999: 182).

The nationalization of their musical traditions, both by Greeks and Turks—the subject of this essay—was inscribed into this context. On both sides, the outcome of the nation-building process was not predetermined and, for a long time, a multiplicity of views and schemes coexisted. As argued by Vangelis Kechriotis, even after 1908, the courses of neither Turkish nor Greek nationalism could be taken for granted (2005: 33).

Multi-Ethnic and Multi-Confessional Music-Making at the End of the Empire

At no period was music-making and its patronage by the court and urban aristocracy reserved for the empire's Muslim subjects. Prominently during the seventeenth century, secular singers as well as freelance composers and instrumentalists emerged, some of whom were non-Muslims (Feldman 1996: 9).¹ In the following century, Greek and Armenian musicians composed various treatises on the theory of music and the traditional system of melodic modes or *maqam* (see Popescu-Judetza 2002).² At the end of the nineteenth century, the sultans' court lost the initiative in music-making which shifted to commercial venues. New places of entertainment like beer houses and *cafés chantants* or *gazinós* brought together musicians from various ethnic and religious backgrounds. In Izmir, Armenian, Jewish and Turkish musicians often joined Greek popular orchestras (generally called *estoudiantinas*) which performed in the taverns, cafes and beerhouses of the city (Kaliviotis 2002). *Estoudiantina* came to denote a particular type of

orchestra that had emerged in Istanbul around 1898 and became widespread in Izmir in the early twentieth century. Containing an obvious reference to the ideas of 'education' and 'study', this term referred to orchestras formed by young people who wanted to experiment with a multicultural repertoire and Western musical instruments such as the mandolin, guitar and harmonica (Ünlü 2004: 169). The Smyrniot *estudiantina* orchestras often played pieces catering for a multi-ethnic audience. In their concerts the listeners encountered a colourful collection of musical genres from beyond the borders of the empire including cantatas from Corfu and Athens or Romanian songs which were just becoming popular through the performances of Gypsy bands (Karasaki 1948: 309).

Since the first decade of the twentieth century, the recording studios of local gramophone companies became important sites of multi-ethnic music-making. In 1912, Ovannes, the famous Armenian singer of Izmir, recorded for the gramophone company Favourite numerous songs from the celebrated melodrama *Leblebici Horhor Ağa* by Dikran Çuhacıyan. He sang in Turkish and was accompanied by an orchestra of Greek musicians (Kaliviotis 2002: 98). As Maureen Jackson observes, along with the traditional spaces for encounters between musicians of various ethnic backgrounds—the palace, Mevlevi lodges, synagogues or churches—new urban meeting places emerged in the early twentieth century. These included musical societies, music stores, *gazinós* and recording studios, which all brought together musicians who not only made music together but also assimilated the professional skills of their counterparts from other ethnic and cultural backgrounds (2008). Thus, three prominent Jewish musicians, who had become friendly with the well-known Armenian musician-composer Kirkor Çulhayan, introduced him to the Chief Rabbi Hayim Ben Mose Becerano. The latter then hired Çulhayan to notate the Maftirim repertoire—the Jewish paraliturgical music that shares compositional, rhythmic and melodic structures with the Ottoman court suite (*ibid.*: Chapters 1 and 2).

Smyrniot synagogue cantor İzak Algazi also crossed cultural borders of many different kinds. He received a European education at the school sponsored by the Alliance Israélite in Izmir and, at the same time, followed orthodox instruction at a traditional school. As a result, he was capable of dealing with a variety of languages and musical forms. He composed and sang religious music in Hebrew as well as *ladino* or Judeo-Spanish songs belonging to the oral tradition and also performed *gzhals* or vocal improvisations and songs in Turkish for commercial recordings (Seroussi 1989).³

In the Ottoman world, voluntary musical associations were semi-public spaces funded by private subscription. Typically, the regular and active members of such associations belonged to a particular ethnic or religious group. Yet annual celebrations, charity balls and concerts were open to the members of other communities. Moreover, since throughout the nineteenth century people came to consider the musical heritage of a given ethnic group as an asset bolstering the prestige of the latter, they displayed the relevant music not only to insiders but to outsiders as well. On 15 February 1882, the Greek newspaper *Grafitkos Kosmos* reported that during the celebrations of the Greek Music Society of Constantinople not only the Greek Orthodox of the city but also 'music-lovers and intellectual Armenians and Jews attended to hear the Byzantine masterpieces that were sung' (*Grafitkos Kosmos* 1882).

