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Resounding 1923

Musical Modernities from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic

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Abstract The introduction provides an overview of the concepts and topics explored in this themed issue. It begins by reflecting on practices of commemoration and the significance of 1923 in modern Turkish history. It then discusses the concept of "modernities" in relation to the Ottoman Empire and post-Ottoman nation-states, both in terms of musical developments and broader political and cultural processes. It emphasizes continuities and interactions between Ottoman and post-Ottoman periods, as well as between Europe and Turkey, and highlights the global diversity of experiences of modernity as demonstrated by a range of scholarship in musicology and other fields. The final section summarizes the contributions to the themed issue.

Introduction

The founding of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 is among the most potent symbols of twentieth-century modernity.[1] From the ashes of World War I and its aftermath, the new republic arose to occupy a prominent place in global political and historical imaginaries – in Turkey no less than in other places – as a model of progressive transformation from an Islamic empire rooted in the Oriental past, to a secular nation-state destined to finally take its place in the modern Western world.[2] Except, of course, things did not quite work out that way. Moreover, the fact that they did not suggests that the discourse of "modernity" itself may need to be reevaluated. As the contributions to this issue of *the world of music* (*new series*) demonstrate, the idea of modernity as an attribute of "the West" – and, relatedly, as antithetical to "the Orient" or "the Islamic world" – continues to be central to political and cultural discourses both within and outside of Turkey. Yet closer inves-

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tigation of the historical conditions that led to the construction of such discourses and their present-day manifestations reveals a more complex story, in which the relationship between the empire of the past and the republic of the future – or between Turkey and Europe – is one of intimacy and entanglement rather than difference and opposition.

This issue of *the world of music* (*new series*) reconsiders the historical and contemporary discourses that have accrued around 1923 and its symbolic ramifications by examining the relationship between music, politics, and social life in Turkey and beyond from the late Ottoman period until the present. By bringing together scholars whose research engages with diverse periods, musical genres, and theoretical approaches, it offers critical new perspectives on music and modernity, particularly in terms of political and cultural interactions between the Ottoman Empire, the Republic of Turkey, Europe, and the other communities and states that emerged out of the Ottoman Empire.

The publication of this issue a century after the establishment of the Republic offers an opportunity to reflect on the ways in which past, present, and future intermingle in discourses and practices of music and modernity. The idea for the issue was conceived following a roundtable discussion at the 21st Congress of the International Musicological Society in Athens in August 2022. Responding to the theme of the conference ("Music across borders") as well as its location in south-eastern Europe, the roundtable was titled "Listening to Europe, Hearing Istanbul: Musical Borders and Local Modernities from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic." The papers presented in Athens formed the basis for three articles in this issue, while the broader discussion initiated by the roundtable shaped the overall conception of the issue, which has been enriched by contributions and responses from other scholars both in and outside Turkey.[3]

It was originally intended to publish this issue to coincide with the centennial of the Republic. However, between the profoundly damaging earthquakes in Gaziantep and the surrounding region, the hard-fought general elections that followed, and the volatile economic situation, 2023 was an exceptionally challenging year in Turkey. Academic publication schedules are liable to delay at the best of times, and can hardly be regarded as a priority in the midst of immense human suffering and political and economic turmoil. But in any case, the lateness of this issue may in some ways

be appropriate to its themes and orientations. Rather than a monumental narrative or festive celebration of Ottoman and Republican music histories, the articles offer critical reflections and reassessments from new and unexpected angles, as the echoes of 1923 continue to resound unpredictably, both forwards and backwards in time, across multiple geographies and through diverse social structures. The articles are thus located in the wake of Republican modernity, rather than being precisely synchronized with its historiographic and ideological cadences.

This introduction begins by reflecting on the significance of 1923 and practices of commemoration as a means of recalibrating ongoing relationships between past and present. The next section explores the concept of "modernities," situating developments in Turkey in the context of global historical processes and debates about modernity, capitalism, and Western coloniality. The following sections discuss concepts of modernity within general musicological scholarship, before proceeding to a more detailed consideration of modernity in the existing literature on Ottoman and Turkish musics. The final section provides a summary of the individual articles, which together demonstrate the vitality and diversity of contemporary research on music and modernity in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic.

Premonitions and echoes of 1923

Public life in Turkey has long been shaped by the rhythms of national holidays, celebrations, and commemorations, organized around significant dates and events that form part of official historical narratives as well as contested collective memories (Özyürek 2007, Öztürkmen 2001). In musicology, conferences and edited volumes are frequently organized around the centennials of famous personalities (e.g. Ayangil 2016) or institutions (Yahya Kaçar 2018; Kara 2018). One of the key volumes on the music history of the early Republic was published as part of a project celebrating the seventy-fifth anniversary of its founding (Paçacı 1999). Commemorative events and publications are often sponsored by state agencies or institutions with clear ideological investments and goals, which reflect broader political and discursive strategies. Under the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP), the failed coup attempt of 15 July 2016 was immediately memo-

rialized through speeches, rallies, and the renaming of public spaces, as well as through the unofficial channels of social media. President Erdoğan and his supporters were thus able to narrativize the events of 15 July in order to redefine the meaning of terms such as democracy, secularism, and popular will within the longer historical context of military coups during the Republican period. More broadly, Erdoğan's repeated invocation of historically significant dates (not least the centennial of the Republic) has played an important role in his attempt to position himself as a visionary leader whose stature is at least equal to that of the founding father of the Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. This must be understood within larger contestations over the relationship between the history of the Republic and the current period of AKP rule, the latter being strategically defined by Erdoğan and his supporters as the "New Turkey" (Yeni Türkiye) (Selvi 2023, Kubicek 2023, Küçük & Özselçuk 2019)

Thus, commemoration involves an attempt to rearticulate relationships between past and present. Furthermore, it is enacted not only through texts and representations, but also through embodied, collective actions in which performance, sound, and affect are crucial (Fauser & Figueroa 2020). State-sanctioned commemorations may be contested by the memorial practices of other states or national communities, or by those of other institutions and publics within the domestic sphere. The official commemoration of the Gallipoli campaign in Turkey in 2015, in which military and nationalist music featured centrally (O'Connell 2021, Maksudyan & Alkan 2023), was conspicuously timed to coincide with the centennial of the Armenian genocide, around which a complex of memorial practices has developed both in Armenia and in the diaspora (Kasbarian 2018, Buchanan 2017). The year 2023 marked not only the centennial of the Turkish Republic, but also a decade since the Gezi Park protests, a political moment that has generated its own practices of remembrance (Karataş & Gencel Bek 2023, Siso et al. 2024). Likewise, the performance of music, sound, and silence has been used by a variety of protest movements that seek redress for injustices perpetrated by the Turkish state in the recent and more distant past, and in doing so attempt to construct alternative historical narratives.[4]

Political movements and upheavals in Turkey have often revolved around the use of public spaces that are materially or symbolically connected to the past. The Gezi Park protests emerged in response to the decision to build

a replica of an Ottoman barracks (restyled as a shopping center) in Taksim Square, a location that is strongly associated with both public protest and the early history of the Republic. This decision was part of the AKP's broader and ongoing strategy of remaking public spaces through large construction projects that reanimate fantasies of the Ottoman-Islamic past while simultaneously embracing crony capitalism and neoliberal consumerism (Akcan 2015). Neo-Ottomanism has not just been a feature of urban heritage and redevelopment, but has permeated all areas of public life in contemporary Turkey, from foreign policy to literature and popular TV shows (Raudvere & Onur 2023, Hecker et al. 2022, Ergin & Karakaya 2017). Contests over public space, often understood within the framework of opposition between Islamist and secularist visions of Turkish identity, have also involved disputes over the legitimacy and significance of Muslim sonic and bodily practices. Prominent recent examples include the use of the call to prayer to mobilize popular resistance against the July 15 coup attempt (Koymen 2017), the construction of the vast Çamlıca Mosque that now dominates Istanbul's cityscape, and the reconversion of the Aya Sofya (Hagia Sophia) into a space for Muslim worship (Kocaömer Yosmaoğlu 2021).

The notion of a foundational date suggests a clear demarcation between "before" and "after." In the case of Turkey, 1923 has often served as an index of a radical break with the past, in which the establishment of the Republic led to a total erasure of the political, social, and cultural heritage of the Ottoman Empire. To be sure, the Kemalist regime implemented wide-ranging reforms and revolutionary policies that profoundly reshaped Turkish society and its regional and global orientations (Clayer et al. 2019, Yılmaz 2013). However, scholars have long been aware of significant continuities between the empire and the Republic (Zürcher 2010, Hanioğlu 1997, Meeker 2002, Philliou 2021, Göçek 2011). In more recent decades, interrelated domestic and geopolitical developments including the emergence of political Islam as well as Turkey's growing influence as a regional power have demonstrated the extent to which echoes of the Ottoman past continue to resonate in Turkey's present.

For some proponents of neo-Ottomanism, the Kemalist Republic represents an "alien" interruption in the longer history of Ottoman-Islamic culture (Küçük & Özselçuk 2019:11). Yet if neo-Ottomanists are captivated by a "nostalgia for the empire" (Yavuz 2020), the political ascendancy of Islamist

parties including the AKP has provoked secularists to reassert Kemalist values and symbols within the neoliberalized private sphere, a phenomenon that Esra Özyürek (2006) has aptly labeled "nostalgia for the modern." Across the political spectrum, cultural practices including music have been important sites for articulating narratives about the past and its significance for the present. The notion of "resounding" 1923 therefore offers a framework for reimagining the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey through musical practices and discourses. Rather than a clean historical break or a steady developmental progression between two opposing periods or cultural worlds, the sounds that reverberate across the borders between empire and republic reveal connections, premonitions, returns, and echoes between multiple pasts and presents.

Turkey, Europe, and global modernities

For much of the twentieth century, the Republic of Turkey served as an object lesson in modernization theory. It was hailed as a paradigmatic example of the inexorable transformation of traditional religious societies into secular nation-states (Lerner 1958, Lewis 1961, Berkes 1964). Yet even as a particular vision of Eurocentric modernity appeared to have triumphed in Turkey, a variety of factors were conspiring to undermine this reassuringly predictable narrative. In the final decades of the twentieth century, there was growing disillusionment with military tutelage over civil society (enforced through multiple coups d'état) as well as with the elitist, statist, top-down policies that had become entrenched during the foundational period of single-party rule. Assimilationist and corporatist models of nationhood were destabilized by the emergence of Kurdish separatism and rapid integration into a globalized, neoliberal economic order. Islamic conservatism gained ground as a political ideology, while Muslim lifestyles became more visible in the public sphere. The fitful European Union accession process led to growing demands for recognition of minority rights, while the liberalization of the political domain facilitated the election of Islamist parties to municipal and national administrations.