The Creation of 'Oriental Music' and the Notion of 'Tradition'

In the age of romanticism and nationalism, the search for musical traditions prompted the 'discovery' and examination of 'classical works'. Triggered by orientalist approaches on the one hand and the new aesthetic sensibilities conforming to nationalist agendas on the other, musicians and collectors attempted to codify musical traditions of the non-Western world. This process inevitably involved a significant amount of omission and outright invention.⁴ From South India to the new national formations emerging in the Middle East as well as the ethnic and linguistic minorities of Central and Eastern Europe, people were in the business of creating 'national' musical traditions. Schools and academies were established to transmit the correct form of the 'classical' tradition to the new generations.

During the nineteenth century, these developments were concomitant with a conviction shared by most Turkish-speaking Muslim intellectuals living in the Ottoman Empire: that the music of the Islamic peoples of the East was in a state of decline and decadence. However, variants of this particular approach to historicity exist in many modern political, literary and musical movements launched partly as a response to European colonialism. In South India, traditionalists and reformists alike focused on the creation of a refined taste for Indian music and its rescue from its 'present degeneracy' (Subramanian 1999: 146). As for the Orthodox, their musicians and musicologists meant to restore the holy melodies of the Greek Orthodox chant to their previous purity and grandeur. Regarding music, decadence was often

attributed to the lack of a scientific groundwork; hence experts sought to stimulate a scientific interest in music among the educated population.

In 1895, the Turkish musician Ali Rıfat (later, Çağatay)⁵ wrote: 'Oriental music, which is the product of the beautiful harmony of art and nature, is composed of melodies that give pleasure and enjoyment to the soul' (2004a: 19). The 'naturalness' of the so-called Oriental music—that is, the idea of musical sounds arising from inviolable mathematical relationships found in nature—was opposed to the 'unnaturalness' of the equal temperament of modern tuning as used in the West. This argument often served to emphasize the high emotional and sensual impact of Oriental music.⁶ It should be further noted that Ali Rıfat seemed to share the ancient Greek idealizations of music as a power affecting the soul, shaping the human character, civilizing behaviour and taming desires. However, the Turkish musician lamented that 'while in the last two centuries, it [Oriental music] showed a significant progress within the laws of the science of mathematics, yet merely due to the fact that the theory of this science [music] was not given enough importance it waned in comparison to its previous grandeur' (ibid.).

More often than not, those Ottoman musicians who were well versed in one of the Western languages and had contact with the relevant cultures, echoed the orientalist musicians of the West and invited their European colleagues to profit from the 'melodic richness' of their music. On 1 May 1908, Rauf Yekta wrote to the director of the reputed French music journal *La Revue Musicale*: 'In any case, it is regrettable that the West has not taken the trouble to examine Oriental music properly. Western musicians should profit from the abundant melodic richness of this music in order to enlarge the restricted resources of the major and minor modes' (Gökçen 2007: 111–12; my translation). Hence, the category 'Oriental music' referred to a music which was supposedly in decline yet was natural, powerfully emotional and melodically rich. Paradoxically, it needed scientific interest but had also remained 'natural' because it had stayed outside the influence of Western science.

When teaching in various musical institutions and transmitting the relevant repertoire, Ottoman musicians passionately debated the adoption or rejection of Western staff notation. But in this enterprise they had to cope with the dilemma of maintaining the 'authenticity and naturalness' of their music while at the same time validating it by establishing a scientific basis and systematizing their music with the use of modern methods. From the nineteenth-century nationalist discourses on musical heritage, these

musicians and teachers derived the idea of an almost 'sacred' and pure musical tradition inherited from ancestors who had established its rules. Typically, these people feared that their music would suffer corruption in case they could not prevent the penetration of foreign idioms. 'If we seek the progress of our music in altering its old style by intermingling it with *alafranga* [European music],' wrote Ali Rifat, 'we will destroy and lose the rules that the honourable ancestors have established with the utmost care' (2004a: 19).