These political and social developments unfolded in parallel with academic debates that brought the legitimacy of Kemalist political ideals and historical narratives into question. Both liberal-Leftist and Islamist-conser-

vative intellectuals came increasingly to see the early Republican regime as an authoritarian system that had dangerously alienated large swaths of the population through its radical secularism and coercive imposition of Western values. The internal critique of Kemalist modernization was bolstered by global intellectual, political, and cultural movements, including postmodernism and postcolonialism, that vigorously challenged the narrative of Western modernity as universally valid and inherently progressive, instead exposing its limitations, exclusions, and contradictions. Thus, "post-Kemalism" allowed for the rise of Islamist parties as part of a democratizing process that attempted to reintegrate elements of society that had been marginalized by Kemalist hegemony, leading to the coming to power of the AKP in 2002. However, Erdoğan's subsequent slide into populist authoritarianism has all but destroyed the fragile alliance between moderate Islamist and liberal factions, prompting some scholars to conceptualize Turkey's current uncertain historical moment as one of "post-post-Kemalism" (Aytürk 2015, Szurek & Türesay 2022).

The developments of the last few decades in Turkey have thus highlighted the complex and variable meanings of "modernity," whether as a historical period, a political ideal, or a set of cultural practices. From the perspective of classical modernization theory and Kemalist policy, modernity was associated with secular Western values that stood in direct opposition to Islam as an embodiment of the pre-modern, imperial past. However, more recent scholarship has argued that contemporary Islamism, both as a political ideology and as a lifestyle choice, rather than simply being traditional or anti-modern, is a way of constructing and articulating alternative experiences of modernity (Jung & Sinclair 2020, Çınar 2005, Göle 1996). Likewise, if the Ottoman Empire was once regarded as antithetical to modernity, there is now an abundance of research illustrating how Ottoman subjects engaged with and critically reflected upon modern technologies, political ideas, social practices, and cultural forms (e.g. Ringer & Charrière 2020, Kozma et al. 2014, Kurzman 2002). The question of modernity in Turkey, then, is directly connected to competing historical narratives about the Ottoman Empire and Islam, and about the development of secularism and nationalism. Moreover, these narratives are indexed to broader debates about the relationship between modernity and the West, whether understood as a historical process or as a discursive strategy.

In the late twentieth century, geopolitical developments including the formation of newly decolonized states, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the proliferation of ethnic and ideological conflicts, and the global circulation of technologies, commodities, and labor all contributed to a reevaluation of modernity. On the one hand, it was increasingly acknowledged that modernity was unable to deliver the utopian society it may once have promised, or even to sustain a belief in rationality, objective truth, or universal human values. Indeed, far from leading to an egalitarian paradise, modernity seemed to lie at the heart of the most disturbing and violent events in human history (Bauman 2007 [1989]). On the other hand, modern technologies, institutions, lifestyles, and ideas were apparently no longer confined to Europe and North America, but were flourishing – or being grappled with – in societies all over the globe. Accordingly, scholars developed concepts such as "multiple modernities" (Eisenstadt 2000) or "alternative modernities" (Gaonkar 2001), which resisted the teleology of an inevitable convergence towards a singular Western modernity. Instead, it was argued that modernity took many unpredictable forms, as its ideas, technologies, and practices were creatively adapted and reshaped within diverse cultural environments.

The concept of multiple modernities (or closely related terms such as "alternative" or "later" modernities) has been effectively employed in the analysis of Turkish history and society (Göle 2000, Kaya 2004, Göksel 2016). However, while this paradigm offers an important corrective to the determinism and Eurocentrism of classical modernization theory, it has not been without its critics. As Arif Dirlik has argued, the idea of multiple modernities emerged after the demise of socialism as a viable systemic alternative to capitalism, the global spread of which is fundamental to global modernity. In the absence of a structural critique of the inequalities produced by capitalism, according to Dirlik, the notion of alternative modernities offers little more than a retreat into culturalism based on purported ontological differences between essentialized nations, religions, or civilizations (which are themselves products of modernity). Furthermore, culturalist arguments may be deployed by diverse actors across the political spectrum, from postcolonial theorists to hardline nationalists and religious fundamentalists (Dirlik 2013, Dirlik 2003).

The theory of multiple modernities assumes that the origins of modernity lie in Europe, and that its institutional and technological forms were then exported around the globe, where they were appropriated and adapted to different social and cultural contexts. However, postcolonial and decolonial thinkers have long argued that modernity did not develop independently of the geopolitical and ideological structures of European colonialism, and indeed that modernity and coloniality are so deeply intertwined as to be almost indistinguishable (Dussel 1993, Quijano 2007). Due to this (suppressed) linkage, the fundamental premises of social scientific discourse, encapsulated in key terms such as "modernity" and "tradition," function as a means of maintaining and legitimizing the hegemony of the West (Bhambra 2023, Chakrabarty 2000). In order to reconceptualize modernity, then, it is not enough to document the diversity of cultural forms that an originary European modernity has taken through its global dissemination, or to compare varieties of modernity as they have developed within discrete and self-contained nations or civilizations. Rather, it is necessary to attend to the historical connections and entanglements that facilitated the emergence of modernity as a globally shared condition, while also acknowledging both the multiplicity of experiences of modernity and its inextricable links to coloniality and capitalism.