However, on the other hand, Ali Rifat ardently supported the application of Western methods in order to uplift the performance of music and achieve a more precise rendition of the musical repertoire. He called for the construction of a special diapason and a metronome which could execute the rhythms of Ottoman art music and the establishment of a more precise notation system.⁷ The problem of intonation was at the centre of his concerns, related to the preservation of the fine and authentic intervals of Ottoman music. In different ways this question occupied the practitioners of Eastern Orthodox chant, Orthodox religious leaders with an interest in the redefinition of ritual and liturgy, the Western orientalist enthusiasts of 'Eastern music' and of course the Turkish, Greek, Armenian and Jewish musicians of the time. As expected, similar problems brought forth similar solutions. In 1881, Patriarch Joachim assembled a 'music council' to discuss various issues pertaining to musical theory. The group decided to have a special organ built that was capable of rendering the modes of church music (Erol 2009: Chapter 5). Similarly, Rifat called for the construction of an instrument with stable tones like the piano. However, this instrument was not to have equal-temperament tuning, accepted in Europe after a long resistance. Rather, it was to possess particular intermediary tones adjusted to the requirements of the modal system of Ottoman music, so that any *maqam* could be rendered at all positions across the keyboard (2004b: 49).⁸

Music and Mathematics: An Intra-professional Dialogue over Numbers

When reflecting on music, Enlightenment thinkers had emphasized the connection with mathematics, thereby linking this art with phenomena open to 'objective' measurement and systematization. Enlightenment thinking about music also involved the fetishizing of numbers as the embodying principle for both truth and progress (Leppert 1987). In the late 1890s, technical discussions on music and calculations, which generally concerned the proportional distances between the tones in a musical scale, increasingly

filled the columns of Greek and Turkish language newspapers including *Neologos*, *İkdam* and *Malumat*. Through an abundant use of figures, the authors staked a claim to objectivity and their work now appeared as 'scientific'—in other words, they found a place within a discourse highlighting the notion of progress. Figures and calculations, while totally incomprehensible to the non-expert public, became a ground for discussion, dialogue and exchange among Ottoman Greek, Turkish and Armenian musicians.

In February–March 1900, Ebu Refi Kazım published a rather technical and quantitative article in *Malumat* concerning the *perde* (tones) of Ottoman art music. Kazım was a graduate of the Darüşşafaka school in Istanbul, an institution founded in 1873 and well known for its scientific and modern education. He had studied traditional music with the prominent Mevlevi musician Zekâi Dede and was an adherent of the Mevlevi dervish order and composer of numerous religious hymns. Apart from his compositions, he authored tracts on the theory of music as well as a dictionary of musical terms. Given his interest in the science of harmonics, it is not surprising that he also taught mathematics and geometry in secondary schools.⁹ In his article, Kazım determined three types of intervals (the distance between two notes) in Ottoman music—*bud-i tanini*, *bud-i mücenneb-i tamm*, *bud-i mücenneb-i nakıs*—and presented the relevant calculations.

Remarkably, these three intervals corresponded to the so-called *meizonos*, *elassonos* and *elahistos* tones in Archimandrite Hrysanthos' famous book which provided the basis of Greek musical theory in modern times, thus demonstrating continuity and transfers among specialists concerned with the physical qualities of music. Moreover, Hrysanthos harked back to the work of Arab theorists (1832: 29). Even more tellingly, Kazım supported his argument by citing the figures determined by his contemporary, the Greek cantor Nikolaos Paganas for the chord lengths that rendered the 12 tones of European music. Kazım pointed out that the differences between these lengths conformed to his own findings.

Paganas was a member of the 'Ecclesiastical Music Society of Constantinople' in Fener, the seat of the Ecumenical Orthodox patriarch. In the previous year he had published a series of articles on music in the Greek-language newspaper *Tahidromos*. Further research will be necessary before we can truly understand the relationship between Kazım and Paganas. Was it a professional friendship which developed through meetings at musical lectures and concerts? Or was Kazım, perhaps, only familiar with the Greek musician's published work and respected his work for the common aim of

'progress in music' (Kazım 2004: 67)? Apparently, the two musicians' dialogue continued beyond this first article because, two months after Kazım's essay in *Malumat*, Paganas published an article in *Nea Efimeris* entitled 'The Treatise of N. Paganas about the Theories of the Musicologist Kazım Bey' (cited in Papadopoulos 1902: 28).