The place of modernity in Turkey, or of Turkey in modernity, is complicated by its geographical and geopolitical position. Alongside neighboring states and political communities in south-eastern Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East, Turkey's present is profoundly shaped by its imperial pasts. While European colonialism and capitalism have played a major role in the histories of the region, discourses of modernity have also been enacted through other structures of power, including Ottoman imperiality as well as a multitude of nation- and community-building projects that have coalesced around diverse ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups. These projects have been variously positioned in relation to the imaginary poles of "East" and "West," which function as a generalized discursive framework for identifying relative degrees of proximity (measured along both spatial and temporal axes) to modernity. However, the location of Turkey and other post-Ottoman states on the margins of Europe – or, one might say, the location of Europe on the periphery of the (post-)Ottoman world – means that discourses of distance and difference are predicated on experiences of intimacy

and familiarity. If the Orient has been integral to the formation of modern European subjectivities, the Occident is no less fundamental to political and social imaginaries in late Ottoman and post-Ottoman spaces, and indeed in many other global contexts (Ahıska 2003, Chen 1995).

In short, the plural form *modernities* in the title of this issue is intended to signal what Gaonkar (2001:15) calls the "iridescent" quality of modernity, which takes on multiple features from different perspectives. Modernity may be fundamentally connected to the ideas of "Europe" or "the West" and to the forces of capitalism and coloniality. Yet it is also many other things to many other people, from transformative political projects or economic policies to quotidian habits, affective relations, cultural products, and performative practices. The meanings ascribed to these various aspects of modernity vary, circulate, and are contested among and between different social groups, individuals, and institutions. *Modernities*, then, underscores not so much a presumed ontological difference between Western and non-Western subjectivities, but the multiplicity of experiences, practices, and discourses of modernity that coexist within particular spaces (including Europe itself) and are at the same time connected to larger geopolitical and discursive formations. Given the importance of cultural and social practices as signifiers, conduits, and products of modernity, the following sections will consider how intersections between music and modernity have been conceptualized in musicological scholarship both in general and with reference to the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic.

Musicology and modernity

How might we understand the relationship between music and modernity? Recent scholarship in historical musicology has favored a reconceptualization of music history that is based not on periodization into conventional stylistic categories such as "classical" or "Romantic" but on music as "the aesthetic mediation of social modernity" (Johnson 2015:7, see also e.g. Berger & Newcomb 2005, Chua 1999). Music is thus situated within larger historical narratives of modernity, understood as an assemblage of distinctive technological, political, economic, intellectual, and aesthetic processes and concomitant transformations in subjectivity that occurred between approximately the seventeenth to twentieth centuries. This entails not only a more

expansive chronology of musical modernity, but also a more inclusive understanding of aesthetic practices, which are not restricted to the self-conscious modernisms of the twentieth century. Yet despite its productive interrogation of stylistic periodization and its engagement with larger historical processes, such scholarship seems to take for granted that modernity is an exclusively Western affair, and to limit its scope to the canonical repertoire, composers, and social and intellectual contexts of European art music.

By contrast, drawing on postcolonial theory, some musicologists have emphasized the interdependency of European art music as an ideological construct and the discourse of modernity, both of which are constituted through the colonial encounter and the silencing or marginalization of "non-Western" voices (Irving 2019, Wilbourne & Cusick 2021, Tomlinson 2007, Tomlinson 2002, Bloechl 2008). Furthermore, if popular music was once heard by European intellectuals merely as a symptom of the malaise of capitalist modernity (Adorno 1941), there is now a large body of scholarship demonstrating not only that popular musical practices are integral to understanding Western modernity writ large, but that "popular" and "elite" forms of musical modernism have often been closely intertwined (Piekut 2019, Ballantine 2014, Schleifer 2011, Lewis 1996, Manuel 1995, Gilroy 1993). Relatedly, musical modernism is increasingly conceptualized as a global phenomenon, taking account of a wide variety of projects beyond Europe and North America as well as the multiple mediations and migrations that connect different geographical and social spaces (Heile 2024, Lee & Miller 2023, Cohen 2022, Janz & Yang 2019, Madrid 2015, Burckhalter et al. 2013).

To a large extent, the formation of ethnomusicology as an intellectual discipline was predicated on a dichotomy between "modernity" and "tradition" – the latter associated not only with the non-West, but also the "folk" and the ancient or medieval (Cole 2021, Busse Berger 2021, Blum et al. 1993, Nettl & Bohlman 1991, Tomlinson 1999). If the aim of ethnomusicologists was to preserve and study "traditional" musics in the face of an increasingly globalized Western modernity, this seemed also to require an understanding of how such musics were subject to processes of "modernization," "Westernization," or "classicization," often in tandem with nationalist projects (Nettl 1985, Moro 2004, Baumann 2000, Harris 2016, Bakhle 2005). However, musical modernity is not a self-contained phenomenon that was created in the West and subsequently exported, copied, or adapted in other places, but

rather is continually co-produced through the interactions and imaginations of multiple actors and constituencies. While these interactions have been intensified by the technological, economic, and political conditions of late modernity, they are embedded in processes and structures – not least those of coloniality, but also a variety of media technologies from print to sound recording – that have ensured the connectivity of global cultures over a longer period, and the continued resonance of these historical connections in the present. Moreover, as argued in relation to modernity more generally, experiences and discourses of musical modernity are manifold rather than singular, varying not simply between the West and elsewhere but also within and across other global contexts (Erlmann 1999, Bohlman 2008, Weidman 2006, Jones 2001, Radano & Olaniyan 2016, yamomo 2018, Robinson & Levine 2019, Babiracki 2017).