When it came to professional advice many Ottoman musicians engaged in multi-ethnic musicological dialogue. In 1885, the Turkish musician and music-score publisher Hacı Emin Efendi asked the opinion of the Armenian musician Leon Hancıyan about the manuscript of his recently composed 'instructor of notation' (Erol 2003). Ottoman Greek, Turkish, Armenian and Jewish musicians followed one another's experiments, research and works on music. In certain situations they also competed in terms of musical knowledge. A contract written out in Ottoman Turkish from the archive of the Greek Orthodox cantor Nilefs Kamarados documents an interesting contest, a bet on a musical issue between the cantor and Leon Hancıyan (Kamarados-Byzantios 1976).¹⁰ The dispute concerned the number of tones in the musical scale. According to the contract, if there were not six major tones in an octave, Hancıyan would give a harmonica to Kamarados, otherwise Kamarados would owe Hancıyan five Ottoman liras.¹¹

All these examples make it clear that the multi-ethnic discussion over music and numbers was part of a shared discourse highlighting the concept of 'progress'. It is in this context that we must view the attribution of a positive value to science and objectivity which was articulated through scholarly and technical debates. We should also note the similar stance of Greek and Turkish musicians regarding the perception of music as a heritage that had to be preserved yet which also needed to be reformed through the tools and methods of Western science.

Musical Borders, Competing Projects and Discourses

Fabricating national traditions is a project which often embraces the entire cultural domain of a given ethno-religious group, including language, education, literature, music, architecture and even religion. This tendency is relevant to the 'debate concerning the classics' which excited experts in cultural production during the last months of 1897. While largely a debate among literary men, certain musicologists became involved as well.

The agenda behind the debate over the classics was the creation of a national literary corpus. At the centre of the discussion was the possible

translation of the Western classics and the question whether this enterprise would promote original creation and generate 'Turkish classics'. This discussion resembled a number of other controversies concerning, for instance, alien influences in languages or the metres used in popular or classical poetry and song. Many assumed that the latter were unique to each nation. Necib Asım, a Turkist intellectual who took part in the debates on poetry, praised an article that had appeared in *Malumat*, which encouraged the use of ancient Turkish metres (2004). In 1897, on the eve of the victory against Greece, poet Mehmed Emin wrote his famous work, *Turkish Poems*, a novelty for its use of simple language and the Turkish syllabic metre. His preference for the Turkish over the Arabic metre fit nicely into the project of creating a national music tradition. In both literature and music, Turkists aimed at cutting back Arab and Persian elements as well as Western influences.

Mehmed Celal, another Turkish poet of the time, encouraged contemporary musicians to investigate the various forms of indigenous classical, popular and rural music: '[I]nstead of the Persian and Arabic music considered by some to be classics, they should prefer [our] national music, which, since its beginnings, has remained undeveloped in elite circles and is even about to be swept away by the flood called civilization' (2004: 105). Furthermore, subscribing to the scientific discourse like many of his contemporaries, Celal insisted on the cultivation of *fenn-i musiki* (scientific music) as he believed that contemporary music lacked this quality. He emphasized the need for uplifting the present state of music and basing it on science in order to create a *musiki-i fenni-i Osmanî veya şarki* (scientific Ottoman/Oriental music) (ibid.: 100, 105). In fact, even the name given to music was closely connected to questions of self-representation and identity. Ahmed Midhat, prominent Turkish author, as well as Salih Zeki, an intellectual known for his work on the philosophy and history of science, preferred the term 'Oriental music', by which they meant a music which the Turks shared with the other Muslim cultures of the East. On the other hand, Necib Asım (later, Yazıksız) insisted that music was a national creation (Kushner 1977: 85).