Ottoman and Republican musical modernities

Scholars have approached the question of musical modernity in Turkey and the Ottoman Empire in a variety of ways, which should themselves be understood as part of the discursive construction of modernity. Throughout the twentieth century, the Ottoman Empire was understood as antithetical to modernity by both Republican elites and Euro-American commentators. Moreover, Ottoman music was seen as a mysterious cultural domain that was particularly resistant to the imperatives of modernization, while Western music, correspondingly, was deemed inaccessible to those who were insufficiently modern. As Bernard Lewis declared in *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, "music, like science, is part of the inner citadel of Western culture, one of the final secrets to which the aspiring newcomer must penetrate" (Lewis 1961:436). Such ideas were, of course, determined by the politics of Orientalism and its peculiar understanding of Islam and Islamicate cultures (Stokes 2002, Said 1978). Yet while the notion of an essential and unbridgeable difference between Ottoman-Islamic and Western spheres is central to Orientalist discourse, it also underpins the valorization of unchanging "traditional" or "authentic" cultural practices, whether by Western ethnomusicologists or Muslim conservatives in contemporary Turkey.

Some scholars have sought to understand musical developments during the Ottoman period in broader terms. Drawing on the revisionist historical work of Rifa'at 'Ali Abou-El-Haj (1991), Walter Feldman (2024 [1996]:xi–xv, 53–5; see also Feldman 2019) has argued that changes in Ottoman musical life during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were an aspect of a "locally generated modernity" that involved a process of secularization within elite Ottoman culture. Other scholars have situated Ottoman music and sonic practices within a dynamic interpretive framework that includes local social and intellectual developments as well as entanglements and comparisons with Europe and other cultural areas (Haug 2016, Demirbaş & Scharrer 2024, Fırat 2024, Behar 2017, Behar 2022, Ergin 2015, Greve 2015, Aksoy 2003, Artan 2014, Olley 2023). This scholarship can be seen as an aspect of a more general trend within both Ottoman studies and global history that understands early modernity not as a unique and isolated European achievement, but as a set of globally connected processes and interactions (Trakulhun & Weber 2015, Islamoğlu & Perdue 2009, Aksan & Goffman 2007, Hamadeh 2004, Andrews & Kalpaklı 2005, Subrahmanyam 1997).

Yet as with the theory of multiple modernities, the concepts of "locally generated modernity" or "global early modernity" inevitably involve some kind of reference (whether explicitly stated or not) to European historical developments and discourses. The argument that transformations in early modern Ottoman musical life involved a process of secularization, for example, makes little sense without the prior understanding that "secularism" is fundamental to the discourse of Western modernity (Asad 2003). Similarly, discussions of Ottoman modernity often revolve around the integration of European knowledge, aesthetics, material products, or individuals into Ottoman society. At the same time, arguments for an Ottoman or Islamic modernity may have different political implications, from the claim that particular periods (such as the so-called Tulip Age) were a (failed) precursor to the secularism of the Republic (Erimtan 2008), to the revivalist idea that "modern" values are in fact inherent to the intellectual genealogies and social structures of Islam. Thus, while it is necessary to attempt to understand modernity in global rather than exclusively Western terms, it is equally important to acknowledge the discursive and actual connections between "modernity" and "Europe." These connections become most starkly evident during the nineteenth century, when the geopolitical, economic, and ideo-

logical relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Europe shifted decisively in favor of the latter.

Musical developments in the late Ottoman period occurred in tandem with the proliferation of communication and media technologies, the impact of wide-ranging political, educational, and social reforms implemented by the state and other actors, and the integration of the empire into an economic and diplomatic world order dominated by European powers. Western musical forms became an increasingly common feature of Ottoman urban life, from elite salons, military bands, and commercial opera houses to open-air theaters, cafes, and nightclubs (Karadağlı 2020, Fuhrmann 2020, Alimdar 2016, Eğecioğlu 2012, Mestyan 2012, Mestyan 2010, Baydar 2010, Aracı 2010, Aracı 2006). The investment of the state and bourgeoisie in the idea of reform entailed institutional changes that transformed the ways in which music was taught and learned. Imperial music schools and ensembles were restructured, musical and scholarly societies were established, and dozens of private music schools emerged (Öner 2022, Öner 2021, Toker 2016, Özden 2015, Hacıosmanoğlu 2014).

Print technology enabled the increased circulation of music in written form, including collections of lyrics in multiple scripts and languages, diverse musical genres in Western, Greek, and Armenian notation systems, theoretical or pedagogical treatises, and books and articles on music history and criticism (Sanlıkol 2023, Andrikos 2021, Arslan 2020, Yalçın & İde 2019, Kıyak 2017, Yalçın 2016, Paçacı 2010, Ayangil 2008, Prätor 2002, Jäger 1996). Commercial recording media together with transformations in urban space, social structures, and patterns of migration promoted the audibility of a wide range of genres and performers, including women and those from marginalized ethnic and religious communities (MacArthur-Seal 2024, Ayas 2023, Poulos 2023, Atalay 2021, Blackthorne-O'Barr 2021, Ünlü 2016, Woodall 2010, Fuhrmann 2010).

The transformations of the long nineteenth century are often understood in binary terms, as an existential struggle between "traditional" Ottoman music and "modern" Western music. However, as in other domains, from literature and architecture to politics and economics, the reality was a complex field of interactions in which a variety of forms were combined in different ways to produce multiple hybrid genres and practices. Thus, for example, the staging of opera did not mean simply the wholesale import of a

European product, but facilitated the emergence of localized forms of musical theater that drew on existing dramatic and musical practices, languages, and plot elements (Sevinçli 2016, And 1999 [1976]). Similarly, although Western staff notation was integrated into late Ottoman musical practices, it competed with a variety of other notational forms, while the social structures and pedagogical methods of oral transmission remained fundamental to music education (Poulos 2017, Poulos 2011, Behar 2006).

Nonetheless, debates about music in the late Ottoman period were typically predicated on a discursive opposition between "Turkish" (alaturka) and "European" (alafranga) musics, which were indexed to a wider set of terms such as "Eastern" (şarkî) and "Western" (garbî) or "old" (kadîm) and "new" (cedîd), and applied to diverse areas of life from timekeeping and dress to eating habits and gender roles (Wishnitzer 2015, O'Connell 2005, Mardin 1974). For late Ottoman intellectuals, the dream of modernity – or the "new" – was intimately bound up with ideals of reform, progress, science, and civilization, and with the empire's relationship to Europe (Çelik 2021, Yalçınkaya 2015, Özdalga 2005). Accordingly, most late Ottoman authors who wrote about music believed that progress and civilization were necessary and desirable, but disagreed about how they should be achieved. While some advocated the adoption of Western music as a universal art form that was cultivated by all civilized nations, others argued that Eastern music was in fact more ancient and sophisticated than Western music, but that it should be reformed through the application of modern scientific principles (Olley 2024, Arslan 2016, Üner 2006, Öztürk 2011).

These debates did not happen in isolation, but in dialogue with developments in Europe as well as among other Ottoman communities, and were embedded within broader political dynamics, including the formation of pan-Islamic networks and ideologies and the emergence of nationalist movements. Scholars of music in the late Ottoman Empire and early Turkish Republic were well informed about publications in French, German, and English, especially if these were concerned with "Oriental" music, and often studied in Europe or collaborated with European scholars. Conversely, European scholarship on "Oriental" or "Near Eastern" music was mediated through a network of material, economic, political, and social connections between Europe and the Ottoman Empire and its successor states. This encompassed philological and historical scholarship as well as ethnographic

research and field recording (Maksudyan 2024, Yavuz et al. 2020, Gökçen 2006, Racy 1993).

The Herderian idea of an organic connection between language, territory, and culture was adopted by various Ottoman and post-Ottoman communities during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, supporting efforts to collect, analyze and publish songs, poems, stories, and other kinds of ethnographic data (Erol 2014, Erol 2011, Öztürkmen 2020, Bilal & Yıldız 2019, Tamari 2009:93–112). These not only provided raw materials from which to construct historical narratives or scientific theories, but served as a basis for the implementation of cultural and educational policies in post-Ottoman states. Yet the emergence of practices and discourses that emphasized the links between music and national identity should not be taken as evidence of essential cultural difference between static and homogenous national communities. While some groups and individuals believed ardently in the power of music and other cultural practices to support national emancipation and state formation, others remained loyal to older imperial or religious institutions, or mediated between multiple identities. Furthermore, both musical practices and ideological debates among different ethnic, linguistic, and religious communities were embedded within overlapping historical and social formations that have continued to resonate and interact across national and communal boundaries (Jackson 2013, Pennanen et al. 2013, Yıldız 2016, Lavin 2024).

With the advent of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, musical practices and debates that had developed over the preceding century came to acquire new dimensions. Given that all of the major figures in early Republican music and musicology were born and educated in the Ottoman Empire, there were many direct continuities with the late imperial period. However, the establishment of a secular nation-state that was Western in orientation, authoritarian in political style, and determined to force through modernizing reforms and create ethno-linguistic homogeneity at any cost, led to novel musical developments and altered the significance of existing practices and ideas. The urban music of the Ottoman period, associated with the imperial palace and the Sufi orders as well as the non-Muslim and non-Turkish communities of the region, was systematically suppressed by the state and categorically rejected by the Kemalist elite. The ideological condemnation of Ottoman music as backward and degenerate was supported through

practical, institutional measures including bans on education and broadcasting (Ayas 2014, Erol 2012, Balkılıç 2009, Tekelioğlu 2001, O'Connell 2000).

The creation of a national music fit for the new Republic involved a range of strategies. The cultivation of Western art music was promoted through the establishment of conservatoires and other educational institutions, often under the guidance of European musicians and pedagogues, while Turkish composers such as Ahmed Adnan Saygun (1907–1991) were sponsored to travel to Europe for musical training (Kutluk 2018, Aracı 2001, Woodard 2007, Zimmermann-Kalyoncu 1985, Paçacı 1999). In line with global trends during the early twentieth century, the creation of a national style of art music was complemented by the study of rural "folk" musics through state-supported recording, archiving, and publication activities.

Again, interactions with European scholars and musicians were often central to such projects, the most prominent example being Béla Bartók's fieldwork expedition to Anatolia in 1936, which was facilitated and documented by Saygun (Bartók 1976, Saygun 1951, Yükselsin 2011, Değirmenci 2006). The new national music, which was constructed through the combination of rural Anatolian elements with Western compositional and performance techniques, was disseminated to the general populace through the mass media of radio, printed publications, school curricula, and a network of cultural and educational centers known as People's Houses (halkevleri) (Lamprou 2015, Bartsch 2011, Ahıska 2010, Öztürkmen 1994).