Western cultural historians have usually studied music histories and particularly biographies of musicians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the framework of reception history. Given nationalism was a major vantage point in nineteenth-century reception history, many authors identified the 'nation' with its prominent composers. This tendency is especially apparent in biographies of Ludwig van Beethoven and Richard Wagner.

Writing in the newspaper *Tercüman-ı Hakikat Gazetesi*, Ahmed Midhat was the first to call for the composition of a comprehensive history of Ottoman music including the biographies of the relevant musicians. In 1898, Nuri Şeyda began publishing some biographies in the newspaper *İkdam*. In August of the same year, Şeyda had completed his eighth biography, dealing with the life and works of Abdülkadir Meragi, the famed musician of the court of Timur. Şeyda introduced the musician as a great figure with considerable influence on the *milli musikimiz* (national music), claiming that Meragi was the first teacher of the *esatize-i Osmaniyye* (Ottoman masters).

However, where the boundaries of the nation were concerned, music was indeed a battlefield of varying discourses. Some months later, Asım attacked Şeyda, demanding the publication of the biographies of all Turkish musicians, not only those active in the Ottoman orbit. This criticism hints at the existence of competing projects when it came to the creation of a musical canon and the inclusion or exclusion of certain types of music and musicians, the difficulty being especially acute when authors tried to constitute national traditions within multi-ethnic settings. Yekta, considered the founder of Turkish musicology, took the debate further: '[I]n the history of our music, since old times, one has encountered among our Rum [Romaioi, Greek Orthodox] citizens [men] with both ecclesiastical and non-religious works' (1993: 66). In this context, Yekta referred to the famous eighteenth-century Greek Orthodox musician Zaharia ('*rahib* Zaharya') and to Andreas who was a *tanbur* player at the court of Süleyman the Magnificent. Moreover, he appealed to the Patriarch of Constantinople: if the records of the Patriarchate could provide biographical information regarding the prominent Greek musicians of previous centuries, this would be a great service to the 'History of Ottoman Music' then in the process of composition.

Yekta also made one of the boldest statements concerning the relationship between Ottoman art music and the ecclesiastical music of the Ottoman Greeks, claiming that *musiki-i Osmani* (Ottoman music) and the ecclesiastical music of the Rums had emerged from the same source and were based on the same theory. For Yekta, the seeming distinction between the two types of music was minor—a mere difference of style (*ibid.*).

Incidentally, Yekta used the term *musiki-i Osmani* more systematically in his articles published between 1898 and 1900. Although he continued to use the term until about 1907, he increasingly preferred to refer to this music as *şark musikisi* (Oriental music). However, I do not think that he

had used the former term in order to refer to a common Ottoman musical heritage which was the possession of a unified Ottoman nation. Around that time, Kazım was also using the term *musiki-i Osmani* definitely without implying any claims of this kind. More probably, here, the word 'Ottoman' related not to any nation but to the ruling elite of the Ottoman Empire.

When this article was translated into Greek by Apostolos Fotiadis, a Turkish-language teacher, and published in *Nea Efimeris*, the Greek musician Georgios Pahtikos responded with an article in *Ekklesiastiki Alitheia* entitled 'Musicology among the Ottomans'. For Pahtikos, the knowledge of music was national and musicology was nothing but the real and historical knowledge of the music of a nation, which formed part of the latter's specific character. Pahtikos disagreed with the view of the Turkish musicologist, claiming that the chants of the Greek Orthodox Church were not composed in the modes of Ottoman music: 'The modes of our ecclesiastical music, if they are precisely examined, are found to be identical [ομοίοι] not only with [those of] the Byzantine music, from which it directly descends but also with those of ancient Greek music' (1899: 462). Asserting further that music was a distinct quality of nations, he pointed to the European example—nations sharing the same musical scale and the same music theory produced different kinds of music. This view was not surprising since, in the last 30 years of the nineteenth century, music had become a political battleground for the aggressive nationalisms of the European states. In conclusion, Pahtikos appealed to Yekta and encouraged the writing of the history of Ottoman music, 'so that we learn its technical basis and its historical genesis' (*ibid.*). This was, of course, a call for the clarification of the relationship between the two traditions.