The modernization of musical practices in the early Republican period also required new ideological frameworks. The ideal of racial purity was supported by a historical narrative that located the origins of the Turkish people in Central Asia, and attributed to them the development of civilization not only in Anatolia but throughout the Eurasian continent. In musical terms, this was supposedly confirmed by the presence of pentatonic scale structures – understood as a quintessential musical characteristic of the Turks – in a vast geographical region extending from China to Scotland (Çakıroğlu 2022, Ayas 2016). Yet although Turkish nationalist frameworks were most readily associated with folk music, other scholars argued that Ottoman music, far from being a foreign imposition, was an expression of unadulterated Turkish essence with deep roots in the ancient past. Efforts to defend Ottoman music in the face of official hostility involved not just its identification as unequivocally Turkish, but the modernization of its the-

oretical and pedagogical principles on a scientific basis, the introduction of Western-style performance techniques and staging conventions, and the preservation of an authoritative canonical repertoire in staff notation (Öztürk 2018, O'Connell 2013, Greve 1995).

The division between genres such as folk, Turkish classical, and Western art music was integral to the formation of institutional and educational structures and to the development of musicological scholarship both within and outside of Turkey during the twentieth century. Consequently, research in areas such as the history of Ottoman music (e.g. Wright 1992, Ekinci & Korkmaz 2022, Karakaya 2021), contemporary Turkish classical music (Signell 1977, Gill-Gürtan 2011), rural music making (e.g. Markoff 1990–91, Reinhard & Oliveira Pinto 1989, Picken 1975), urban popular musics (e.g. Stokes 1992, Özbek 1991), or Western art music in Turkey (e.g. Ali 2017, Durugönül 2016) has followed somewhat distinct methodological and conceptual trajectories. Likewise, debates in Turkish music studies have often proceeded independently from research on the musical practices of other post-Ottoman communities, which tend to be similarly restricted by national, geographical, or linguistic boundaries. Whether based on musical genres or ethnic-national identities, such distinctions are far from neutral, and are aligned with particular ideological discourses, social constituencies, and institutional structures. As the preceding discussion has shown, these alignments can be traced back to the debates and transformations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and should be understood not simply as part of the internal history of the Turkish nation-state, but in the context of the interactions and connections that contributed to the emergence of interlinked global modernities.

In recent years, musical scholarship related to Turkey has engaged with diverse practices, repertoires, and social contexts in dialogue with general trends in ethnomusicology and in relation to global political and economic developments. Studies of popular music in Turkey have intersected with themes of national belonging, media circulation and technological innovation, globalization, world music and tourism, and interactions between popular culture and political movements (Değirmenci 2013, Stokes 2010, Bates 2016, Gedik 2017, Fossum 2024, Eren 2024, Senay 2014). The study of musical practices among migrants and diasporic communities in Europe and North America, which has been an important topic of ethnomusicological research

for several decades (Greve 2003, Baumann 1985, Sels 2021, Sağlam 2009, McMurray 2021, Köymen 2023, Seidlitz 2020), has continued together with studies of migrant and other marginalized communities within Turkey, especially in the aftermath of the Syrian civil war and ongoing domestic and regional conflicts (Öğüt 2021, Habash 2021, Mürer & Çakır 2022, Seeman 2019, Greve et al. 2020, Hamelink 2016, Özdemir et al. 2019).

The violence of displacement and assimilation also intersects with questions of political geography in relation to resource extraction, post-humanism, and ecological crisis (McMurray 2020, Aslan & Karahasanoğlu 2021, Özdemir 2019). While questions of musical identity pertain to minoritized communities, they also highlight the continued allure of national and religious belonging and the resurgence of Ottoman or Islamic modes of musical practice and sociality (Gill 2017, Şenay 2020). At the same time, debates around secularism, relations with Europe, and the value of Western art music continue to be an important part of both scholarly and vernacular discourse (Şahin 2018, Wozniak 2023, Karadağlı 2021). The contributions to this issue engage in various ways with many of these issues, setting them in broad historical context and drawing on a wide array of sources, musical practices, and conceptual models. The issue thus contributes to ongoing debates both in and outside of Turkey about the role of music in mediating experiences of modernity as an aspect of shifting relations between the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish Republic, and the wider world.

Summary of articles

The articles in this issue span the period from the second half of the nineteenth century to the present day, and range across a variety of musical genres, social contexts, and theoretical frameworks. The first three articles are all concerned with the late Ottoman period. In Panagiotis C. Poulos's article, "'Foreigners in their Homeland': Song Writing, Musical Estrangement, and Subjecthood Formation in Late Ottoman Istanbul," printed songbooks in multiple languages including Turkish, Greek, and Karamanlidika (Turkish in Greek script) provide material for reconceptualizing the relationship between Ottoman social structures and popular urban song forms, especially the şarkı. Poulos deftly weaves together musical and linguistic analysis, historical and contemporary discourses of estrangement and exile, and

recent debates in literary studies to illustrate how the şarkı functions as a "sonic assemblage" that mediates between multiple identities and social geographies.

In the following article, "Joking Aside: European Music and the Dislocation of Modernity in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Satire," I focus on humorous descriptions of Western music published in Ottoman periodicals during the 1870s. I argue that strategic uses of humor in relation to European musical practices allowed for the expression of ambivalence with regards to the dominant discourse of civilizational progress, particularly through playful dislocation of the sense of distance or proximity between Europe and Istanbul. In "Transcultural Memory in the Study of Folk Music in Turkey: 78-rpm Records of the Ottoman American Diaspora," Burcu Yıldız presents groundbreaking research on the history and analysis of Anatolian folk music. She demonstrates how commercial recordings of Ottoman Armenian migrants in the early twentieth-century United States are not only important for understanding how migrant communities construct and maintain transcultural memories, but are also an invaluable ethnographic resource that predates the state-sponsored recording expeditions to Anatolia during the early Republican period. In common with Poulos, Yıldız seeks to challenge the boundaries of musicological research defined according to exclusive national, ethnic, or linguistic criteria. Furthermore, all three of these articles engage closely with questions of spatial orientation, migration, and the geographical networks and media technologies that facilitated connections between late Ottoman Istanbul and other places, from eastern Anatolia and the Balkans to western Europe and north America.

The following three articles are broadly concerned with the musical reforms of the early Republican period and their transnational synergies. In "Self-Orientalist Representations of Turkish Classical Music in the Republican Era: Orientalism and Orientalism in Reverse," Onur Güneş Ayas analyzes the role of Orientalism in musical debates in Turkey. Drawing on a wide range of primary sources and theoretical literature, Ayas shows that while Westernizing musical reforms were based on Orientalist denigrations of "Eastern" or "alaturka" music, those who have sought to counter these claims by emphasizing the superiority of Turkish classical music base their arguments on the same conceptual framework, even though the relative value of "East" and "West" are reversed. The following article by Evrim Hikmet Öğüt,

titled "Rauf Yekta's Notes on the 1932 Congress of Arab Music: Being a Mediator in a Dual Musical Universe," explores these discursive dynamics from a related but distinct perspective. By analyzing the Turkish musicologist Rauf Yekta's hitherto unstudied notes detailing his participation in the Congress, Öğüt shows how Yekta portrayed himself as a mediator between the Arab and European delegates, and thus attempted to stake out a unique position in the context of the highly polarized ideological debates of early Republican period.

A different aspect of the Republican musical revolution is brought to the fore in Elif Damla Yavuz's article, "Institutionalizing Opera in Turkey: Carl Ebert and the Opera Studio." Yavuz provides a richly textured archival approach to the institutionalization of opera in Turkey, focusing on interactions between the German émigré Carl Ebert and his Turkish interlocutors at Ankara State Conservatory during the 1930s and 1940s. As Yavuz suggests, established narratives of musical reform can be enriched by more detailed study of primary sources, which demonstrate that the aims of both Turkish and European reformers were often frustrated by material realities and opposing political or social interests. The place of Western art music in the history of Turkey continues to be a site for multiple discursive interventions and social formations, as discussed in Erol Köymen's article, "Provincializing Acoustics, Feeling Europe: Heritage and Sonic Atmosphere in Istanbul." Bringing together ethnographic fieldwork with recent theorizations of affect and atmosphere, Köymen argues that "good" acoustics, particularly in relation to historical buildings signifying Istanbul's multi-ethnic and multi-confessional past, are not reducible to a universal and scientifically quantifiable data set, but are better understood as a "feel" that emerges through socially situated interactions between bodies, spaces, sounds, and memories.

Finally, the afterword by Martin Stokes, "Istanbul, Cairo, and the 'Demography of Babel'," draws out connections between the articles and puts them in dialogue with questions of translation and comparison across and between Europe, Istanbul, and Cairo. Taking a cue from comparative literature studies, Stokes asks what it means to understand Istanbul as a site of translation, while also highlighting the transnational aspects of debates about music and modernity in Turkey during the twentieth century, especially as these relate to Egypt, the wider Arab world, and notions of "Arabness." In this way, the issue concludes by locating the construction of musical

modernities neither within isolated national histories, nor within a universalizing narrative of convergence towards the West, but rather in continuous and ongoing processes of interaction, circulation, translation, and reflection between multiple cultural spaces.

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Notes

1. The contributions to this issue generally use the common English term *Turkey* rather than *Türkiye*, which was adopted as the official name of the country in 2022. For a discussion of the domestic and geopolitical dynamics surrounding the name change, see Selvi 2023.

2. Terms such as “Western” or “the West” (garb, batı) have been commonly used in Turkish since the Ottoman

period, sometimes interchangeably or overlapping with “Europe” (Avrupa) or “Frank” (frenk). As the contributions to this issue illustrate, their meanings are not precisely delineated and have shifted in different periods and contexts, often in relation to changing political ideologies. This introduction and the articles that follow generally adopt the same terms used by the sources under discussion, while fully acknowledging their ideological foundations and the absence of an objective referent. For more detailed discussions, see e.g. Aydin 2006 and Ahıska 2003.

3. The roundtable at IMS in 2022 included contributions from Panagiotis C. Poulos, Erol Köymen, and myself. Banu Şenay and Chris Houston were also included in the original proposal but were eventually unable to participate for logistical reasons.

4. On the long-standing silent protests of the Saturday Mothers against forcibly disappeared Turkish citizens, see Can 2022. On the role of music in contestations of Kurdish identity and territorial rights, see Hongur 2022. For discussion of music and sound in the Gezi Park protests, see Bianchi 2018.

About the author

Jacob Olley is a research associate on the UKRI-funded project Ottoman Auralities and the Eastern Mediterranean: Sound, Media and Power, 1789–1922, based at the Faculty of Music, University of Cambridge. He previously held a Leverhulme Early Career Research Fellowship at the same institution. His publications include a two-volume critical edition of Ottoman music in modern Armenian notation, and the co-edited volume *Rhythmic Cycles and Structures in the Art Music of the Middle East* (2017). He is currently writing a book on the cultural history of music notation systems in Ottoman Istanbul.