In previous years, Pahtikos had entered into discussions with other Greek musicians of Istanbul, including the previously mentioned Kamarados, about a question regarding the tones of ancient Greek music. Pahtikos' contributions shared in the nationalist approach of his time towards cultural practices which sought to reconstruct the continuity of the nation through music (see Kamarados and Pahtikos 1900). Furthermore, in his writings and speeches, Pahtikos had been calling for the creation of a new type of Greek art music based on the fusion of folk and ecclesiastical melodies on the one hand and Western technique on the other.

On the Greek side to the debate, one of the dominant approaches advocated a seamless continuity of cultural elements and an authentic and pure tradition, thus excluding all contact with the Ottoman milieu. By contrast

the second approach, prevalent particularly among certain Istanbul Greeks regarded the reference to the Ottoman culture or music as legitimate, subject to the condition that the sources of the latter also went back to ancient Greek culture which they, the Rum of Istanbul, saw as the basis of their ethnic and cultural identity. In 1900, Iakovos Nafpliotis, a cantor at the Great Church, at the Ecclesiastical Music Society of Constantinople in which he introduced the hitherto unpublished work of the eighteenth-century church musician Panagiotis Halatzoglou: 'The Comparison of Arabo-Persian Music with our Ecclesiastical Music' (see EMS2: 68). To Halatzoglou's treatise, which was published in *Ekklesiastiki Alitheia* (June, 1900), Nafpliotis added a footnote. Exactly at the point where the author discussed Ottoman rhythms, the editor noted that these complex rhythms were combinations of smaller units which corresponded to ancient Greek metres. For example, he claimed that the rhythms *sofyan* (4/4) and *semâi* (3/4) derived from the Greek poetic metres *paiona* and *spondaic*. Subsequently, stating that all other Ottoman rhythms derived from these basic rhythmic feet, he concluded that the Ottoman types were based on the rhythms of the ancient Greeks.

This claim brings us back to the question of historical continuity. For the Greek cantor's evaluation of the rhythms used in Ottoman music (which he called 'Arabo-Persian') was situated within a specific discourse—at the time rather prevalent among the learned elite—concerning the cultural identity of the modern Greeks. According to this interpretation, Arabic and Persian musical elements and idioms were not foreign to modern Greeks because they were Greek in essence, having their roots in the imperial expansion of Greek culture after the fourth century BCE.

Conclusion

A great deal has been written about the vanishing of the cosmopolitan worlds of the Ottoman cities as a result of the empire's disintegration. Taking music as a sphere of communication, I have attempted to show that in the late Ottoman Empire, particularly in Istanbul, music was a pluralistic social and aesthetic field governed by the exchange of specialized knowledge and skills. Teaching and performing 'traditional' music also served as an anchor that allowed nationalists of various backgrounds to position themselves against the West, its culture and its aesthetic conventions. At the same time, music functioned as a discursive space where national projects and elite discourses on identity competed with one another.

Yet, more needs to be said on the disappearance of this multicultural musical world. At the very least it is worth asking: What happened to these people? Pahtikos died in 1916, still quite young, without really having experienced the dissolution of the empire. As a result of his early death, the Greek art music of modern times did not owe him as much as he might have wished and, during the following decades, this responsibility fell on a couple of Greek Western-educated composers. Stamboulite (originally Chiot) cantor Nilefs Kamarados passed away in 1922, the year which profoundly marked the history of both modern Turkey and Greece. At least he died a natural death, unlike his brother Vasilios Kamarados, another Rum cantor of Istanbul who hanged himself in the church where he was employed in Athens, probably due to the unbearable frustrations of refugee life and expatriation. On the other hand, Turkish musician Yekta lived on to gain a reputation as one of the significant musicologists of Republican Turkey, which still continues to debate the origins of its 'traditional' music.

Notes

- 1 For the interesting biography and the multifaceted activities of Ali Ufki, the seventeenth-century Polish musician in the Ottoman court, see Cem Behar (1990).
- 2 The Armenian musician Artin wrote his treatise on the performance of 'art' (as opposed to popular) music in Turkish with Armenian characters.
- 3 For the wonderful performance of İzak Algazi surviving in recordings from the 1920s and early 1930s, see the Algazi recording (2004).
- 4 Lakshmi Subramanian (1999) has brilliantly shown how, beginning from the 1880s, the orientalist project was seized by Indian elite publicists who sought the 'revival' of Classical Indian Music and contributed to the redefinition of the Carnatic music of South India.
- 5 Ali Rifat (Çağatay) was an oud player and composer, who taught at Darüelhan (House of Melodies), the music school which opened in 1914. He was the founder of the Oriental Music Association in Istanbul, established during the First World War, and also the founding president of the Institute for Turkish Music.
- 6 Many seventeenth-century musicians, philosophers and theologians in Europe strenuously resisted the idea of altering the harmonies of music: 'Equal temperament represented an assault on an idea that had gripped thinkers in nearly every field as a powerful metaphor for a universe ruled by mathematical law' (Isacoff 2002: 6).
- 7 'Maahaza (diyapazon) ve (metronom) gibi fenn-i musikide fevkalade haiz-i ehemmiyet olan bazı alatin bizde de ta'mimi ve (metronom)a mukabil Türkçe

usulleri gösterir bir alet yapılması ve bizim musikide mevcut olan sesleri şimdiki gibi karine ile değil aslını gösterir ve nağamatını kaffeten zapt edebilir ekmel bir nota vücuda getirilmesi taht-ı elzemiyettedir.' (Notwithstanding, it is imperative to propagate instruments that are important for the science of music, such as the diapason and the metronome, to construct an instrument corresponding to the metronome which shows the Turkish *usuls* (rhythm patterns), and create a most perfect notation system which indicates the real values of the sounds that we have in our music, rather than the present one that designates by inference, and one which is able to record tunes in their entirety) (Rıfat 2004a: 23; my translation).

- 8 'Halbuki (piyano) gibi sabitü'l-ahenk bir çalgının bizde de yapılması lazım geldikde araya konulacak sesler nasıl olmalı ki herhangi bir (perde)den başlarsa başlansın her (makam) icra edilebilsin.' (Whereas, which notes should be inserted, in case we construct an instrument like the [piano] with fixed sounds so that whichever note [*perde*] is used as a starting point, one can play all the *makams*) (Rıfat 2004b: 49, my translation).
- 9 For Ebu Refi Kazım's biography, see Yılmaz Öztuna (1969: 463–4).
- 10 Leon Hancıyan was Nilefs Kamarados' instructor in the Armenian (Hampartsum) notation (Kamarados-Byzantios 1976: 15). Not surprisingly, in Kamarados' archive, there are musical scores written in Hampartsum notation.
- 11 Archive of Nilefs Kamarados, Lilian Voudouri Music Library, Athens, File (10.1.1): 'Chants Turcs'. The transliteration of the document is as follows: 'Badi-i mukavele sened[i] oldur ki Rum Pisaltisi Onilyas ile musiki hocası Leon Efendiler meyanında akd-ı mukavele olmuşdur şöyle ki bir oktav dahilinde yani ber tekmiil veterin nüsfinin derununda altı tekmiil sesi bulunmaz ise Leon Efendi mecburdur bir ayaklı armonika vermeğe şayed bulunur ise Onilyas Efendi Leon Efendi'ye mecburdur beş aded Osmanlı lirası vermeğe ve işbu mukaveleyi tarafeyn kabul etdiklerine mübeyyin işbu mukavele senedi tarafeyn temhir kılındı Fi 26 Teşrin-i evvel sene 1303 [7 Kasım 1887] Mezkûr Liyon Efendi'ye kefil bi'l-malim Ermenice (?) imza.' (The cause of this contract deed, which has been concluded between the Greek *psaltis* Onilyas and the music teacher Leon Efendi, is such that if there are not six major tones in an octave, that is, in the half-length of a string, Leon Efendi is obliged to give a harmonica; if there are, Onilyas Efendi is obliged to give 5 Ottoman liras to Leon Efendi. And both sides have certified that they have accepted this contract and sealed this contract deed. Dated 26 October 1303 [7 November 1887] Guarantor for above-mentioned Liyon Efendi [Armenian, signature]) (my translation).

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